

Office of Public Affairs

LOB #43:

BOARD SUPPORT

Purpose

The Office of Public Affairs supports the Board of Supervisors by coordinating presentations made to employees, residents, businesses, nonprofits and other organizations. Typically, but not always, these proclamations, resolutions and certificates are presented at Board meetings in order to recognize and celebrate the achievements and contributions of individuals, businesses, nonprofits and faith-based organizations in support of Fairfax County's strategic vision.

Description

OPA coordinates approximately 160 presentations requested by the Board of Supervisors annually for proclamations, resolutions and certifications for hundreds of recipients. This includes:

- Coordinating with the Chairman's office and other Board offices on a regular basis;
- Scheduling all participants who will appear at a Board meeting;
- Writing and distributing guidelines for meeting participation to recipients;
- Preparing items for presentation by researching, writing, coordinating review and producing the final document to be mounted onto a plaque;
- Coordinating the signatures of every document with the appropriate member of the Board;
- Arranging for photographic services, both in print and online; and
- Providing support materials to the Board.

In addition, Board members periodically receive requests to provide presentations to delegations from foreign countries or other organizations such as Boy Scout or Girl Scout troops or Leadership Fairfax. These groups range in size from 1-90 people, depending on the type of organization. If requested by a Board member, OPA coordinates with the appropriate agency for a presentation on the subject matter identified. Often it involves a general overview of Fairfax County, which OPA coordinates, prepares and presents.

Finally, OPA produces a weekly FOIA notice to comply with Virginia law that mandates that all public meetings where more than two Board members are present be publicized at least five business days in advance.

There is 1/1.36 FTE position associated with this line of business. In addition to one employee who handles the majority of this work, other staff provides support by taking photographs at meetings, proofing/editing the documents, and coordinating and providing presentations to foreign delegations as well as local organizations.

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Benefits

The Board of Supervisors recognizes that community engagement is essential to successful local government. One way of engaging the community is to recognize and celebrate contributions and achievements by individuals and organizations including nonprofits, faith-based groups and businesses.

Bringing these people into Board meetings provides an opportunity for others to learn of their accomplishments, whether it is a Fairfax County Public Schools team winning a state championship or an organization providing a program that improves the lives of County residents. Longtime County staff are often recognized for their service to the workforce, and many theme months are highlighted throughout the year, ranging from Hispanic Heritage Month to Fire and Emergency Medical Services Safety, Health and Survival Week.

These presentations are also promoted through a variety of communications channels, including placement on the County's website, pictures in the County's Flickr gallery and discussion on the County's Board of Supervisors podcasts. Highlighting these accomplishments after every meeting helps to emphasize the many positive stories that take place within Fairfax County.

There are also many benefits to hosting delegations from other countries, as well as local groups. These requests come in from local, provincial and national governments from around the world looking to learn how Fairfax County government operates. Providing these jurisdictions with our best practices helps those countries better govern their communities, while at the same time promoting Fairfax County as a positive role model.

Providing presentations to local groups such as Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops and organizations such as Leadership Fairfax affords the opportunity to educate these individuals about their County government. Feedback from the various groups indicates that they come away from the presentation with a clearer idea of how Fairfax County operates, the constraints it is under and the challenges faced, and the wide variety of services provided to residents.

Mandates

OPA prepares and distributes a weekly FOIA meeting notice, as mandated by Virginia Code §§ 2.2-3707 through 3708 and 3714, regarding publishing notices of public meetings.

The notice lists all meetings where more than two members of the Board of Supervisors are present with the potential to discuss County business. It is distributed to the media and public via email, and the meetings are also posted on the County's Public Meetings Calendar online.

Trends and Challenges

The total number of presentations requested by Board members has ranged from 156 to 159 per year over the past three years.

In addition to the presentations that take place at the Board meetings, Board members also requests to have proclamations and certificates presented at individual events throughout the year in their communities. OPA is responsible for preparing these resolutions, in addition to the regular requests for Board meeting presentations. These requests nearly doubled over the past three years – from 13 in FY 2013 to 23 in FY 2015. Those out-of-cycle requests have resulted in an increased workload during non-Board meeting times.

The number of delegations and presentations to other groups fluctuates from year-to-year from a low of 9 in FY 2014 to 16 in FY 2015. Generally, they average one per month. Staff provides these presentations in addition to many other duties.

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Resources

| Category | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Adopted |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| LOB #43: Board Support | | | |
| FUNDING | | | |
| <u>Expenditures:</u> | | | |
| Compensation | \$109,396 | \$102,154 | \$108,364 |
| Operating Expenses | 9,436 | 10,368 | 8,920 |
| Total Expenditures | \$118,832 | \$112,522 | \$117,284 |
| General Fund Revenue | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund | \$118,832 | \$112,522 | \$117,284 |
| POSITIONS | | | |
| Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) | | | |
| <u>Positions:</u> | | | |
| Regular | 1 / 1.44 | 1 / 1.44 | 1 / 1.36 |
| Total Positions | 1 / 1.44 | 1 / 1.44 | 1 / 1.36 |

Metrics

| Metric Indicator | FY 2013 Actual | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Estimate | FY 2017 Estimate |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Proclamations, resolutions and certificates prepared/presented at Board meetings | 146 | 133 | 133 | 133 | 133 |
| Proclamations, resolutions and certificates prepared/sent | 13 | 24 | 23 | 30 | 30 |
| Presentations to delegations and other groups | 13 | 9 | 16 | 12 | 12 |

The number of proclamations, resolutions and certificates prepared/presented at Board meetings has remained fairly constant over the past few fiscal years, ranging from 133 to 146.

The number prepared and sent increased from FY 2013 to FY 2014 but remained approximately the same for FY 2015. Still as the number of groups seeking recognition increases, the number of these could be expected to increase in the next few years.

Staff from all Board of Supervisors' offices took part in a session in August 2015 to brainstorm ideas to streamline this portion of Board meetings. Valuable suggestions were made that, if adopted, are anticipated to result in holding the line on the number of presentations at Board meetings.

The number of presentations to delegations and other groups (e.g., Leadership Fairfax, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc.) fluctuates from year to year – from a low of nine in FY 2014 to 16 in FY 2015. OPA has little control over the number of requests received but strives to accommodate as many as possible in order to share important information about Fairfax County.