

PUBLIC RELATIONS

DESCRIPTION

The Public Relations Department directs the county’s public communications efforts and increases awareness and understanding of Henrico County Government activities for the county’s residents, businesses, news media and others. Working with county agencies and officials, the Department creates and implements print, video and graphic communications targeted to a variety of audiences. Activities include news releases, media advisories, news conferences, photography, graphic design, Henrico County Television (HCTV), management of social media including the county’s official Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts and YouTube channel, public awareness campaigns, print publications — such as the county’s annual report, the employee telephone directory, and departmental brochures — media relations, news tracking, agency consultation, website news maintenance, audiovisual presentation services, streaming Board of Supervisors meetings, event planning and community-engagement efforts. The Department also receives, distributes, and responds to Virginia Freedom of Information Act requests through its service as the county’s FOIA officer.

The Department oversees operations of HCTV. Activities include production of feature-length programming and short-format video news releases to broadcast on HCTV and distribute through social media and the county website. The Department continues to offer residents timely information and quality programming through HCTV.

OBJECTIVES

- To tell the story of Henrico County through print and video productions.
- To provide county agencies with effective support and technical assistance in crisis consultation, media relations and promotion of their programs and services.
- To establish and maintain contacts with news media representatives to ensure accurate coverage of county activities.

FISCAL YEAR 2022 SUMMARY

Annual Fiscal Plan

| Description | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 | Change |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| | Actual | Original | Approved | 21 to 22 |
| Personnel | \$ 1,724,638 | \$ 1,711,390 | \$ 1,828,426 | 6.8% |
| Operation | 234,214 | 192,477 | 225,477 | 17.1% |
| Capital | 650 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Total | <u>\$ 1,959,502</u> | <u>\$ 1,903,867</u> | <u>\$ 2,053,903</u> | <u>7.9%</u> |
| Personnel Complement | 20 | 20 | 20 | 0 |

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

| | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 | Change 21 to 22 |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Workload Measures | | | | |
| Social Media Posts | 1,850 | 2,003 | 2,500 | 497 |
| Social Media Followers | 22,673 | 30,997 | 40,000 | 9,003 |
| Videos Produced | 96 | 269 | 100 | (169) |
| Publications Distributed | 82,900 | 68,750 | 68,750 | 0 |
| Information Packets Distributed | 1,855 | 2,317 | 2,000 | (317) |
| Media Contacts Made | 9,093 | 8,121 | 10,000 | 1,879 |
| Photos Taken/Distributed | 2,153 | 2,442 | 2,500 | 58 |

OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)

- To create crisis and emergency communication plans.
- To enhance the visibility of Henrico County as a desirable place to live, work, and enjoy leisure hours.
- To disseminate information to county residents through print publications, feature video productions, HCTV message boards, social media, the news media, the county website, and other available platforms.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Public Relations Department’s budget for FY2021-22 is \$2,053,903. This a \$150,036, or a 7.9 percent, increase from the FY2020-21 approved budget. The personnel component totals \$1,828,426, which reflects a \$117,036 or 6.8 percent increase driven by employee compensation increases as well as rising healthcare and benefit costs. The operating budget totals \$225,477, an increase of \$33,000, or 17.1 percent. This increase is due to restoring some of the funding that was cut in the FY2020-21 budget due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Department is separated into two divisions: Public Relations and Media Services.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Public Relations component of the budget for FY2021-22 is \$1,058,887 and reflects an increase of \$100,624, or 10.5 percent, compared to FY2020-21. The increase is attributed to increases in employee compensation and benefit costs as well as the restoration of \$33,000 in operating funding to offset part of the budget cuts in FY2020-21 due to COVID-19.

The employees in the Public Relations office focus on media relations and public awareness of county policies, programs and services via coverage in print and broadcast news media, and through various publications such as news releases, departmental brochures and other print materials. Public Relations is also responsible for social media, including the county’s official Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts, photography, graphic design, and HCTV message board bulletins, event planning and community engagement. The division also serves as the county’s FOIA officer.

Public Relations

MEDIA SERVICES

The Media Services component of the budget for FY2021-22 is \$995,016, reflects an increase of \$ 49,412, or 5.2 percent, from FY2020-21. The increase is within the personnel component and is attributed to employee raises and higher healthcare and benefit costs.

The employees in the Media Services office serve as a video production and media support staff, telling the story of Henrico County through feature and documentary programming and video news releases. Media Services offers other county agencies assistance with promotion of their programs and services through video productions. The office maintains and develops content for the Henrico County Government channel on YouTube.com, provides streaming video coverage of Board of Supervisors meetings, provides live streaming coverage of press conferences and other select county events, and is also responsible for producing programs and operating HCTV.

For FY2021-22, Public Relations will continue providing the same quality and level of service. The department will continue to assist agencies with media and public information needs, will be available to disseminate information during crisis situations, will write and produce various publications, will live-stream every Board of Supervisors meeting, will assist with special projects, and will produce new, original programming for HCTV and the Henrico County Government YouTube channel.