
R2019-4: SETTING FORTH THE CITY OF MYRTLE BEACH'S POLICY OF OPEN GOVERNMENT, COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENCY AND GOAL OF PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE CITY STAFF AND THE CITY COUNCIL.

Applicant/Purpose: Staff/ to establish a policy of open government, commitment to transparency, & a goal of proactive communication for Council & staff.

Brief:

- The City is committed to be an open, transparent organization, which welcomes public participation.
- To meet this goal the City commits to the following:
 - Plan & schedule a new community-wide visioning process, soliciting ideas & feedback from residents & businesses.
 - Undertake a 3rd party survey of current public opinion on a wide range of topics to establish a baseline against which future improvements & communications can be measured.
 - Host a quarterly "newcomers" meeting for new residents of the City & surrounding areas, as a welcome to the greater community & an introduction to city services & facilities.
 - Schedule monthly Council workshops to publicly discuss long-range issues & policies affecting City residents & businesses.
 - Welcome inquiries from citizens & the news media & respond promptly to questions w/ accurate information, correcting the record on a case-by-case basis, as needed.
 - Encourage more staff members to speak to the news media & the public in their areas of expertise, to demonstrate the city's openness, responsiveness & willingness to assist.
 - Continue to comply fully w/ requirements of the SC FOIA, which grants access to public documents, subject to limitations set forth by state law;
 - Encourage greater use of video as a storytelling medium in the city's communications, especially on social media sites;
 - Provide more accessible data & statistical information to the public through the new Enterprise Resource Planning software package;

Issues:

- This resolution also adopts policies & guidelines to further encourage responsiveness & transparency in such areas as:
 - Crisis communication - outlines the roles & responsibilities & protocols that will guide the city in sharing information w/ the city's audience during an emergency.
 - Viral media event - outlines the roles & responsibilities when an event has the potential to become viral, or is going viral.
 - Social Media Commenting - establishes guidelines for citizens who are posting to one of the city's social media sites

Public Notification: Normal meeting notification

Alternatives: To modify or amend the resolution.

Financial Impact: None at this time.

Manager's Recommendation: I recommend approval.

Attachment(s): Resolution, Proposed policy.

RESOLUTION R2019-4

CITY OF MYRTLE BEACH
COUNTY OF HORRY
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION SETTING FORTH THE CITY
OF MYRTLE BEACH'S POLICY OF OPEN
GOVERNMENT, COMMITMENT TO
TRANSPARENCY AND GOAL OF
PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR
MEMBERS OF THE CITY STAFF AND THE
CITY COUNCIL.

WHEREAS, The City of Myrtle Beach is a South Carolina public body operating under the Council-Manager form of government, with a mayor and six Council members elected at-large for four-year, staggered terms; and

WHEREAS, The City of Myrtle Beach strives to be an outstanding example of transparency, open government and proactive communication among all governments in the State of South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, The Myrtle Beach City Council hereby pledges to be open and transparent in its deliberations and decision-making and welcomes public input and involvement in the process, subject to standard rules of decorum and, where applicable, limitations on time; and

WHEREAS, The residents, businesses, visitors and neighbors of the City of Myrtle Beach deserve no less than a deliberate effort to provide responsive and responsible government, based on transparent decision-making and clear communications;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Myrtle Beach City Council will:

1. Plan and schedule a new community-wide visioning process, soliciting ideas and feedback from residents and businesses as part of the state-required update of the city's Comprehensive Plan;
2. Undertake a third-party survey of current public opinion on a wide range of topics, using statistically sound methods, to establish a baseline against which future improvements and communications can be measured;
3. Host a quarterly "newcomers" meeting for new residents of the City of Myrtle Beach and surrounding areas, as a welcome to the greater community and an introduction to city services and facilities;
4. Schedule monthly City Council workshops to publicly discuss long-range issues and policies affecting the City of Myrtle Beach and its residents and businesses;
5. Welcome inquiries from citizens and the news media and respond promptly to questions with accurate information, correcting the record on a case-by-case basis, as needed;
6. Encourage more city staff members to speak to the news media and the public in their areas of expertise, as multiple voices help to demonstrate the city's openness, responsiveness and willingness to assist;
7. Continue to comply fully with requirements of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, which grants access to public documents, subject to limitations set forth by state law;

- 1 8. Encourage and support greater use of video as a storytelling medium in the
- 2 city's outbound communications, especially on social media sites;
- 3 9. Provide more accessible data and statistical information to the public through
- 4 the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software package;
- 5 10. Adopt the attached policies and guidelines to encourage and ensure
- 6 responsiveness and transparency in the city's communications;
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8 Signed, sealed and dated this 22nd day of January 2019.

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13 BRENDA BETHUNE, MAYOR

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15 ATTEST:

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18 JENNIFER STANFORD, CITY CLERK