

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Position Code: 3035

WC Code: 9410

FLSA Status: Exempt

Pay Grade: 358

Location: Public Information

Approval Date: 2019

General Statement of Duties

Performs professional work in developing and administering a program of internal and external communications for the Town that encourages open communication and civic engagement.

Distinguishing Features of the Class

A position in this class serves as an information conduit for the community and provides information to the public, media, and town employees on programs, services, issues and policies. Employee must exercise considerable initiative, imagination and independent judgment to develop and implement programs. Work requires continuous contact with a variety of public officials, community leaders, media representatives and the general public. Work is performed under general supervision of the Town Manager and is evaluated based on the recognized success of communications programs and civic engagement.

Duties and Responsibilities

Represents the Town to the community at large through the development and maintenance of relationships with key community groups, external agencies, and/or other interested parties.

Serves as a professional communications resource for the Town; managing community, Town and media relations.

Enhances and improves civic engagement with the various community and civic groups in the area.

Plans, develops and directs programs to ensure dissemination of information designed to keep Town departments and the community informed of Town programs, services, activities, features, accomplishments or position; may conduct surveys to determine public opinion of Town government and/or programs.

Produces communications materials about Town services by gathering information, writing, editing and preparing layout for distribution to internal and external audiences.

Assists with editorial writing, speech writing, press releases, marketing efforts, special events and special projects.

Answers inquiries from media representatives and/or the general public by providing information based on detailed knowledge of Town programs and activities and as required by state open records laws; may refer inquiries to the proper Town officials.

Assists with community education programs about Town government and services, and develops other programs and materials to engage the community with Town affairs.

Directs media inquiries to the appropriate Town contacts.

Acts proactively regarding media relations; provides background information and additional materials as requested by reporters.

Coordinates media conferences, as requested.

Plans and participates in meetings with Town officials, general public, community groups, religious organizations and schools to share information and discuss Town activities.

Informs and educates citizens on the functions and processes of Town government.

Enhances and advertises the e-mail notification service or list-serve for citizens interested in Town events, meetings and services.

Advises Town management, elected officials and other department directors of the public relations effects of proposed policies and actions.

Serves on various boards and committees representing the Town; conducts tours or seminars for the public or other governmental agencies.

Prepares and makes presentations to various organizations.

Assists in the production of original cable channel programming for MI Connection and other broadcast media.

Develops, edits and produces Town news and information in a newsletters; responsible for web site content and the accuracy and timeliness of online information.

Coordinates regular citizen education programs designed to educate and engage citizens in Town government.

Performs short- and long-term planning aimed at increasing marketing and community relations outreach on a local and regional level; develops marketing plan as well as short- and long-term goals.

Recruitment and Selection Guidelines

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Thorough knowledge of the English language, including proper grammar, syntax, punctuation and spelling.

Thorough knowledge of the principles, practices, methods and techniques associated with journalistic composition and community relations.

Thorough knowledge of researching, developing and writing multi-faceted marketing and community relations plans.

Thorough knowledge of the organization, policies, procedures, philosophies, and goals of the Town.

Thorough knowledge of NC public information laws.

Thorough knowledge of the requirements, policies and procedures of the various media outlets necessary for promotional activities.

Considerable knowledge of the methods and techniques for developing and implementing community relations strategies and programs.

Considerable knowledge of publication layout and design.

Considerable knowledge of the current literature, trends and developments in the fields of community relations and local government administration.

Skill in written composition.

Skill in graphic design.

Skill in the collection, analysis and presentation of statistical data.

Ability to use common office machines, including computer-driven word processing, spreadsheet, graphics and file maintenance programs.

Ability to perform research utilizing a variety of informational sources, and to compile, organize, analyze, and present such information in a variety of formats.

Ability to establish and maintain complex records and files.

Ability to exercise initiative and independent judgment in creating and selecting work products.

Ability to provide clear and explicit instruction orally and in writing.

Ability to evaluate the writing of peers or superiors.

Ability to modify or supplement the written work of others.

Ability to understand and analyze complex issues and technical services to formulate strategies for communicating effectively with the public.

Ability to work in a consulting capacity and provide leadership in contacts with professionals, public officials and members of the general public at various levels of authority and influence.

Ability to exercise tact and courtesy in frequent contact with professionals, public officials and the general public at various levels of authority and influence.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships as necessitated by work assignments.

Physical Requirements

Must be able to physically perform the basic life operational support functions of reaching, walking, fingering, talking, hearing, and repetitive motions.

Must be able to perform sedentary work exerting up to 10 pounds of force occasionally and/or a negligible amount of force frequently or constantly to lift, carry, push, pull, or otherwise move objects.

Must possess the visual acuity to compile and compute data and statistics, perform transcription tasks, operate a computer terminal, and do extensive reading.

Minimum Education and Experience

Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in English, journalism, public or community relations, marketing, or a related field, and 5 to 7 years of experience in responsible public relations or related work with experience in local government or in a public organization preferred; or any equivalent combination of education and experience.

Special Requirement

Possession of a valid North Carolina driver's license.