

POS Alignment & Prioritization Project

Public Affairs Transformation – Status Update

(draft – as of 2/28/17)

Background:

- The Alignment & Prioritization Project was conceived one year ago (see attached) in response to frustrations over gaps in service by Public Affairs to commissioners and the lack of an aligned and prioritized set of shared priorities that were mutually advanced by the Port Commission, CEO and port staff. Kate Snider and Phyllis Schulman were retained to facilitate the work involved with identifying structural improvements and developing an aligned set of organizational priorities.

Status – Key Challenges:

- **ORGANIZATIONAL ALIGNMENT:**

- ACCOMPLISHED: 2017 Commission Work Plan and 2017 Port-Wide Goals will be integrated and adopted in March 2017. A comprehensive schedule (including commission actions, key operational /business milestones and strategic communication activities) will be activated by the end of Q1.
- ACCOMPLISHED: 2017 Legislative Agendas for Local/Regional, State and Federal were developed and approved in public meetings.

- **TALENT GAPS:**

- ACCOMPLISHED: Seven key hires occurred in 2017 and the department was restructured (added Communications Director and Government Relations Director) to provide greater bandwidth to concurrently handle multiple strategic key issues.
- ACCOMPLISHED: Hired a community engagement manager to focus on developing relationships with environmental focused organizations.
- UNDERWAY:
 - Improving departmental capabilities to provide politically sophisticated communications support to individual commissioners on key projects/issues.
 - Establishing seamless process between PA and commission office (including onboarding of commission specialists) to ensure detailed prep is in place to support external engagement by commissioners.
 - Restructure community engagement/local government relations responsibilities to broaden direct/ongoing staff engagement beyond maritime and airport fence-line communities.

- **SILOS:**

- ACCOMPLISHED: Significant team-building efforts over the past year have dismantled silos and unified the PA staff as a one-port, cohesive team.
- ACCOMPLISHED: POS PA staff is providing seamless support to the NWSA for extensive North Harbor needs (media, local/federal gov. relations and community engagement.)

- **TOOLS:**

- ACCOMPLISHED: Conducted 2016 public opinion survey & focus groups and incorporated results into a fresh, values-focused communications strategy.
- ACCOMPLISHED: A media look-ahead calendar, outlining proactive communications moments, is being provided weekly to commissioners and the ELT.
- ACCOMPLISHED/ONGOING: The complexity of the Port's web site modernization project (in partnership with ICT) has pushed back completion from the end of 2016 to the end of 2017. Work is on track to meet this revised completion date.
- ACCOMPLISHED/ONGOING: A complete updating/overhaul of the Port's communication products (e.g. external presentations, one-pagers) will be completed by the end of Q4 to ensure integration with the Port's new web site and improved access will be available internally through Sharepoint.

Immediate Next Steps:

- Early March: Confirm steps/changes with commissioners for addressing talent gaps listed as "Underway".
- Early March: Briefings with commissioners to review/launch paid media portion of the multi-faceted communications plan emphasizing port values (i.e. Opportunity, Livability & Equity/Inclusion).
- Early/Mid March: Work with CEO, Commission Chief of Staff and others to populate the comprehensive 2017 commission action calendar (i.e. commission meeting themes, key decision points, integrated strategic communications) and review with commissioners.
- Mid/Late March: Briefings with commissioners to review detailed and targeted government relations/outreach plans for:
 - Airport Communities Strategy
 - City of Seattle Strategies (Arena, Industrial Lands)
 - POS/NWSA Future Real Estate Strategy
 - Comprehensive PA 2017 Plan
- Continue co-leadership to drive process/structural changes outlined in the Alignment & Prioritization Project recommendations (October 2016) through to completion.