

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: June 26, 2015

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Meg Roederer, Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Council

CC: Jerene Watson, Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: Constituent Services

This CCR is in response to a request by Council regarding Constituent Services.

There is a system in place and protocol for elected officials to address constituent requests and concerns. If an elected official receives constituent concerns, inquires or other requests you may respond to the constituent directly and/or inform the Executive Assistant/City Manager's office for assistance. The case can be tracked in the constituent services report and staff assistance provided with a resolution.

Constituent Services Program Summary:

The program is managed by the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and City Council and three reports are provided to the Mayor, Council, City Administration and Leadership Team. The purpose is to report citizen concerns that the Mayor, Council and Administration (City Manager's Office) receives from constituents by website, mail, email, phone, or in-person. The constituents receive a response acknowledging the issue within three business days from the Executive Assistant and it is forwarded to the City department director or City Manager for assignment to a staff member for resolution, investigation and the appropriate action. City staff may respond back directly to the citizen or request the Executive Assistant to respond on their behalf to the citizen and/or councilmember. Staff must report the resolution/action back to the Executive Assistant for it to be captured in the report and the case marked as closed or pending to confirm that the loop has been closed with all parties involved. Depending on the nature of the issue the case time resolution may vary from less than 24 hours to more than 12 months.

Please note not all citizen emails receive a staff response many emails are opinions/feedback on issues or event invitations. The City Council email is monitored on a regular basis. Also, if a citizen sends an email to council@flagstaffaz.gov an automated reply is sent immediately.

Thank you for contacting the Flagstaff City Council – your email has been forwarded to the current Mayor and Councilmembers. We value citizen input and review all of the correspondence that is sent to us. However, depending on the nature of your e-mail, you may or may not receive an additional response. If your

concern requests additional follow-up or information, we will respond more fully in the future.

Whether or not your e-mail requires a response, please know that your input is very important and we appreciate your taking the time to let us know your thoughts. Please do not reply directly to this message as the mailbox generating it is unmonitored but feel free to direct any further correspondence to council@flagstaffaz.gov.

In addition, the Executive Assistant includes the website "Report-A-Concern" statistics in the summary report. The website module is managed by Assistant to the City Manager-Communications, Kim Ott and the concerns go directly to the department and do not route to the Executive Assistant unless it is specific to the *Mayor, City Council* or listed as *Other Concern*. However, the Executive Assistant includes the overall website statistics in the summary report.

Process Overview:

1. Intake point: as appropriate or upon request (notification of Executive Assistant)
2. Enter case into report
3. Research Issue
4. Confer with appropriate parties (Mayor, Council, Staff, etc.)
5. Draft Response
6. Three-day maximum follow-up/response time
7. Enter case update into report assign as closed or pending
8. Report released to Mayor, Council and Leadership

Constituent Services Program History and Refinement:

- 2011 Constituent Services Program launched.
- Prior to June 2012 Word document data collection/tracking limited.
- June 2012 Excel Report used and data collection/tracking efficiency improved.
- July 2012 (FY13) City of Flagstaff *Report-A-Concern* Website Module launched and the Excel Report updated to include website concerns, pie charts and status category.
- January/February 2013 report refined and codes assigned to the cases which coincided with the website codes.
- April 2013 Constituent Services Summary Report and Constituent Services Pending Report created and introduced as well as converted to PDF and three reports produced 1) Summary 2) Monthly Detail 3) Pending. The city council opinion line calls (928-213-2020) added to the summary report.
- Three reports provided to the Mayor, Council and Leadership Team.
- January 2014 First Constituent Services Annual Report Created (2013 CY Data).
- January 2015 Second Constituent Services Annual Report Created (2014 CY Data).

Constituent Services Software Research:

Constituent Services Software: CRM also known as Citizen Relationship Management, Customer Relationship Management, Citizen Request Management provides the ability

to manage citizen concerns in one database, track concerns, improve efficiency, search concerns, archive case documentation and create reports. The current constituent services program does not utilize C.R.M. Software. Outlook, Civicplus (*Report-A-Concern*), Excel and PDF documents are used to compile data in order to keep track of the issues/cases and create reports. The current system does not have a search function or comprehensive tracking mechanism, archive documentation, assign automated case numbers and is time consuming. In addition, constituent concerns that are reported directly to the department are not included in the reports because department tracking systems vary. Staff has conducted research and purchasing a CRM program to enhance the program would require budget approval.

RECOMMENDATION / CONCLUSION

A successful constituent services program can send a positive signal to citizens that the city makes it a priority to address their needs along with the following:

- Send a strong message on the importance of being accountable to its citizens
- Reduce citizen frustration
- Build bridges with the community
- Reinforce the City's positive image
- Create trust by addressing concerns
- Promote public support for initiatives
- Serve as a barometer for tracking trends in public opinion
- Anticipate issues or problems before they reach crisis proportions
- Highlight problems or programs of interest to the public
- Alert the City to emerging issues
- May signal problems with city operations

The City of Flagstaff Constituent Services Program was launched in 2011 with the addition of Deputy City Manager Jerene Watson and program refinement is on-going. The current process has proved effective and successful thus far addressing the citizen concerns quickly, professionally, fairly as well as tracked and reported. There are however, program challenges because there is not a dedicated funding source, comprehensive constituent services software program or a constituent services coordinator. It is one of the many responsibilities of the Executive Assistant and the current structure of the constituent services program is at capacity. Future consideration should be made as the City of Flagstaff population grows and additional data, reporting and concerns increase creating a workload that will outgrow the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Council position.