

Public Relations Plan

4-27-26



Table of Contents

Introduction..... 2
 Jim Hogg County Appraisal District Mission Statement..... 3
 Purpose..... 3
 Goals 3
 Definition of Customer 3
Public Inquiries 4
 Periodic Policy Evaluation..... 4
 Timely Response..... 4
Media Communications and Crisis Response..... 4
 Newspaper..... 5
 Television..... 5
Courtesy Information 5
 Mail Outs 5
 Courthouse Postings..... 5
 Available Flyers 5
Public Appearances..... 5
Taxing Entity Communications 6
Public Feedback Mechanisms..... 6
Public Relations Timeline..... 6

Introduction

This plan is based on the IAAO Standard on Public Relations, and is to be used in conjunction with that standard to fit the needs of Jim Hogg County Appraisal District.

Jim Hogg County Appraisal District Mission Statement

The mission of the Jim Hogg County Appraisal District is to appraise all real and business personal property within Jim Hogg County. The district appraises property according to the Texas Property Tax Code and the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices (USPAP). Jim Hogg County Appraisal District is responsible for the fair market appraisal of properties within each of the following taxing entities; Jim Hogg County, Jim Hogg County Independent School I&S & M&O, Brush County Groundwater Conservation District, Jim Hogg FM & FC, Jim Hogg Special Road, Jim Hogg County Emergency Service, and Jim Hogg County WCID#2.

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide a written document to serve the purposes of the public relations program of Jim Hogg County Appraisal District. County Appraisal District serves Jim Hogg County, Texas and aims to provide the public with an open line of communication to increase public knowledge and CAD transparency.

Goals

One of the goals of this document is to provide the CAD with policies to remember when dealing with the public, and a measuring mechanism to ensure that the CAD's Public Relations program is being implemented in the intended fashion.

Another goal of the document as well as the Public Relations program of the CAD is to increase transparency and availability of information, thereby increasing taxpayer confidence in the CAD. It is the CAD's goal that all communications with the public are informative, clear, accurate, and consistent.

Definition of Customer

The Jim Hogg County Appraisal District has multiple sets of customers with different needs. Many people find at one time or another that they need to contact the Jim Hogg County Appraisal District for a variety of reasons, and the CAD's PR plan is designed to accommodate the needs of them all. Below are some examples of CAD customers.

- Property Owners/Taxpayers
- Population of Jim Hogg County
- Taxing Entities
- Other Appraisal Districts
- The Property Tax Assistance Division and the State of Texas
- Property Tax Consultants

JIM HOGG COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

- Real Estate and Oil and Gas Lawyers, Land Men

Public Inquiries

CAD Staff are to be courteous to taxpayers and all members of the public at all times, and answer inquiries with the utmost respect and accuracy.

Periodic Policy Evaluation

Periodically the Chief Appraiser and other staff will review the current public relations and customer service policies and actions to determine the level of sufficiency. This may occur bi-annually, annually, immediately following any type of incident that might induce public fallout, and when any key staff member leaves the CAD.

The review should include a time when CAD staff will have a chance to add feedback and voice their concerns and suggestions. After the review is complete, the designated person will compile the suggestions into new policies to be implemented by all CAD staff.

Timely Response

It is the policy of Jim Hogg County Appraisal District to respond as quickly as possible to public inquiries. Telephone calls and e-mails should be returned as promptly as feasible for each staff member. It is imperative that each staff member read e-mails and listen to phone messages and respond professionally and timely. It is unacceptable for telephone calls and e-mails to go unanswered for more than 2 business days. We all get busy, but as public servants it is our duty to be responsive to public inquiries. Not only is it a good policy, but it will help the CAD to increase goodwill and confidence in the Property Tax System and local government.

Media Communications and Crisis Response

The Jim Hogg County Appraisal District will respond to all media inquiries, even if “no comment” is the only response. It is the policy of the CAD not to comment on sensational stories lacking concrete factual information that is relevant to the CAD and to taxpayers. The CAD will have several prepared statements to address the following crisis events to prevent CAD unpreparedness and absence of someone to make a statement:

- a. Common natural disasters that may affect the area (e.g. wildfire, hurricane, drought)
- b. Sudden, unexpected departure of the Chief Appraiser or Board Member
- c. Expected departure of the Chief Appraiser
- d. Tax rate increase
- e. Rendition request/filing deadline
- f. Tax Bills due

JIM HOGG COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

Newspaper

Newspaper submissions will be sent in at various times of year by the CAD to inform taxpayers of impending filing deadlines and other information. The CAD will submit a notice that rendition filings are due between January 1 and February 28. Examples of past filings will be on file.

Television

If television appearance requests are made, it is up to CAD discretion whether to accept the request depending upon the nature of the news item. As previously stated, it is the policy of the CAD to refrain from comment on stories of a sensational or negative nature. The CAD may find it in the best interests of CAD public relations to speak to television media if the story will be informative and educational. All statements will be fact-based and opinions and speculation are to be excluded from media communications.

Courtesy Information

Mail Outs

The CAD may mail out public information documents at certain times of year to remind taxpayers of their duties, rights, and remedies. These mail outs will be proofed to ensure error-free and accurate communications.

Courthouse Postings

Jim Hogg County Appraisal District will post announcements for CAD Board of Director Meetings 3 business days prior to the meeting. The agenda will also be posted. Procedure for posting agendas can be found in the Board of Directors Manual, Page 10, Section 1.3.5.

Available Flyers

The CAD will make available in its office and the county tax office [IF APPLICABLE] various flyers for taxpayers to take and to bring to public events. These flyers will contain relevant information for taxpayers about the CAD, the Board of Directors, and the appraisal process.

Public Appearances

The Chief Appraiser will make public appearances at county functions such as county commissioner meetings and school board meetings. The Chief Appraiser may also make appearances at meetings of local organizations, if they exist in Jim Hogg County. Public appearances are a way for taxpayers, taxing entities, and the county population to get to know the Chief Appraiser and become familiar and comfortable with the property taxation process. At each public appearance where a speech is made by the Chief Appraiser it would be ideal to have a question and answer session following the speech to give the public a chance to respond.

Taxing Entity Communications

In addition to attending taxing entity meetings periodically, it is recommended that the Chief Appraiser periodically check in with the CAD contact at Taxing Entities to ensure open communication and accessibility. A phone call, e-mail, or brief meeting would suffice.

Public Feedback Mechanisms

In addition to routine inquiries and opportunities for taxpayers to contact the CAD, the CAD will provide confidential comment cards that the taxpayers may fill out to provide feedback to the CAD. The categories on these mechanisms will include timeliness of CAD response to inquiries, satisfaction of issue resolution.

Public Relations Timeline

- **December through January-** The chief appraiser shall attend commissioner's court, other governmental body and special district meetings. Review and development of public information on brochures and other materials related to property exemptions, renditions and special appraisal. Documents will be updated in the instance that changes are made in the legal opinion of legislative meaning and/or new legislation. Publish notice in local newspaper about requirements and availability of applications, renditions and agricultural appraisals.
- **February through March** – The chief appraiser shall attend the Jim Hogg County School District Board of Directors meeting as wells as commissioners court and city council meeting.
- **March through April** – Review and development of public information materials related to appraisal procedures, notices and protest and evidence production. Documents will be updated in the instance that changes are made in the legal opinion of legislative meaning and/or new legislation.
- **April through May** – Publish notice in local newspaper about requirements and availability of applications for deferral, homestead exemptions, renditions and agricultural appraisals. Submit to all taxing entities preliminary estimated values. Prepare press release for notices of appraised values and protest process. Publish notice in local newspaper about taxpayer protest and procedures.
- **June through July** – The chief shall provide updates and final certification on values for the upcoming tax year.
- **July through August** – Strategic planning sessions, evaluations, review, planning and implementation of customer service and communication recommendations.

JIM HOGG COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

- **September through October** – Provide public notice of hearings for reappraisal plan and annual budget.
- **November through December** – Review, update and development of public information materials explaining appraisal district policy and procedures, tax information, forms district statistics, and property information.