
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33601**

BOARD POLICY: 01.19.01.01

SUBJECT: Sponsorship
DATE: August 6, 2014
SUPERSEDES: Replaces 01.19.01.00

PURPOSE

This policy provides framework within which County staff members may solicit and accept sponsorships from third parties, in the form of in-kind and/or monetary consideration, to support County government activities that are open and/or available to the public. The policy also provides framework within which the County can become a monetary or in-kind sponsor of third party activities. Further, the policy sets standards for the kinds of sponsorship relationships and arrangements that the County may enter.

DEFINITIONS

Activities: Events, programs, projects, services, publications, equipment and/or properties

In-Kind Consideration: Sponsor contributions provided in the form of products, goods and/or services (as opposed to monetary consideration)

Monetary Consideration: Sponsor contributions provided in the form of cash or cash equivalents (as opposed to in-kind consideration)

Sponsor: Any party who provides monetary or in-kind consideration for an activity in exchange for access to the commercial marketing potential of being associated with that activity

Sponsorship: A mutually beneficial arrangement in which one party provides money, products, goods or services in exchange for access to the commercial marketing potential associated with the other party's activity

Total Sponsorship Value: The sum of all monetary contributions plus the sum of the monetary value of all in-kind contributions for a given County activity

POLICY

A. Overview

Sponsorship is a mutually beneficial arrangement in which one party provides money, goods or services in exchange for access to the commercial marketing potential associated with the other party's activity. The Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners (Board) wants to foster an environment in which organizations receive such benefits in exchange for supporting their community and advancing common goals.

As such, the Board authorizes County employees to solicit and accept third party sponsorships for the County's activities that are open and/or available to the public, in order to generate funds or provide products or services that will offset the County's costs and/or add value for the public participants of those activities. The Board authorizes County employees to use and expend contributions from approved sponsors.

The Board authorizes the expenditure of County funds to provide sponsorships of other government or nonprofit organizations, for activities that promote shared goals as identified by the Board through its [strategic plan](#) vision and strategies.

The County's sponsorship activities must take place in accordance with the [Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, Part III, Chapter, 112, Florida Statutes](#). Further, sponsorship activities shall take place in accordance with the guidelines and limitations of this policy, and in alignment with the County's [current sponsorship procedures](#) on the County's intranet site, County Online Information Network (COIN), as well as all other relevant County policies and guidelines. This expressly includes policies, procedures and guidelines that pertain to purchase and management of property and equipment that belongs to the County government. Sponsorship activities shall be budgeted and accounted for in a manner determined by Business & Support Services Department and the Clerk of the Circuit Court's Department of County Finance.

Examples of appropriate sponsorships are provided in the County's sponsorship procedures.

B. Providing Sponsorships for Third Party Activities

Any County sponsorship of third party activities must be approved by the Board (if valued at more than \$1,000) or the County Administrator (if valued at \$1,000 or less), and in sufficient time to ensure that the County is eligible to receive the sponsorship package benefits described in the third party's published sponsorship package. Board members requesting that the County become a sponsor for a third party activity with \$1,000 or less (monetary, or based on the value of in-kind contributions from the County) should make arrangements through the County Administrator. Requests for sponsorships of more than \$1,000 (monetary or in-kind value) must be presented at a Board meeting for approval prior to expenditure. Sponsorships from the County should be paid for with funds appropriated in the County budget for the specific purpose of sponsorship of third party activities. In all cases, a funding source is to be identified before proceeding with the request.

The County will provide sponsorships for activities of other government or nonprofit organizations that promote shared goals, as identified by the Board through their [strategic plan](#), vision and strategies. Sponsorships should be given only to organizations that operate in

coordination with Hillsborough County government to provide services in the community, and at such time as those organizations are not receiving other funds from Hillsborough County (such as operating or grant funds). The County will sponsor any one organization only once per fiscal year. The County will not sponsor activities of for-profit organizations, or any party or activity that could possibly undermine the public trust.

In addition, the County should sponsor only activities that provide a platform (described in a publicly available or published sponsorship package) for the County to be visible to a large and relevant audience to market, promote or raise awareness about County government. Recognition of the County's sponsorship should not be given to County departments, agencies, business units, programs or projects, but rather to the Hillsborough County, Florida government in accordance with the County's branding and style guidelines.

All County sponsorships of third party activities shall be pursuant to a duly executed contract or purchase order. Each sponsorship contract or purchase order should clearly identify what the County is providing to the third party, and the recognition and/or other benefits to be received by the County in exchange for its sponsorship. If this information is not included in the purchase order or contract document, the third party's published sponsorship package must ALSO be provided as reference in order for payment to be authorized.

C. Accepting Sponsorships for County Activities

Prior to accepting any sponsorship, and prior to soliciting any party or organization for sponsorship of County activities, the Board and departments, agencies or business units (end-user business units) under the County Administrator must provide a written description of the project for which they hope to accept sponsorships, and must receive the necessary approvals. Staff must submit the request well in advance of the date they intend to begin sponsor interactions. This is to ensure that County staff and administration have time to consider the proposal, and to confirm that it is aligned with County policies and is in the best interest of the County. These actions are to be taken as described in the County's current [sponsorship procedures](#).

For activities with a proposed **total sponsorship value** that exceeds the established threshold described in the current sponsorship procedures, County end-user business units must coordinate with the Communications and Digital Media Services Department (CDMS) on all printed and electronic materials used to solicit, communicate with or recognize sponsors. This expressly includes the development of sponsorship packages, which are required for each sponsorship activity that exceeds the established total sponsorship value threshold. Such sponsorship packages are to be published in a manner designated by CDMS (such as by posting on the County website). This also expressly includes the design and production of materials that recognize approved sponsors (such as signs, banners, flyers and event programs). It may also include preparation of correspondence from the County to potential or approved sponsors.

Board approval is required for the County to accept any individual third party sponsorship that has a value exceeding the amount of the County Administrator's current spending approval limit.

Funds from sponsors shall be budgeted and accounted for in a manner determined by the Business & Support Services Department and the Clerk of the Circuit Court's Department of County Finance, as described in the County's current sponsorship procedures.

End-user business units are responsible for ensuring that the agreed-upon benefits are received by both parties, and for tracking and reporting sponsorships as described in the County's [sponsorship procedures](#).

D. Scope

1. This policy applies to the Board and to all County departments, agencies and business units under the County Administrator.
2. Sponsorships must only be given or received for activities that are open and/or available to the public.
3. This policy does NOT apply to:
 - a. Philanthropic contributions, gifts or donations given to the County. Such contributions are separate and distinct from sponsorship. These are money, products, goods or services that a third party gives to the County, *and for which the County does not provide any reciprocal promotional or marketing benefit*. The County may recognize such contributions as provided for in Board Policy [01.03.02.00](#), or by a simple verbal or written statement of appreciation, such as on an event program. More significant recognition may constitute sponsorship, and then this policy applies.
 - b. Situations where third parties are conducting activities on County property with approval from the County, by lease with the County, and/or by holding permits with the County. This includes (but is not limited to) athletic organizations', neighborhood associations' or other organizations' use of County facilities to conduct athletic and/or special events. For third parties' activities, County employees shall not be involved in the acceptance of sponsorships, or in sponsorship solicitation or coordination. The County may serve and be recognized as A PARTNER for third parties' activities on County property (in accordance with County standards and priorities), but use of a County facility does NOT make a person or organization a sponsor of the County's, and does NOT make the County a sponsor of that person, organization or activity.
 - c. Situations where the County is using paid or unpaid third parties as entertainers or providers of content or programming for County activities. Being a provider of entertainment, content or programming does not make a person or organization a sponsor of the County's UNLESS that service was requested through, and secured in accordance with, a County sponsorship package.
 - d. Activities executed by any 501(c)3 organization that provides support for County programs (such as a Friends organization). If the County is planning or hosting an activity, such a 501(c)3 organization may be considered a sponsor of that activity if that organization provides monetary and/or in-kind consideration as delineated in a specific County sponsorship package.
 - e. Situations in which CDMS provides for the recognition of third parties for the purpose of generating positive public relations and/or public awareness.

- f. Money, goods or services the County exchanges with third parties through grant programs and under grant agreements.
- g. Recognition for the County's contributions to nonprofit organizations as described in Board Policy [10.04.00.00](#).
- h. The naming of County-owned buildings, parks and property (refer to Board Policy [01.12.00.00](#)).
- i. Employee programming initiated and executed by the Human Resources Department.

C. SPONSORSHIP CONDITIONS

1. Large sponsorships or sponsorship situations that are out of the ordinary may warrant that a contract be executed between the sponsor and the County. The need for a sponsorship contract should be determined on a case-by-case basis between the end-user business unit, CDMS and County Administration, in consultation with the County Attorney's office.
2. The County does not relinquish to any sponsor or third party any aspect of the County's right to manage or control assets, facilities or properties that the County owns, or through which the County provides services. Hillsborough County reserves the right to full editorial control over the placement, content, appearance and wording of County sponsorship-related information, branding and messaging. The County will reject content that is inconsistent with the business and intended services of the County. Placement of sponsorship messages at a County activity, upon County property, or for use in conjunction with County services require specific authorization from the County.
3. The establishment of a sponsorship relationship or contract does not constitute an endorsement by Hillsborough County government of a third party's organization, mission, products or services.
4. All activities and properties for which Hillsborough County accepts sponsorships are to be used for the County's provision of services for the public, and therefore (except as required by law or expressly established by an affirmative action by the Board) no person or organization shall have a right to access or use any County activity or property for any purpose other than the County's intended and authorized purpose.
5. Monetary and in-kind contributions from sponsors become County funds or property upon receipt. The County has sole discretion and authority to use those contributions in any manner the County deems appropriate in order to produce the intended activity. County employees and officials shall follow the current sponsorship procedures for deposit and management of monetary contributions, and shall follow all County policies, procedures and guidelines that pertain to purchase and management of County property and equipment.
6. To fulfill the intent of each sponsor's contribution, the County will use each monetary or in-kind contribution for the specific County activity the sponsor intended to support, as indicated by the applicable sponsorship package. The County will not accumulate or use sponsors' contributions for different or future activities.

7. Monetary refunds or return of in-kind contributions will only be allowed if the County activity is cancelled due to a force majeure.

D. APPROPRIATE SPONSOR RELATIONSHIPS

1. Hillsborough County possesses sole discretion and final decision-making authority for determining the appropriateness of a sponsorship relationship and reserves the right to refuse to enter into any proposed sponsorship relationship or contract.
2. The County will not sponsor any activity or accept any sponsor that take positions which are inconsistent with local, state or federal law, or with County policies, positions or resolutions.
3. The County will not enter into any sponsorship relationship or contract that could possibly undermine public confidence in the County.
4. The County will not enter into any sponsorship relationship or contract that may interfere with the efficient delivery of County services or operations, including but not limited to current or potential conflicts of interest between a third party and any County business unit, employee, official or affiliate.
5. The following are generally not eligible to sponsor or be sponsored by the County:
 - a. Organizations that receive County funds, or that provide funding to the County
 - b. Faith-based organizations
 - c. Political-based organizations
 - d. Organizations whose business is substantially derived from the sale of alcohol, tobacco, firearms, or adult use, as defined in the Hillsborough County Land Development Code.

E. STANDARDS FOR SPONSORS' MATERIALS

1. The County's messages to recognize its sponsors may identify the sponsor, but the County will not make statements or take actions that promote, advocate, or endorse a sponsor's organization, products or services.
2. County staff must review sponsors' demonstrations, programming, in-kind contributions, graphic designs, promotional materials and/or speaking points in sufficient detail to ensure the content and final appearance or presentation is appropriate for use in conjunction with the associated sponsored County activity. This may be done in advance of an activity if practicable or necessary. It may be done immediately before the activity, provided that end-user business unit staff members can ensure that any inappropriate sponsor materials will be removed before they are viewable by the public.
3. Sponsors' materials for use in conjunction with County activities or property generally may not include:

- a. Price information or an indication of savings or monetary value. This generally excludes coupons, gift certificates or gift cards that are provided for the benefit of public participants of the activity, and that are approved by the County.
- b. References to competing products, services or organizations
- c. Tobacco, alcohol or illegal drug products, or information that that advertises such products
- d. Products or information that are sexual in nature, obscene, profane, vulgar or potentially harmful to minors
- e. Anything that condones or promotes illegal activity, violence or discrimination
- f. False, misleading or deceptive information

RESPONSIBILITIES

The County Administrator, or designee, shall be responsible for administering this policy. CDMS is responsible for updating the County's sponsorship procedures as needed in order to provide agility and optimal functionality for the County officials and employees who use the program in service to the public, and also to protect the best interests of the County. CDMS shall maintain records of sponsorships given and received by the County, and will report these activities to County Administration for placement on a meeting agenda for the Board to receive the report. Reporting shall be done at an interval described in the County's sponsorship procedures, and when desired by the Board or the County Administrator.

Approved By: **Board of County Commissioners**

Approval Date: **August 6, 2014**