

# **Webb County Single Point of Contact Procedures**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The County of Webb has become, within an incredibly short period of time, a governmental entity that develops, produces and obtains funding for a large number of grant funded projects. Although the original intent of obtaining ‘grants’ was to lessen the burden on Webb County Taxpayers in completing County Capital Improvement projects and this was an understandable and justifiable goal. However, in recent years with the ‘decentralization’ of grant writing within Webb County, it now seems like the grant writing focus and responsibility is not on this particular goal. The issue of ‘in the best interest to Webb County’ or the issue of ‘this project will not have an impact on the General Fund’ appears to have been lost.

With this realization, change is necessary. Curtailing or limiting grant development is the wrong response. Management of grant funded project’s development and submission is the alternative. The County can continue to develop services and capital improvement projects from law enforcement, infrastructure improvements to health services and a multitude of court sponsored support services as long as its overall focus “is in the best interest to Webb County”. The residents of the County of Webb are neither willing or in some cases, able to do without certain grant funded services that only Webb County can provide.

The purpose of the “Single Point of Contact” policy for grant development and submission is an effort to reinstate the original goal of focus and responsibility in lessening the burden on the Webb County taxpayer. These SPOC policy procedures will add another task to grant application development but it is necessary at this time. It is necessary because grant writing involves people, discipline and failure. Grant writing failures can be minimized by promising county commitments within a project application that burden the County at the end of a grant period and placing additional expenses on the General Fund, creating new positions that were previously grant funded and creating programs that are not self-sufficient and cannot stand on their own. Or by creating programs that are outside of the County’s jurisdiction as a political subdivision of the State of Texas. In some cases, implementing programs that are within the design and responsibility of non-profit organizations that receive the County’s 3<sup>rd</sup> party funding to carry out these functions.

These Single Point of Contact procedures will place accountability on the department developing the grant application, identify responsibility before the Commissioner’s Court gives its approval to develop and decrease the focus of doing one’s own thing. These procedures will outline regimentation and function-focused grant funded activities that are in the best interest to Webb County.

## **SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT PROCEDURES**

- The submission of a “Letter of Intent to Apply” to the County Judge to request authorization to develop/submit a State, Federal or Foundation grant application (whether competitive or Formula grant) for funding consideration where Webb County is the “applicant” and if funded, will be contractually obligated by a grant contract will be required. The “Letter of Intent to Apply” is a pre-requisite for consideration to be placed on the Webb County Commissioner’s Court Agenda.
- Webb County Departments must include responses to the following questions when submitting their “Letter of Intent to Apply” (See Attachment 1, Letter of Intent to Apply) for review by the County Judge and/or designated representative, i.e., the Pre-Agenda Committee and/or the Economic Development Department for consideration of placement on the Commissioner’s Court agenda:
  - 1) Project description; include project activities that will be funded by grant funds.
  - 2) What County needs, services or problems will addressed by this project?
  - 3) What is the grant amount that will be proposed in the grant application?
  - 4) What is the grant matching amount of local funds or in-kind that will be proposed?
  - 5) What is the precise time period that these grant funds will be used?
  - 6) Will this proposed project add cost, services or any financial responsibility to the County’s General Fund after the project ends?
  - 7) Will this project add employees to the county payroll if and when the grant is terminated?
  - 8) What are the operating and maintenance costs of the grant funded project activities that will be funded by the county?
  - 9) How many citizens will be served and in what way?
  - 10) Is there any assurance that the grant will be continued/refunded by the funding agency?
  - 11) What wording or commitments will be included in the grant application for ‘continuity of activities’ or ‘funding of activities’ after the grant has ended?
- In the event of a circumstance in which an application deadline (or other program-related deadline) will not allow for Commissioner’s Court approval beforehand, ratifications after-the-fact will be admissible but will still require that all Single Point of Contact procedures be followed.
- Based on responses to the above questions, the Pre-Agenda Committee and/or the Economic Development Department will determine if the proposed project meets the prerequisites of the Single Point of Contact Procedures in order for it to be placed on the Webb County Commissioner’s Court agenda for authorization to develop and submit the grant application.

- In the case that more than one Webb County Department submits a “Letter of Intent to Apply” to the County Judge for authorization to develop an application to the same funding source, different funding source but similar existing program or contains a degree of duplication of existing services, the Pre-Agenda Committee and/or the Economic Development Department will further consider the following options:
  - i. Which County Department submitted the “Letter of Intent to Apply” first;
  - ii. Continuation grant applications may be favored over newly proposed applications depending on success of current project;
  - iii. The percentage level of grant/match (cash or in-kind);
  - iv. All applications that include a ‘loan’ element and are not 100% grant funded will be considered separately;
  - v. The ‘Duplication of Services’ factor;
  - vi. And the responses to the aforementioned questions.
  
- In all cases, all agenda items requesting authorization to develop and submit a project application will need to include the following wording as part of the agenda item: “This request is in accordance to the County’s Single Point of Contact procedures.”
  
- If the project application is funded, all future requests for grant contract time extensions, budget amendments, budget modifications, contract performance statement amendments, contract performance statement modifications or grant budget line item transfers will require County Commissioner’s Court approval. A copy of request and subsequent funding agency approval will need to be provided to the Economic Development Department.
  
- After a project is funded and the responsible department commences to implement the grant funded project, the County Judge having been designated by the County Commissioner’s Court to represent the County in all matters pertaining to this project, will have the prerogative to request full disclosure of on-going activities and/or request a detailed status/disclosure report of project activities, budgetary details and project timeline status.
  
- A copy of all funded project’s close-out package will need to be provided to the Economic Development Department. Failure to provide a copy of close out package will affect your future grant application requests.