

CITY OF SULTAN  
AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

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Date: April 26, 2009

Agenda Item #: D-1  
SUBJECT:

**City of Sultan Volunteer Program  
CITY-WIDE PRIDE**

CONTACT PERSON: Donna Murphy Grants and Economic Development Coordinator

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ISSUE:  
Development of Volunteer Program Policies.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Direction from Council moving forward with the Volunteer Program Policy.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

On October 4, 2007 the City Council Subcommittee reviewed sample volunteer programs from other cities with staff and determined that the City of Woodinville's Program matched Sultan's volunteer needs the best. The Council Subcommittee recommended using the City of Woodinville's contract and documents as a model for Sultan and gave staff direction regarding edits and additions to the documents.

The City Council met on October 17, 2007 to discuss the proposed Volunteer Program and using the City of Woodinville's Program as a model.

In January 2008 Mayor Eslick determined the City of Woodinville's Volunteer Policies and Procedures were too comprehensive for the City of Sultan and requested it be scaled down. Consequently, the City of Sultan continued requiring volunteers to sign a liability release while volunteering, but no Policies or Procedures were developed.

In February 2009 the City of Sultan purchased Graffiti Abatement equipment for volunteers to use and it became apparent that Policies and Procedures must be developed in order for the volunteers to do their jobs efficiently and to protect the City properly.

Policy Issues for Discussion: What should the City do during an emergency? Example: Calling the High School and asking students to sandbag during the flood. What are the liability issues?

- PRO: Calling the community together during an emergency and asking for help has proven effective in Sultan for decades and it brings the people closer.
- CON: There could be liability issues, especially with individuals under 18. Asking them to fill, lift and place sand bags during a flood event, working in the rain without protective clothing and gear could result in disgruntled parents.
- Staff Recommendation: The Volunteer Policies require volunteers to complete and sign an application. Staff recommends the City make this requirement during emergency situations.

- At what age would the Council consider a youth could work independently without parental supervision?
  - Some policies recommend age 16 while others accept 14 year old volunteers to work independently without parental or adult supervision.
- What should the policy be for working with court ordered workers?
  - Staff recommends working through the Police Department before accepting court ordered workers/volunteers.
  - Staff Recommendation: City staff recommend setting the minimum age at 16. Recent experience with younger volunteers (not associated with family events) has been problematic.
- Does the City Council want employees to volunteer?
  - It has been common practice for City Staff to volunteer at City sponsored projects.
  - Staff Recommendation: Continue encouraging staff and the Mayor and Council to volunteer at City sponsored projects, with the understanding staff cannot volunteer for their own job under Federal Law.

#### FISCAL IMPACT:

The costs of adopting a Volunteer Program Policy are managing the program and volunteers, purchasing protective gear and clothing, acknowledgement Ceremonies, i.e. Community Awards Night and the Volunteer Recognition Dinner. With approximately 150 person hours given to the City every month through the existing Volunteer Program, it is staff's opinion that adopting a Volunteer Program Policy is worth the effort. The Policy gives staff guidance in areas when an important decision must be made in the spur of the moment.

#### ALTERNATIVES:

1. Discuss the proposed Volunteer Program Policies and provide direction to staff.
2. Direct staff to return with adopting a resolution using the attached Volunteer Program Policies.
3. Discuss the proposed Volunteer Program Policies and direct staff to areas of concern.

#### ATTACHMENTS:

1. DRAFT Volunteer Policy
2. Authorization to Release Driving Records Information
3. Volunteer Application

**City of Sultan**  
**VOLUNTEER POLICY**

**POLICY**

The City of Sultan recognizes and supports the use of volunteers to assist the City of Sultan government in providing services and programs. The City of Sultan Volunteer Program Policies will establish standards of volunteer service for a formal volunteer program. This policy contains responsibilities of both the City and volunteers. Written policies and procedures will assure volunteers are suitably oriented and trained and job duties are developed, supervision is appropriate to assigned duties and discussion with volunteers regarding safety, liability to the City and accident and property damage coverage is conducted. Advisory boards and commissions are not covered by this policy.

**SCOPE**

To maximize the effectiveness of volunteers, yet limit risk exposure to both volunteers and the City, this policy will apply to all City departments and volunteers.

**PROCEDURES**

The City may develop and maintain written procedures to supplement this policy which will address specific methods to recruit, interview, select, orient, train, supervise and recognize volunteers. The Mayor will designate an employee to be responsible for the Volunteer Program, who will serve as the contact person.

**Selection Process**

**Recruitment**

Departments shall use recruiting procedures appropriate to the specific program area. Procedures shall be consistently followed. To assist in this initial process, potential volunteers may be required to complete an application.

Initial information to collect could be: name, address, telephone number, driver's license (if driving required), work or volunteer experience, education or training, interests, availability, preferred assignments, references, etc., as proper for the program area.

**Selection**

A selection process shall be established where potential volunteers are interviewed and references verified if necessary. The prospective volunteer must complete and sign a Volunteer Application and Release Form in order to proceed with the recruitment.

Volunteers working with minors, the elderly and/or disabled persons will require a background check in accordance with RCW 43.43.830.

If the volunteer position requires driving, a copy of the volunteer's drivers license shall be placed on file, a copy of the volunteer's personal vehicle insurance, and an Abstract of Driving Record obtained from the Department of Licensing at the volunteer's expense. Volunteers **MUST** sign applications forms.

If the selection process discloses information that indicates the tentative volunteer would not fulfill department expectations, the City is under no obligation to assign or retain that volunteer.

**Recruitment of Minors**

Generally speaking, the City of Sultan will not accept as an *individual* volunteer, anyone less than 16 years of age, but encourages participation of all ages in event-related and other group appropriate projects.

The City encourages individual minors (16-18) participation as volunteers so that these volunteers can accomplish their community service hours requirements for school. Individual minor volunteers are assigned to an appropriate supervisor who may be staff or an adult volunteer.

Groups and organizations (including families) whose members consist of children under age 16 are to volunteer with appropriate projects, provided their independent sponsoring group or organization adequately provides all of the adult supervision necessary for all minors to perform the activity safely. The City shall not be responsible for providing adequate adult supervision for groups including minor volunteers.

Each volunteer who has not reached the age of 18 must have the written consent of a parent or legal guardian prior to volunteering.

### **Court and Diversion Board Ordered Community Service**

The City will facilitate, whenever possible, volunteer opportunities for persons who are directed by legal authority to complete community service hours. Most referrals for court-ordered community service for minors come through the Denny Youth Center.

The Sultan Chief of Police or designee will review court orders for volunteer community service. The Sultan Chief of Police will determine if volunteer service in Sultan is appropriate. The Sultan Chief of Police will work with the volunteer coordinator to place the volunteer.

There must be adequate City resources to provide appropriate supervision of volunteers convicted of a crime. Supervisor(s) of such a volunteer shall be informed of the volunteer's legal requirement, but shall not be provided the details of the conviction. Court-ordered community service volunteers must read and sign the Volunteer Application Form before commencing volunteer service.

### **City Employees as Volunteers**

The City accepts and encourages the services of its staff as volunteers. This service is accepted, provided the volunteer service is:

1. Provided totally without an coercive nature
2. Involves tasks which are outside the scope of normal staff duties
3. Time is provided outside of usual working hours

Additionally, the City supports its employees in volunteering with other community organizations, outside work hours.

### **Orientation**

In order for both the City and volunteers to have a complete understanding of the conditions of volunteering, the following topics should be discussed during new volunteer orientation:

1. **Policy and Procedure** Policy and procedure regulating volunteer duties should be discussed. Specific emphasis should be given to working safely, conditions of driving while as a volunteer and risk exposure to the City. This policy should be furnished to and discussed with volunteers.
2. **Training** Volunteers will receive an overview of their volunteer assignment and, as appropriate, a written list of duties and expectations, hours of service, supervision, necessary forms, approved financial expenditures and reimbursement procedures, accident reporting procedures, confidentiality, call in, dress code, performance reviews, medical coverage, etc. Volunteers shall be directed to serve within their assigned duty assignment.
3. **Supervision** Volunteers will be supervised as to assignments, work performance, activity, use of equipment, etc. Performance problems will be corrected or the volunteer service terminated.

### **Risks of Injury to Volunteers**

It is important volunteers know what insurance coverage the City will or will not provide.

### **Personal Injury**

Volunteers are not “subject workers” as defined by the State Workers’ Compensation Act; therefore, workers’ compensation coverage will not be provided. Time loss benefits are not available.

### **Damage to Volunteer Property**

If a volunteer’s personal property is damaged while the volunteer is serving in authorized volunteer status, the City will not be responsible to reimburse the volunteer for the damage.

### **Driving**

All operators of a motor vehicle, while on City business, must be qualified to drive and drive safely. Operators must have sufficient knowledge about vehicle handling, demonstrated by a safe driving record, so as to protect employees, volunteers, the City, clients and the public from an unsafe driver. This provision applies to both City-owned and volunteer-owned vehicles.

Volunteers operating City equipment will receive instruction from the supervisor or department regarding City equipment before being authorized to operate the equipment. This will include a review of safety requirements discussion of responsibility of the operator and supervisor.

Volunteers operating their private vehicles must be insured as required by Washington State Law. Volunteer’s auto insurance will be considered primary. Liability insurance coverage must be maintained uninterrupted.