

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE October 5, 2017

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **October 11, 2017 Agenda Item No. 16 – Open Records Request**

As requested by the Government Performance and Financial Management Committee at its September 5, 2017 meeting, we have placed on the October 11, 2017 City Council Voting Agenda, item number 16 for individual consideration, a resolution to transfer oversight and responsibility for the City's Open Records Request (ORR) function from the City Manager to the City Secretary with final design and implementation of a newly centralized ORR Center to be coordinated with the appointment of the new City Secretary. For your review prior to the October 11, 2017 meeting, we are providing the following items for your review:

- Attachment #1 - agenda information sheet and resolution that provides the background information specific to the item
- Attachment #2 - presentation from the Government Performance and Financial Management Committee on September 5, 2017

Should you have questions or concerns, please contact Chief of Staff Kimberly Bizer Tolbert.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T.C. Broadnax'.

T.C. Broadnax
City Manager

c: Larry Casto, City Attorney
Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary (Interim)
Daniel F. Solis, Administrative Judge
Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager
Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
Jo M. (Jody) Puckett, Assistant City Manager (Interim)

Jon Fortune, Assistant City Manager
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
Nadia Chandler Hardy, Chief of Community Services
Raquel Favela, Chief of Economic Development & Neighborhood Services
Theresa O'Donnell, Chief of Resilience
Directors and Assistant Directors

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Government Performance and Financial Management
AGENDA DATE: October 11, 2017
COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): All
DEPARTMENT: Public Affairs and Outreach
CMO: Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, 670-3302
MAPSCO: N/A

SUBJECT

A resolution to transfer oversight responsibility for the City's Open Records Request (ORR) function from the City Manager's Office to the City Secretary's Office with final design and implementation of a newly centralized ORR Center to be coordinated with the appointment of the new City Secretary - Financing: No cost consideration to the City

BACKGROUND

The City's Open Records Request (ORR) function is currently housed within the Public Information Office (PIO), a management services division reporting directly to the City Manager's Office (CMO). Under the PIO, requests for public information (ORRs), with the exception of ORRs for Dallas Police Department (DPD) information, are managed, monitored and tracked in order to ensure that the City complies with the requirements of the Texas Public Information Act (TPIA).

Two full-time PIO staff are currently assigned to the ORR function, which is coordinating the gathering of requested information with City departments, the City Attorney's Office, City Secretary's Office and Communication and Information Services (CIS), in addition to managing the ORR web portal, GovQA.

PIO serves to enhance transparency and educate the community about City news, events, and various services across the entire organization. As part of the FY 2017-18 budget, PIO's name was changed to Public Affairs and Outreach to further expand their focus on existing services such as audio/visual production and social media relations to new areas such as community outreach and engagement, digital communications, internal communications programs, and strategic and crisis communications.

With the intended new direction for PIO, the City Manager formed a working group in May 2017 to determine opportunities for improvement and develop alignment recommendations specific to the ORR process. The working group, which was comprised of representatives from internal stakeholders such as the City Attorney's Office, City Secretary's Office, Dallas Police Department, and Communication and Information

October 11, 2017

WHEREAS, the city remains committed to enhancing transparency and improving its service to the citizens of Dallas; and

WHEREAS, the city wishes to move its Open Records Request function to the City Secretary's Office to provide a central point of contact for the city and to increase efficiencies for the process, with the appointment of the new City Secretary and to develop standard operating procedures and improve training for city employees and city officials;

WHEREAS, on September 20, 2017, the city council passed Ordinance No. 30651, the operating and capital budget appropriations ordinance, for fiscal year 2017-18;

WHEREAS, the city wishes to transfer two FTE positions and appropriations from Public Affairs and Outreach to the City Secretary's Office, with the final design and implementation of the new ORR Center to be coordinated with the appointment of the new City Secretary.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE DALLAS CITY COUNCIL:

Section 1. That oversight responsibility for the City's Open Records Request function shall be transferred from the City Manager's Office to the City Secretary's Office, with final design and implementation of a newly centralized Open Records Request Center to be coordinated with the appointment of the new City Secretary.

Section 2. That the city manager is hereby authorized to decrease the department of management services appropriations in an amount not to exceed \$265,366 from \$26,611,693 to \$26,346,327 in Fund 0001, Dept. MGT, Unit 1128, various object codes.

Section 3. That the city manager is hereby authorized to increase the city secretary's office department appropriations in an amount not to exceed \$265,366 from \$2,223,547 to \$2,488,913 in Fund 0001, Dept. SEC, Unit 1364, various object codes.

Section 4. That the city manager is hereby authorized to transfer positions from the department of management services, Fund 001, Dept. MGT, Unit 1128 to the city secretary's office, Fund 0001, Dept. SEC, Unit 1364.

Section 5. That this resolution shall take effect in coordination with the appointment of the new City Secretary, in accordance with the provisions of the Dallas City Charter, and it is accordingly so resolved.

Services, identified three challenges: (1) an unstructured process across the organization, (2) staffing capacity to handle requests and (3) an underutilized processing system.

Following the identification of challenges and opportunities, the working group analyzed the current ORR alignment against best-practices of top five council-manager cities and large Texas cities and found that the function primarily resides in the City Secretary or Clerk's Office in alignment with their role as official record holders. The City of San Antonio's ORR functions currently reside within the City Manager's Office purview but are also undergoing an analysis to restructure and realign ORR functions with the City Secretary's Office (CSO).

The working group determined that a centralized ORR Center in the CSO would enable the City to respond to ORRs in the most efficient and transparent manner possible. At this time, the two full-time PIO staff currently assigned to the ORR function will be transferred to the CSO. Additional staff from other departments may be co-located within the new ORR Center pending final design and implementation by the newly-appointed City Secretary.

Additionally, the working group recommended the development of a standard operating procedures manual and training materials, annual training facilitated by the Attorney General's Office for city employees and public officials, additional in-house training for the City's Departmental Open Records Coordinators, more consistent and effective use of GovQA, launching a series of public service announcements to inform the public on how to submit an ORR, and finally an evaluation of the City's website to determine the types of information that can be posted and made available online.

In addition to the alignment of functions under the CSO, the transfer of the ORR process would create a central point of contact for the community who visit City Hall online and in person and reduce the need to be sent to various offices. Currently, an individual's first stop at City Hall when seeking records is the CSO but is then redirected to the PIO on another floor to submit a request. The transfer would further the City's commitment to putting service first.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (COUNCIL, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS)

This item was briefed at the Government Performance and Finance Committee meeting on September 5, 2017.

FISCAL INFORMATION

No cost consideration to the City.

Public Information and Open Records Requests Overview

**Government Performance
and Financial Management
Committee**

September 5, 2017

**Kimberly Bizer Tolbert
Chief of Staff**



City of Dallas

Overview

- Background
 - Current Public Information Office
 - New Public Affairs and Outreach
- Open Records Request Working Group
 - Challenges Identified
 - Opportunities for Improvement
- Best Practices
 - Public Information Offices
 - Open Records Requests
- Recommendations
- Next Steps

Background: Public Information Office

Primary Focus

Social media
& media
relations

Website
management

Audio/Visual
Production

Open
Records
Requests

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New Public Affairs and Outreach

Community outreach & civic engagement

Digital communications strategy

Social media & media relations

Web content, creative and graphic design

Audio/Visual Production

Open Records Requests

New Focus Areas

Existing Focus Areas

For Discussion

Internal communications program

Strategic and crisis communications

Speaker's Bureau

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Background: Open Records Requests

- Housed within current Public Information Office (PIO)
- Two dedicated FTEs
- Oversight for all ORRs with exception of DPD
- Each department or managing services division has an Open Records Coordinator

Ways to Submit an ORR



Email



Postal Mail



Online Form



In Person

ORR Historical Data

- Top 5 Departments with ORRs
 - Dallas Fire Rescue
 - Code Compliance
 - Sustainable Development and Construction
 - Trinity Watershed Management
 - Office of Environmental Quality

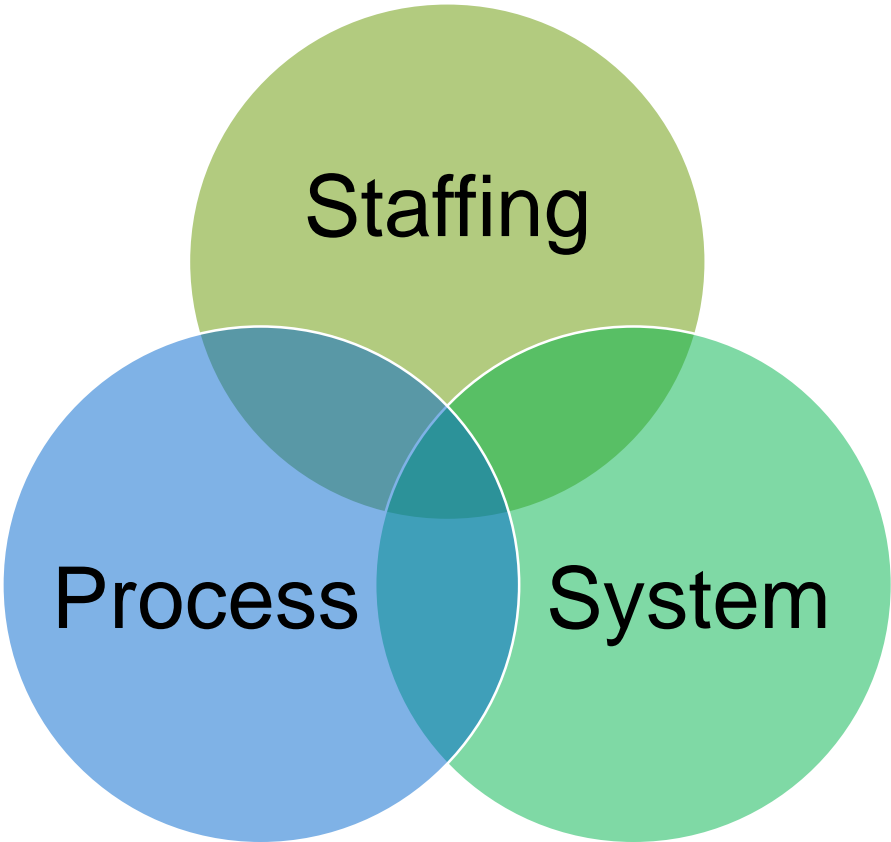
Time Period	Requests (est.)
January 1, 2017 – August 2017	11,964
January 2016 – December 2016	15,700

ORR Working Group

- Formed in May 2017 comprised of representatives from:
 - City Attorney's Office
 - City Secretary's Office
 - Public Information Office (ORR Staff)
 - Communications and Information Services
 - Courts and Detention Services
 - Mayor and City Council Office
 - Dallas Police Department
- Analyze current staffing, system, process, and opportunities for improvement
- Develop alignment recommendation

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Challenges Identified:

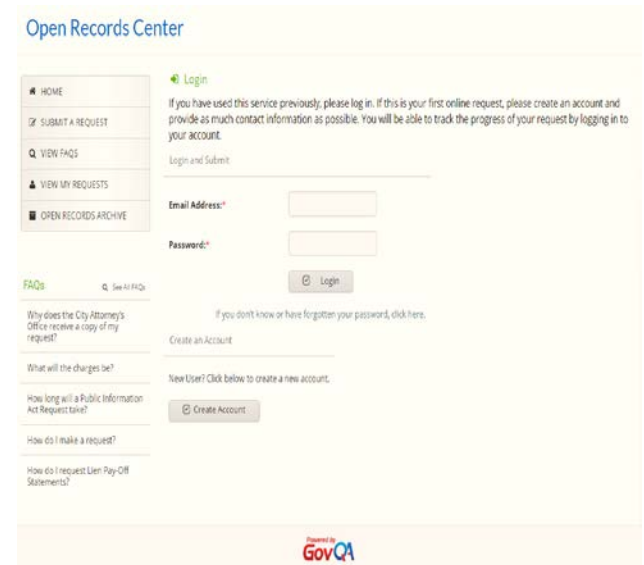


Challenges: Staffing

- Entry level staff serve as ORR Coordinator
- Time commitment is not reflected in Performance Management and Position Descriptions
- High turn-over
- Receipt and dissemination of ORR's to departments is limited to two dedicated staff housed in PIO

Challenges: System

- Lack of an electronic document management system
- GovQA Web System
 - Implemented in October 2016
 - Not utilized by all departments
 - Inactive features
 - Additional cost for various features
 - Lack of training



Challenges: Process

- City lacks a Standard Operating Procedure to process ORR's
- Documents redacted by hand
- Public is unaware of various methods to request records/documents
- Siloed interdepartmental coordination
- Lack of training for ORR process and Public Information Act
- Varying response times

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Opportunities for Improvement

- Develop and implement Administrative Directive and standard operating procedures manual
- Develop training materials and host mandatory GovQA training and annual refresher training
- Host Attorney General's Office to provide training specific to the Public Information Act (provide annually)
- Launch PSA materials to inform public on ORR process (In the Know)
- Conduct website audit

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ORR Alignment Best Practices

City	Oversight Department	Reports To
Phoenix, AZ	Communications Office	City Manager
San Antonio, TX	Government and Public Affairs	City Manager
Dallas, TX	Public Information Office	City Manager
San Jose, CA	City Clerk's Office	Mayor and City Council
Austin, TX	City Attorney's Office	City Manager
Charlotte, NC	Communications Office	City Manager
Fort Worth, TX	City Secretary's Office	Mayor and City Council
Houston, TX	City Secretary's Office	Mayor

Public Information Office

Best Practices (Council-Manager Form of Government)

City	Department Name	Reports To
Phoenix, AZ	Communications Office	City Manager
San Antonio, TX	Government and Public Affairs**	City Manager
Dallas, TX	Public Information Office	City Manager
San Jose, CA	Communication and Public Outreach	City Manager
Austin, TX	Communications and Public Information Office	City Manager
Charlotte, NC	Communications Office	City Manager

*** Includes Intergovernmental and Military Affairs*

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Recommendations

- Create a centralized ORR Center
 - Serve as one-stop shop for internal and external users
 - Efficient coordination between CMO & CAO
 - Reduce barriers for communication
- Co-locate CIS and ORR staff in centralized ORR Center
 - CIS Staff: (7)
 - 5 Senior Security Analysts
 - 1 Senior IT Engineers
 - 1 Senior IT Manager
 - ORR Staff (2)
 - 1 Manager
 - 1 Coordinator
 - City Attorney's Office
 - 1 Paralegal

Recommendations Cont'd

- Transfer oversight of ORR Center to City Secretary's Office
 - Better align with their role as official record keeper for the City
 - Greater coordination with CMO and CAO
 - May require an ordinance change
- Maintain new Public Affairs and Outreach as Management Services division reporting to the City Manager

Next Steps

- Receive feedback from Government Performance and Financial Management Committee
- Convene smaller working group to focus on transition plan in coordination with timeline for hiring of city secretary

Public Information and Open Records Requests Overview

Government Performance
and Financial Management

September 5, 2017

Kimberly Bizer Tolbert
Chief of Staff



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