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Board of County Commissioners  
Hillsborough County  
Tampa, Florida 33601

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**Board Policy: 01.19.01.02**

Subject: Sponsorship

Date: February 15, 2017

Supersedes: Replaces 01.19.01.01

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**Purpose:**

This policy provides framework for County staff members to solicit and accept sponsorships from third parties, in the form of in-kind and/or monetary consideration, to support County government activities that serve a public purpose. This policy also provides framework for the County to serve as a monetary or in-kind sponsor of third-party activities that do not conflict with the public good. 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.

**Definitions:**

**Sponsorship:**

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. Programs that are a part of a County Department's annual work plan are not considered sponsorships for the purposes of this policy.

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

**In-Kind:** Sponsorship provided in the form of products, goods and/or services that do not include a monetary exchange or transaction.

**Monetary:** Sponsorship provided in the form of cash.

**Total Sponsorship Value:** The sum of all monetary and/or in-kind contributions.

**Policy:**

**A. Overview**

The Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners (Board) wants to foster an environment in which organizations receive marketing 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 the contributions received from approved sponsors. Additionally, the Board authorizes County employees to provide sponsorship to third-party activities that do not conflict with the public good. Additionally, sponsorships involving or including the purchase of goods and/or services shall be governed by the County's Procurement Policy and 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 \$5,000) or the County Administrator (if valued at \$5,000 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 \$5,000 or less should make arrangements through the County Administrator or his/her designee. Requests for sponsorships of more than \$5,000 (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. In all cases, a funding source is to be identified before proceeding with the request.

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.

For sponsorship requests initiated by employees, departments, agencies or business units under the County Administrator, the requestor must have approval from the respective Department Director, Procurement Director and Chief Administrator prior to seeking County Administrator and/or Board approval in order to ensure there is no inherent and/or perceived conflict of interest.

Upon approval, it is the responsibility of the requesting department to coordinate any marketing materials or brand promotion provided by the sponsorship with the Communications & Digital Media Department.

**C. Accepting Sponsorships for County Activities**

Prior to accepting or soliciting any sponsorship of County activities, employees, departments, agencies or business units under the County Administrator must have documented approval from the respective Department Director, Procurement Director and Chief Administrator in order to ensure there is no inherent and/or perceived conflict of interest.

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 Management & Budget Department and the Clerk of the Circuit Court's Department of County Finance.

End-users are responsible for ensuring that the agreed-upon benefits are received by both parties. Additionally, end-users are responsible for tracking and reporting sponsorships upon request or as needed.

#### **D. Scope**

1. This policy applies to the Board and to all County departments, agencies and business units under the County Administrator.
2. 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.
  - 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. The County may serve and be recognized as A PARTNER for third parties' activities on County property, 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 and secured through sponsorship as described in this policy.
  - 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.
  - e. Situations in which the Communications & Digital Media Department 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 programs and/or under grant agreements as authorized by the Board.
  - 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.

#### **E. Sponsorship Conditions:**

1. 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.
2. 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.

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 and/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.
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. The County will not accumulate or use sponsors' contributions for different or future activities. Any exceptions to this condition must be approved by the Management & Budget Department.

#### **F. Sponsor Relationships:**

1. The 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.
5. The following are generally not eligible to sponsor or be sponsored by the County:
  - a. Political-based organizations
  - b. 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.

#### **G. Ethical Considerations**

1. Sponsorships shall not, in any manner, influence, or be perceived to influence, the day-to-day business of the County, nor invoke any future or additional consideration other than as specifically stated in the resulting sponsorship contract.
2. Sponsorships shall not confer any personal benefit, directly or indirectly, to any particular County employee or official; or cause or allow a County employee or official to receive any product, service, or asset for personal gain or use.
3. Sponsorships shall not interfere with existing contractual obligations.
4. Sponsorships shall not result in, or be perceived to result in, any competitive advantage, benefit or preferential treatment for the sponsor outside of the resulting sponsorship contract.

5. Sponsorships by parties that are disqualified or debarred from doing business with the County shall not be allowed and will be declined.
6. Sponsorships by parties that are in litigation with the County shall not be allowed and will be declined.
7. Sponsorships that otherwise constitute a conflict of interest or create the appearance of, or potential for, the same shall not be allowed and will be declined.

#### **H. 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. Communications & Digital Media must approve any marketing materials or brand promotion provided by the sponsorship.
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.
  - b. The advertisement of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drug products.
  - c. Products or information that are obscene, profane, vulgar or potentially harmful to minors.
  - d. Anything that condones or promotes illegal activity, violence or discrimination.
  - e. False, misleading or deceptive information.

#### **Responsibilities:**

The County Administrator, or designee, shall be responsible for administering this policy as described. End-user departments participating in sponsorship activities shall maintain all necessary tracking and approvals of sponsorships both provided and/or received, and will report these activities to County Administration for placement on a meeting agenda for the Board to receive the report as requested. Reporting shall be done when desired by the Board or the County Administrator.

Approved By:  
Approval Date: