

GOVERNMENT BROADCASTING OPERATIONAL POLICY

POLICY NO. 30-01

Purpose:

To provide standard guidelines of operation for Hernando County Government Broadcasting (HCGB) in order to ensure uniformity and consistency and to facilitate understanding of the HCGB mission and functions.

Introduction:

Hernando County Government Broadcasting (HCGB - Channel 19 and Channel 20) are 24-hour government access television channels programmed and operated by Hernando County, Florida. HCGB Channel 19 consists of programming primarily produced by Hernando County government agencies and their employees. HCGB Channel 19 was initially established in 1998 in accordance with provisions of the cable television franchise agreement with Time Warner Communications. Channel 20 was established in November 2002, for broadcast of The Florida Channel which is the State of Florida government access channel and the Community Bulletin Board. HCGB Channel 19 and 20 are not public access channels. Access to air time is restricted to government-related functions and operations and community programming in accordance with this policy. This policy applies to both Channels 19 and 20.

Organizational Structure:

Hernando County Government Broadcasting (HCGB) is a part of the Community Relations Department within the County Administrator's Office under the Board of County Commissioners. The division is supervised by the Community Relations Coordinator and consists of three staff positions (1 Video Production Manager and 2 Video Assistants). The HCGB staff works closely with other county departments to produce informational programs, training videos and other video applications for internal and external use.

Mission:

The mission of HCGB is to enhance communication between County Government and County citizens by providing timely and informative video programming regarding local government activities and services via the local dedicated governmental cable channel.

Programming and Production:

The programming for HCGB is intended to:

- 1) Identify, explain, and encourage the use of government services and provide more responsible and informed interaction between government and citizens;
- 2) Provide Hernando County residents access to the live gavel-to-gavel proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners' meetings and to other forums where public policy is discussed, debated and decided -- all without editing, commentary or analysis.
- 3) Provide elected and appointed officials and others who would influence public policy a direct conduit to the audience without filtering or otherwise distorting their points of view;
- 4) Employ production values that accurately convey the business of government rather than distract from it;
- 5) Conduct all other aspects of its operations consistent with these principles.

The programming will be accomplished in a manner which encourages trust, a sense of accountability and appreciation of the value of county government services. Decisions regarding the daily programming schedule will be made by the Video Production Manager in accordance with these operating policies. Programming shall include only non-editorial information concerning the operations and deliberations of local government and other programming as covered under this policy.

Indirect Government Programming:

1. In order to maximize cost-effective and informative programming, HCGB may utilize videos from or provide production services to eligible organizations outside Hernando County government. Eligible organizations are defined as:
 - A) Local, state and federal government bodies, agencies, and representatives;
 - B) Local groups working with local government agencies on official government activities;
 - C) Private, non-profit organizations providing a public service to Hernando County residents that offsets or avoids direct costs to Hernando County;
 - D) Private, non-profit civic and/or community organizations that do not provide a public service to the general community but whose activities benefit only its members or a limited number of Hernando County residents.
- 2) Requests for services from eligible organizations will be evaluated by HCGB staff in accordance with the following criteria:
 - < availability of resources (cost and staffing)
 - < availability of air time and scheduling
 - < appropriateness to the HCGB mission
 - < citizen/community interest
 - < compliance with programming restrictions
 - < conformance to technical and production quality standards, if program request is to air a videotape
 - < public service/safety needs
- 3) All requests for production services must be submitted in writing by the eligible organization to HCGB within a reasonable length of time prior to the event. HCGB will make a recommendation to the County Administrator, who will then make the final determination for providing HCGB services, based upon the provisions of this policy.
- 4) Upon the County Administrator's approval of providing video services, if the project requires staff overtime or other costs and if the requesting organization meets the definition of 1D above, HCGB shall notify the requesting organization of the estimated cost of the services. HCGB will invoice the organization for one-half the amount of the estimated cost of the service with payment to be made prior to the program. A final invoice will be sent by HCGB for the balance due, based upon the actual time spent by HCGB to provide the services.

- 5) Any production services provided to an outside eligible organization under the terms of this policy shall be the sole responsibility of the Video Production Manager and/or HCGB staff. Under no circumstances will HCGB facilities and/or equipment be made available to outside organizations except as set forth in this policy. The videotape product shall remain the property of HCGB subject to all provisions of public records laws (F.S. Chapter 119).

Prohibited Programming:

1. Advertising of a commercial product or service nature, except as otherwise provided under "Underwriting";
2. Information concerning any lottery, gift enterprise, or similar promotion offering prizes based in whole or part upon lot or chance;
3. Direct solicitation of funds;
4. Material that would violate any federal, state, county or city statute or law
5. Material which has the specific purpose of promoting religious beliefs or religious philosophies;
6. Obscene, indecent or defamatory materials;
7. Appearances or underwriting by or on behalf of candidates for public office, except for candidate forums as set forth in Section VII, Candidates for Elected Offices.
8. Endorsements of proposed issues or ballot items (sample ballots and ballot listings may be permitted), the only exception being if the Board of County Commissioners votes as a body to take a position on an issue and wishes to inform the community on that position.

Candidates for Elected Offices:

- 1) HCGB will produce and/or broadcast no more than two (2) candidate forums for each primary and general election. Video coverage of candidate forums shall be limited to those which are sponsored by recognized, county-wide, private, non-profit, non-partisan organizations. Requests for coverage of candidate forums shall be submitted to the County Administrator for presentation to the Board for approval no less than three months prior to the date of the event.
- 2) The requesting organization shall be responsible for organization, format and content of the forums with input provided by HCGB as needed. HCGB shall be solely responsible for technical production/coverage of the forums (see Section V (5), page 3).

- 3) The requesting organization shall provide a written copy of the forum format to HCGB at least 30 days prior to the forum.
- 4) Candidates who have qualified or pre-qualified for election to any elective office shall not be permitted to make individual statements on HCGB_ regarding their candidacy, except as recognized at candidate forums.
- 5) Current elected officials and/or County employees who have qualified_or pre-qualified for election/re-election to any elective office will be shown only in the performance of their official duties; i.e., official business at meetings or incidental appearances in other programming pertaining to their official duties.

Program Submission:

All programs for HCGB will be viewed by the HCGB staff in their entirety before airing to ensure technical and content compliance. Videotapes which are submitted to HCGB become the property of HCGB. HCGB reserves the right to edit programs submitted for broadcast and/or to display disclaimers. Program submissions must include all copyrights. Copyrighted music and video will not be used in HCGB programs without written permission. The program submission process is as follows:

- 1) Program is submitted to HCGB for review.
- 2) Program is reviewed and any changes needed are made.
- 3) If the program is accepted as submitted, it can then be scheduled for air time.
4. Requests from HCGB for review, revision, or clarification of program content will be honored by the requestor in order for the program to be aired.
- 5) The review process should be completed within 10 working days.

Underwriting:

Hernando County recognizes the value of the local government channel in keeping residents informed on issues which affect them as well as issues of a general local community interest. Therefore, in order to maximize the benefit and the range of programming to be made available within the parameters of this policy, the Board of County Commissioners encourages underwriting of the production of programs by the business community and/or individuals. Underwriting would enable additional funding for particular programming which is in compliance with this policy in return for recognition of the underwriter at the beginning and end of the program. A typical acknowledgment would be, "This program was made possible through the generous support of (name of business/individual) - (business slogan)."

HCGB Program Priorities:

The following programming priorities determine how programs will be aired:

First Priority: Live or tape delayed official public meetings of the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners or its agencies or divisions and approved programs produced by agencies under the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners for Hernando County.

Second Priority: Approved programs produced for or submitted by other government agencies or divisions.

Third Priority: Approved programs produced for or submitted by an outside group and related to Hernando County government agencies or divisions.

Fourth Priority: Approved programs produced for or submitted by a community eligible organization under the definitions and terms of this policy.

Adopted: July 25, 2000

Amended: November 14, 2000

Amended: May 6, 2003