

## POL.A.02.05 - Policy on Public Information

The Park District has a responsibility and a commitment to disseminate information regarding agency administration and operations, programs and events, and parks and facilities in a prompt, fair and accurate manner to the community and the media. In addition, it is the Park District's responsibility to provide a timely, fair, and accurate response to issues and inquiries raised by residents and the media.

This Policy is founded on the following principles:

a. Transparency. The Park District is committed to approaching disclosure of information in a proactive, open, honest, and fair manner. Information concerning the Park District's operational and institutional activities will be made available to the public in order to foster a relationship of mutual trust, cooperation, and respect.

b. Accountability. As a governmental institution entrusted with public resources, the Park District is accountable to its taxpayers whose best interest is at the center of all decision-making.

c. Law-Abiding. The Park District and its Board of Commissioners and employees will abide by all local, state, and federal laws governing the release of public information, including the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

d. Public Engagement. Public engagement enhances the Park District's effectiveness and improves the quality of its decisions. The Park District will solicit public input and feedback on an on-going basis and as part of planning and decision-making processes when appropriate.

### **Responsibility & Methods**

The Director of Marketing and Customer Service oversees the process of dissemination of information to the public, including the media and elected officials. The Park District uses a variety of communication and marketing tools, including but not limited to seasonal program guides, Park District web site, press releases, flyers, banners, newspaper advertising, and electronic newsletters. Media inquiries are routed through the Director of Marketing and Customer Service as the first point of contact with responsibility for coordination and handling of all inquiries.

Responses to public FOIA requests will be managed by the Park District's FOIA Officer, following all applicable laws as well as established Park District policies and procedures.

In the event of a crisis (a serious incident that will generate intense public or media focus whether immediately or within a short period of time), the Park District will follow the procedures outlined in the Park District Crisis Management and Communication Plan.