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SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION OF OREGON

CONSULTING SERVICES PROGRAM



Special Districts **CONSULTING SERVICES**

About the Consulting Services Program

The SDAO Consulting Services Program was established in 2007 to assist districts with addressing complex issues as they work toward providing their patrons with cost-effective, highly desirable, and efficient public services. The program has been here to provide our districts with expert advice and guidance for reducing risk, improving services, and planning for the future. With a cadre of expert consultants at its fingertips, the Consulting Services Program can assist districts with board and organizational assessments, management recruitment, strategic planning, board and staff training, meeting and process facilitation, and overall best practices for your district.

Mission of the Program

Provide members with assistance in making sound management and policy decisions that are in alignment with best practices and state law. As a result, districts operate more proficiently, with less conflict and liability exposure, providing more resources for their specific service.

Overview of Services:

Organizational Assessments

Our team of consultants have the expertise to assist your district with assessing your overall operation. With a look from the outside, our consultants can provide you with guidance and recommendations that will set your district up for long-term success. Consultants assess organizational efficiencies and effectiveness; financial sustainability; personnel management; operating policies and procedures; staff and board training opportunities and involvement; and specific operational activities associated with the type of district being assessed. A written report is provided to the district that summarizes the consultant's findings and recommendations for improvements.



Management Recruitment

Our management recruitment services are tailored to meet your district's needs at a substantially lower cost than national recruitment services. We do this through working hand-in-hand with district leaders to design and implement an inclusive recruitment process that best fits the need of the district. The amount of assistance can range from SDAO outlining the recruitment process for the districts to implement, to SDAO leading and facilitating the entire process.

Basic Planning

Consultants are available to assist districts with a wide range of planning projects. This service is focused on facilitating and outlining basic goals, objectives, and actions to assist the district with preparing for a preferred future or address management/operation issues. Implementation details and evaluating performance measures are generally left for the district to complete. Consultants can assist districts with developing strategic, business, capital equipment, training, and succession plans.



Board Practices Assessment

The Board Practices Assessment (BPA) shows district boards how they rate in six key areas of risk management. The BPA reveals how a board performs in such areas as communications, customer relations, personnel, operations, etc. Results of the BPA underscore the significant link between a board's performance and their district's risk management experience. Simply put, good board practices lead to sound risk management.

Board Trainings

Consultants are available to provide trainings for board members that identify key roles, responsibilities, and duties of board members in the areas of CEO/board relations, ethics, finances and budget management, public meeting requirements, and other issues associated with governing a district.



Special Projects

Consultants are available to assist districts with special projects or problem solving when an issue has come to the surface. Through facilitation, research, investigating, and interviewing, consultants can assist with addressing a variety of issues such as meeting and process facilitation, public outreach, board/manager relations, and reviewing, updating, and implementing policies and procedures. Consultants can also be assigned to provide general guidance, mediate an issue, and/or mentor executive level managers.

First Eight Hours Free

Member districts are eligible for up to eight hours of free services provided by our consultants. After this time is exhausted, members will have the option of continuing at an hourly rate.

Testimonials

"I have been involved with recent SDAO assessments for both a fire district and a water district. The assessments provide invaluable information to the Board and senior staff on how the district operates and functions. As a result, we have a clear picture of our current operations, a vision for the future, and recommended steps to fulfill that vision. SDAO consultants are extremely knowledgeable professionals that provide sound advice and guidance that will help your district excel."

Eric Cederstam, Board Member, Wy'East Fire District and Crystal Springs Water District

"We've chosen SDAO Consulting Services because of the quality service they provide. We have used the service to help facilitate the development of a Strategic Plan and completion of the Board Practices Assessment. Both times, Commissioners have commented on how they appreciate the services that SDAO provides. Having resources like the Consulting Services Program at our fingertips is indicative of the great value SDAO membership is for our district."

Jeff Hazen, Executive Director, Sunset Empire Transportation District

"River Road Park and Recreation District has been fortunate enough to take advantage of the consulting services that SDAO offers. With a large portion of our staff nearing retirement, our district needed a succession plan, and we were fortunate to work with SDAO's talented staff to successfully plan our transition moving forward. We have also worked closely with SDAO's consultants to assist us with addressing complex issues associated with city and county contracts and working relationships. We would highly recommend the SDAO consulting services and their professional staff to any district."

Dale Weigandt, Superintendent, River Road Park and Recreation District

"As a Board Member and Senior Staff Member in Emergency Services I have worked with Consultants from SDAO Consulting Services Program multiple times and have found the services, best practices recommendations and technical assistance to be invaluable during daily activities and stressful times. The consultants understand our needs and limitations. They provide practical recommendations and facilitate a consensus of action between all those involved. It has been a pleasure to work with SDAO's dedicated staff."

Eric Swanson, Board Member, Tillamook Fire District

"On two occasions, the Heceta Water Public Utility District has participated in SDAO's Board Practices Assessment. The Board has enjoyed the experience because they feel that SDAO seriously cares about their performance as a board. The Consultant's Impressions and Recommendations section of the assessment provides needed guidance for the board, it is timely, and it directly relates to the input received by the consultant."

Vickie Kennedy, Office Manager, Heceta Water Public Utility District



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