



Christian County Assembly

## **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

The External Affairs Committee was authorized by the approval of the CCMRA Bylaws on 08/08/2023. This committee is a standing committee. A standing committee performs a continuing function and operates on a year-to-year basis. This committee deals with recruiting, vetting, and monitoring of elected/appointed officials at the municipal, county, and legislative district levels. This committee will as a minimum have four members. This committee being a standing committee will also have a Holdover Member to maintain continuity. Either the Chairman, or if he/she is unable to act, then some other active member of the Committee shall be appointed as a member in the succeeding year.

**MISSION PURPOSE/OVERVIEW:** The External Affairs Committee shall be responsible for public relations, event planning, community outreach, fundraising, and marketing. All of these responsibilities are intertwined and may not be separated. The committee by majority agreement is authorized to spend up to \$100 for the benefit of the CCMRA. Expenditures exceeding this amount must be proposed to a quorum of the members at a regular meeting. The administrative procedures for operation shall be developed by the External Affairs Committee and published as a Standing Rule per Roberts Rules of Order.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Public Relations cultivates and protects the CCMRA image. Provides communications for the CCMRA to the Communications Committee for dissemination to the public helping shape the public's perception of the CCMRA.

### **EVENT PLANNING**

Event planning involves support for the CCMRA mission, goals, and fundraising efforts.

Committee Members involved with Event Planning shall:

Define the CCMRA event goals.

Identify the CCMRA Target Audience.

Craft creative event experiences.

Organize the logistics of events.

Identify guests, guest speakers, entertainment.

Promote fundraising events.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Identify your goals. What do you want to achieve this week/month/year? Write them out and determine what steps you need to take to get there. Who is responsible for completing each step?

What are the deadlines? What is the cost? How will those steps be communicated to the people they apply to? Make both quantitative and qualitative goals.

Consult with the right stakeholders (internal and external). Ask donors what they'd like to see. Looking to run a new project and need more in your budget? Consult the board and finance. Do donors like making donations through text message? Survey!

Research opportunities and challenges in the community. What other organizations are working towards the same or similar mission as you? Are they in your local community? If you're competing, how can you work together? Are there gaps in your community your organization can fill? This can be gaps in services, gaps in donor events, or community building. Perhaps the high school students in your area are in search of more volunteer opportunities? Fun fact: most high schools require students to complete a certain number of hours before they're eligible to graduate.

Identify your brand and audience. One of the first things a nonprofit can do is to create a "brand". When conducting outreach, be sure to promote this aspect of your organization. How do we identify ourselves? You can choose to align this brand with your target audience. Who are your donors? If you can't already answer this question, you'll need to do some digging. What are their demographics? Are they opening your emails? Are they following you on social media? Do they get their updates from your direct mail, newsletters, or social media? The same questions can be asked of your board and volunteers.

Define your strategy. Once you've thought about some of the points above, you'll have a better grasp on what you need to do. For example, if all your volunteers are heavily engaged in social media, start a Facebook group for them! Are donors seeking more involvement? Host more events for fundraising, volunteer opportunities, or just socials for fun.

Decide how you'll measure results. Set goals for yourself, a means to measure and check in on a set date. Did we recruit 20 new volunteers? Did the board open at 70% of our emails?

Determine a plan to make this system habitual. Keep what works and change what didn't! If you continue outreach work, you're doing great! Remember that community and connection are what keep your mission moving.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Create effective events with creative and engaging event ideas.

Benefit Galas and Benefit Dinners

Benefit Auctions

Benefit Runs/Walks

Benefit Sporting Events

Benefit Concerts and Performances

Community Fairs

Benefit Garage Sales

Movie Showings

Fundraising Dinners

## Virtual Fundraising

- Virtual challenges
- Virtual auctions
- Virtual craft workshops
- Online Auctions
- Remote Fun Runs, walks, and rides
- Social media contests
- Matching Gift Drive
- Virtual Seminars
- Roundtable Discussions

## MARKETING

A big part of planning for nonprofit events is the selling of your event and tickets. Selling out tickets ensures that these resources are effectively utilized, and that the event's impact is maximized.

This section will explore marketing strategies and principles to help you sell out your event fundraising efforts:

Utilize Social Media for your Promotions. Nonprofit organizers must recognize the value that social media marketing can bring to the event.

As event organizers, take note of the platform where your target audience is spending the most time. Whatever social media platform they're in – be it TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), or LinkedIn – it is best to apply storytelling techniques to effectively get your audience's attention.

Identify the needs of your audience and position them as a guide to call them to action for the transformation that your organization brings. Furthermore, think of including messages on what transformation and impact your donors can receive when they participate in your nonprofit event or fundraising.

**Leverage on Partnerships.** Partnerships are mutually beneficial relationships that event organizers can form with other organizations or individuals. Therefore, partnerships should be viewed as resources that can literally make a difference to your nonprofit.

Look for relevant partners that share a similar mission or target audience as your nonprofit. Communicate the benefits of your partnership by crafting an effective event partnership proposal. Highlight how partnering with your event can provide exposure, community engagement, and positive brand association for their organization.

**Use a reliable ticket-selling platform.** Set up a smooth ticket-selling process with a reliable ticket-selling platform like Event Espresso and Event Smart. Given the notorious ticketing fees by other platforms, Event Espresso and Event Smart offer \$0 commission fees for an unlimited number of tickets sold.

Customize your audience's experience with customizable landing pages and a cohesive event experience for your audience. Correspondingly, an SEO-friendly event page can also help your event reach the right people.

**Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Approach.** A peer-to-peer fundraising approach can help sell out your event ticket because it uses the value of personal relationships and connections. In a peer-to-peer fundraising, the organization's supporters, event volunteers, or donors become advocates for the cause and set up individual fundraising pages or campaigns on behalf of the nonprofit.

There is a collective impact when people unite to promote fundraising events. As more advocates join the campaign and reach out to their networks, the fundraiser's reach exponentially expands, resulting in a larger donor base.

**How to Attract Donors or Sponsors for Fundraising Events.** Donors and sponsorships are critical components for a successful nonprofit event. Gaining the trust of donors and sponsors can pay bills, promote your event, enhance your credibility, and access to resources and credibility.

Here are some tips to consider:

#### 1. Value Relationship Marketing:

- Building relationships is at the core of successful fundraising efforts. Therefore, it involves cultivating connections with potential donors and sponsors based on trust, authenticity, and shared values.
- Relationship marketing goes beyond a one-time transaction; it focuses on nurturing long-term partnerships that can yield ongoing support. Here's how to implement relationship marketing:
- Personalized Communication: Tailor your communication to each donor or sponsor, addressing their interests, motivations, and connection to your cause. Avoid generic approaches and instead, use personalized messaging to show that you genuinely value their involvement.
- Engagement Opportunities: Offer various engagement opportunities beyond financial contributions. Involve donors and sponsors in volunteering, event participation, or advocacy efforts, fostering a sense of ownership and belonging.
- Gratitude and Recognition: Express gratitude sincerely and regularly. Show appreciation for their contributions, and publicly acknowledge their support through various platforms, such as social media, newsletters, and event programs.

#### 2. Create a Fulfilling Donor Experience

- A fulfilling donor experience is essential to keep donors engaged and motivated to continue supporting your organization. When donors have a positive experience, they are more likely to become recurring donors and advocates for your cause.
- Here's how to create a fulfilling donor experience:
  - Transparency and Accountability: Be transparent about how event funds are used and the impact of donors' contributions. List down event costs and financial summary for tracking purposes. Consequently, share regular updates on your projects and outcomes to demonstrate accountability.
  - Personalized Thank-You's: Send personalized thank-you notes or messages to donors, expressing how their support has made a difference. Consider incorporating handwritten notes or video messages for a more heartfelt touch.
  - Exclusive Events and Opportunities: Offer exclusive access to donor-only events or behind-the-scenes experiences. Providing unique opportunities shows donors that they are valued and part of a special community.

### 3. Demonstrate the Impact of the Cause:

- Donors and sponsors want to know that their contributions are making a tangible difference. Demonstrating the impact of your cause is crucial for creating awareness, building trust and encouraging continued support. Here's how to showcase your impact:
- Impact Reports: Regularly publish impact reports that highlight the outcomes of your organization's efforts. Use data, stories, and visuals to showcase the transformative changes brought about by donor contributions.
- Testimonials and Success Stories: Share testimonials from individuals or communities directly impacted by your cause. Authentic stories resonate deeply with potential donors, showing them the human side of your mission.
- Engaging Content: Utilize engaging content, such as videos, infographics, and interactive media, to present your impact in a compelling and accessible manner.

### **Tips for Non-Profit Fundraising Event Planning.** Create an Engaging Non-Profit Fundraising Website

- Your website is the home of all the information for your nonprofit event. Customize it and include concise but clear storytelling on your landing page. Your branding and website design are factors in attracting donors too.
- Choosing your event registration website is so necessary because, without it, there will be no event.
- Event Espresso or Event Smart is an event ticketing and registration platform that has features that allow you to customize your event page. Aside from this, event organizers

can incorporate a smart single-page checkout for tickets, customize event confirmation emails, customize event registration forms, and more.

**Listen to your audience.** Event planners can organize successful events by listening to their audience and being aware of what is happening in the market. Notice what your participants are buzzing about and incorporate this into your next event.

- When you actively listen to your audience, you may uncover pain points or concerns they have regarding your organization or the cause you support. Addressing these issues head-on demonstrates your commitment to improvement and accountability. In turn, this openness builds credibility and reassures your audience that their involvement and contributions are valued and well-utilized.
- By understanding your audience and what they're wondering, you are also able to market a more effective message.

**You Don't Have to Do Everything In-House.** Save your energy and focus on your expertise by being open to hiring event planners or services to help you. In fact, outsourcing or hiring outside help for your nonprofit event planning can be a game-changer, bringing numerous benefits that can elevate the success of your events and streamline your organization's efforts.

- While nonprofits often have dedicated teams, volunteers, and resources, collaborating with external event planning experts or firms can provide valuable expertise and fresh perspectives. These event professionals have extensive experience in orchestrating successful events, from conceptualization to execution, and can help your organization overcome challenges and navigate complexities.

**Add some fun and bring your event to life.** People attend gatherings to form meaningful connections and have some fun. Take note of trends that you can include in your event program to keep your attendees engaged.

- Consider behavior psychology and what brings a boost of endorphins to your participants and add appropriate activities like a dance-off, interactive games and challenges, photo booths, and more.
- Hire event photographers or videographers for documentation
- Photos and videos are important for documentation purposes to your sponsors or donors. It is also a good souvenir for your event attendees.
- Assigning a designated person to document photos and videos allows authentic memories to be captured that you can use for several purposes. Attendees can also look fondly at those priceless moments that may have been forgotten if not captured.

## Sample Non-Profit Fundraising Event Planning Timeline and Checklist

### 6-12 months

- Identify event objectives
- Consider the budget
- Determine committees and specific roles
- Pick a venue and other suppliers
- Make a proposal for event marketing and event promotion

### 3-5 months

- Book venue and vendors/suppliers
- Confirm guests, entertainers, presenters, etc.
- Double-check permits and other safety protocols
- Assess decoration and set up plans

### 1-3 months

- Create social media posts
- Confirm suppliers
- Onsite visitation
- Determine menu

### Final meetings

- Get program copies, names of guests, and permits
- Be in the moment.
- Enjoy and have fun.

### After

- Update on the financial status of board members of the organization and how much money was raised
- Acknowledgments and thank you notes
- After event survey
- Update on social media posts
- Having a printed or digital timeline and checklist can be very helpful. Check out this event planning checklist which you can use as a guide.

**MEETINGS.** Will be conducted to determine goal progress, discuss problems, issues, and strategy. Date and time will be determined by majority vote during their first meeting. Minutes will be kept and provided along with a monthly report to the Board of Directors.

## **Committee Members**

Committee Chairman?

Assistant Committee Chairman?

Committee Members:

Laura Pettigrew (Events)

Debbie Sullivan (Events/Fundraising)

Tim Peak (Events/Marketing/Fund Raising)

Don Carriker (Marketing)

Jenn Rosebrock (Marketing)

## **Duties and Responsibilities.**

Chairman: Provide leadership for the committee.

- Facilitate communication and discussion during the meetings
- Serve as spokesperson within the organization for the committee
- Facilitate the meeting according to the agenda
- Create the agenda in partnership with committee members
- Provide research as needed for the committee
- Send out meeting reminders and agendas
- Take minutes during the meeting and create the monthly Board report
- Bring the viewpoint of the Board of Directors to the committee discussion
- Bring action items and recommendations from the Committee to the Board of Directors when necessary.
- Report Board decision back to the committee.

Committee Member Responsibilities:

- Serves in an advisory role to guide the committee
- Expresses ideas and provides input
- Actively participates in meetings, contributing to the discussion, brainstorming, and sharing innovative ideas
- Reviews material and provides input for improvement
- Serves as internal/external linkages for CCMRA to open doors to further the organization's mission and vision.
- Participate in the development and implementation of the committee work plan

Time Commitment For Committee Members - Committee members should anticipate being available an average of 3-4 hours per month.