

**Public Hearing**

**M E M O R A N D U M**

October 19, 2018

TO: County Council

FROM: Sonya Healy  Legislative Information Officer  
Michelle Parsons  Manager, Council Information Technology

SUBJECT: Special appropriation to the County Government's FY19 Operating Budget – Nondepartmental Account - \$95,600 for Legislative Branch Communications Outreach (Source: General fund reserves)

PURPOSE: Public Hearing – No Council votes required

Council staff is committed to working together to develop ways to increase access to information for residents and Councilmembers and to publicize the ways that residents can express their views on Council deliberations and County issues. Staff from the Clerk's Office, the Communications Office, the Information Technology Office, and Legislative Information Services have met to discuss how to achieve these goals. Our work is divided into three main categories: improve access to information for residents, Councilmembers, and staff; publicize the ways that residents can express their views on an issue; and provide easy to use data and reports, so Councilmembers can get a snapshot of trends associated with the views of Montgomery County residents. Below is a list of action items associated with each category.

**I. Improve access to information**

- A. Improve Council web site search function.
- B. Expand LIMs search and subscription services.
- C. Make Council minutes and votes easier to find and reformat the minutes.
- D. Improve ease of finding documents on the Council's web site.
- E. Provide additional information on master plans.
- F. Make Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) reports more accessible.
- G. Create hashtags and search terms for each Council staff report that will be used across all correspondence and social media posts.

**II. Publicize the ways that residents can express their views**

- A. Begin a "Council Connected" campaign to drive residents to the Council's web site, the Council President's newsletter and Council Coming Attractions.

- B. Publicize ways for residents to express their views on the Council's web site, in press releases, on social media, during Council meetings, and on County Cable Montgomery (CCM).
- C. Create "Montgomery Minute" videos to show various ways residents can participate in Council deliberations.
- D. Expand community outreach.

**III. Data access and reports**

- A. Generate regular reports from IQ and social media to aggregate data on resident views for Councilmembers to have a snapshot of trends.
- B. Create an internal web page for Council staff to learn about, reference, and manage search tags for all Council information.
- C. Create an internal web page for Council staff with analytics from social media, GovDelivery, the Council web portal, IQ, and streaming multimedia.

To achieve all these goals in an expedited time frame, we recommend a special appropriation for the Council Communications NDA as listed below. **The total funding recommendation would be for \$95,600 in this fiscal year and \$123,400 for FY20.**

- A new staff person to focus exclusively on social media outreach, analytics, and visual information (approximately \$50,000 for FY19; \$100,000 for full year salary and benefits). This funding would backfill an existing vacant position in the Council's Communication Office was not funded in this fiscal year because of budget constraints.
- Start an internship program to have Montgomery College students serve in a help desk capacity for information technology. We recommend two students, each working 15 hours per week at a cost of \$15 per hour (full year cost is \$23,400; cost for the remainder of this fiscal year is \$15,600).
- Contractual assistance for additional community outreach (\$30,000).

Resolution No: \_\_\_\_\_  
Introduced: October 16, 2018  
Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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By: Council President Riemer, Council Vice President Navarro, and Councilmember Katz

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SUBJECT: Special Appropriation to the FY19 Operating Budget  
Montgomery County Government  
Legislative Branch Communications Outreach Nondepartmental Account, \$95,600

Background

1. Section 308 of the Montgomery County Charter provides that a special appropriation: (a) may be made at any time after public notice by news release; (b) must state that the special appropriation is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency or to act without delay in the public interest; (c) must specify the revenues necessary to finance it; and (d) must be approved by no fewer than six members of the Council.
2. This special appropriation is needed to add a new staff person to focus exclusively on social media outreach, to start an internship program to have Montgomery College students serve in a help desk capacity, and to add contractual assistance for specialized community outreach as needed.
3. The Council President has requested the following FY19 Operating Budget appropriation increase for the Legislative Branch Communications Outreach Nondepartmental Account:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$50,000	\$45,600	\$0	\$95,600	General Fund

4. Notice of public hearing was given and a public hearing was held.

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Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following action:

A supplemental appropriation to the FY19 Operating Budget of the Legislative Branch Communications Outreach Nondepartmental Account is approved as follows:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$50,000	\$45,600	\$0	\$95,600	General Fund

The County Council declares that this action is necessary to act without delay in the public interest.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

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Megan Davey Limarzi, Esq.  
Clerk of the Council