

MU Extension District Option Manual

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The goal of MU Extension districts
is to deliver high-quality programming
more efficiently to more Missourians.

University of Missouri Extension regions



MU Extension District Option Manual

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Introduction

Why the state council sought the district option

The University of Missouri Extension State Council led the campaign for a district option after many months of informational meetings and research. Districting, a strategy already being used in 26 other states, seemed to be a good option for improving the *efficiencies* of county extension councils across Missouri.

Although local funding for extension programs at the county level, statewide, has continued to slightly increase, many counties have seen a large reduction in county commission appropriations. The driving factors for those reductions include the weak economy, decreased reimbursement from the state, and increased county operational costs in the areas of employee benefits; law enforcement, including court operation; and maintaining county property.

About half of the funding for county extension council operational costs comes from county-budgeted funds. The other half comes through contracts, gifts, endowments, and fees for goods and services generated locally. The budget challenges that county commissions currently face are unlikely to improve, so commissions will be looking harder for dollars to fund county operations. This situation could adversely affect funding for county extension councils.

These funding issues led the state council to look for solutions. The council perceived that a law that offers county extension councils the option of working together to create efficiencies would be a great benefit. The additional option of seeking a tax levy through a single-council or consolidated district could provide a revenue stream that would help ensure the long-term funding of county councils. Approval of such a levy would prove that Missourians know the value of having lifelong research-based education available locally and believe it is a worthy investment of tax dollars.

This manual describes the potential benefits of districting and the process of forming a district and pursuing a tax levy.

The district option for county extension councils is not just about developing a long-term revenue stream in the form of a property tax; it is about coming together to meet the programming needs of residents through good financial management and resource sharing. For many counties, the opportunity to simply pool resources might be the best reason to create a consolidated district. **By pooling resources, including money and programs, councils can become more *effective and efficient* in use of those resources.** We encourage you to seriously consider this reason for consolidating first when exploring the district option.

The University of Missouri State Extension Council wishes you the best as you continue to serve your county residents.

MU Extension has been serving Missourians for 100 years. The district option is a strategy focused on sustaining MU Extension local programming for the next 100 years.

Forming an MU Extension district

Effective Aug. 28, 2013, county extension councils in Missouri have the option to form single-council or consolidated districts. This change to Missouri’s county extension laws, the first since 1961, was made to enable county extension councils to operate more efficiently and support extension operations and programs in their counties that directly affect the lives of Missouri residents. The district option law allows an extension district to seek funding through a property tax levy.

County councils have a long history of providing local program support for University of Missouri Extension. About half of the funding for county extension budgets comes from county commissions; the remaining amount is raised through grants, contracts, fees and donations. County councils and those local dollars are the true strength in the federal–state–local partnership, as intended by the Smith Lever Act of 1914. This new law provides new possibilities for resource sharing and revenue generation at the county level.

Missouri is a leader in meeting its residents’ needs with local, research-based programming. Through local council efforts, MU Extension reaches residents in all 114 counties and the City of St. Louis. District formation is an option that can help councils continue to meet local needs as MU Extension moves into its next 100 years of serving Missourians.

The goal of MU Extension districts is to deliver high-quality programming more efficiently to more Missourians.

The MU Extension district option

In 2013, the Missouri Legislature passed an act permitting county extension councils to establish a single-council district or a consolidated district of two or more counties for the purpose of funding extension programming. The law applies to all councils except those located in counties with a charter form of government and more than 950,000 inhabitants.

The law — section 262.598 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri — uses the following terms as defined:

- Council** — a University of Missouri extension council authorized under section 262.563
- District or extension district** — a political subdivision formed by one or more councils
- Consolidated district** — a district formed jointly by two or more councils
- Single-council district** — a district formed by one council
- Governing body** — the group of individuals who govern a district

District formation

A single-council district shall be formed by a majority vote of the full council.

A consolidated district may be formed upon a majority vote of each participating council.

Record this vote as you would any other vote per your bylaws or Robert’s Rules of Order, including noting that a quorum was present, or the full council in the

case of a single-council district, and a majority voted in favor of district formation. In a consolidated district, each county council's minutes recording the vote should become a permanent record of the district board.

Governing body

In a single-council district, the council is also the district's governing body. In addition to the powers and duties previously granted to the council under sections 262.550 to 262.620, the council will have those listed under Powers and duties below.

In a consolidated district, each participating council should appoint an equal number of representatives to the governing body, or district board. The number of representatives to be appointed by each council is determined by the member councils, but must be at least three and no more than five. Representatives will have a two-year term of office and may be reappointed. Once the board is created, it will meet to elect officers, who will serve as officers for two years. The board must meet regularly at least once every three months. Although not specifically addressed in the law, the board may adopt bylaws for operational procedures.

Powers and duties

The district board has the following powers and duties:

- Review the activities and annual budgets of each participating council.
- Work cooperatively with each participating council to plan and facilitate the programs, equipment and activities in the district.
- Exercise its taxing authority by asking the voters of the district to institute a property tax levy in the county or counties that compose the district.
 - ▶ By September first of each year, the board will determine the tax rate necessary to generate sufficient revenue to fund the extension programming in the district, which includes annual funding for each participating council for the costs of personnel and the acquisition, supply and maintenance of each council's property, work and equipment.
 - ▶ If the board chooses to exercise its taxing authority, it must submit the question to the voters in each county of the district at a general municipal election.
- Oversee the collection of any tax authorized under this section by ensuring the revenue is deposited into a special fund and monitoring the use of the funds to ensure they are used solely for extension programming in the district.
- Approve payments from the special fund in which the tax revenue is deposited.

Budget adoption

As part of working cooperatively, the district board and the county councils that compose the district should jointly adopt the annual budget for the district's educational programs. A single-council district will have one budget that serves as the budget for both the district and the county council.

Withdrawing from a district

A county may withdraw from a consolidated extension district by a majority vote of the county residents after a petition process to the county circuit court.

This information in this section is available in the form of a PDF brochure from <http://extension.missouri.edu/districtoption>.



In a single-council district, if a tax has not been levied, the district may be dissolved by a majority vote of the full council.

Related websites

Missouri Extension Councils:
[http://extension.missouri.edu/
extcouncil](http://extension.missouri.edu/extcouncil)

University of Missouri Extension:
<http://extension.missouri.edu>

Revised Statutes of Missouri:
<http://www.moga.mo.gov>

Staffing plan

MU Extension has a statewide staffing plan and will work with county councils and regional councils to provide the best statewide program coverage possible by regional specialists.

A district or county council may work with MU Extension for additional county staffing by creation of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for programming.

MU Extension policy

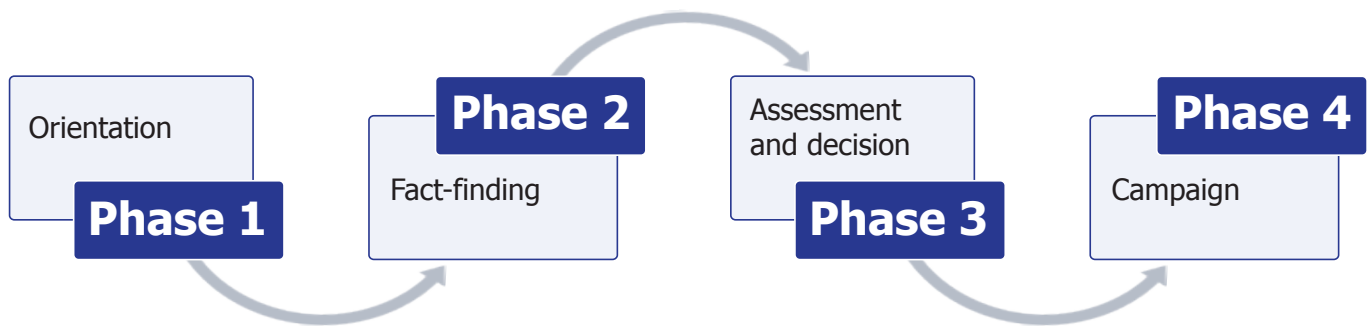
MU Extension has guidance and policies on funding, staffing, personnel educational requirements, and the working relationships with extension councils and districts.

Summary

District formation is an option, not a mandate. County extension councils are charged with delivering needed programming at the local level. Some councils may be able to better fulfill this mission by combining forces. Forming an MU Extension district is an option for county councils that will result in more efficient and effective use of resources and personnel for Missouri residents.

The goal of district formation should be to deliver high-quality programming more efficiently to more Missourians. This new option will ensure that MU Extension remains strong for the next 100 years.

A suggested process for exploring the district option and pursuing a tax levy



Phase 1 — Orientation

During the orientation phase, council members learn about the new law allowing MU Extension councils to form districts and pursue a tax levy, the background for the law, and the roles of each person in extension regarding the law.

Phase 2 — Fact-finding

During the fact-finding phase, councils discuss the district law, outline the benefits of and their concerns about forming a district based on their situation and goals, and consider the possibility of forming a single-council or consolidated district.

Phase 3 — Assessment and decision

During the assessment and decision phase, councils explore how they might work with other counties for efficiencies in delivering services and programming, determine what a tax levy might cost individual county residents, and plan how to communicate to residents the value of an extension district.

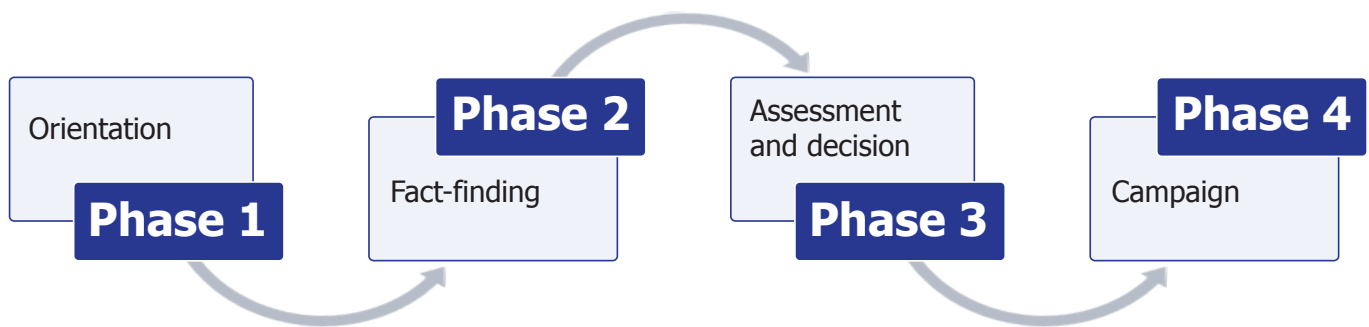
Phase 4 — Campaign

During the campaign phase, the extension district board educates residents about the need for a funding stream that supports extension locally, ensuring that they abide by laws governing political subdivisions and campaign financing.

Single-council district timeline

This timeline is a guide for steps councils should follow when considering the single-council district option. Review the steps and insert into the timeline the dates that fit your council’s goal or schedule. The recommended times are estimates. The process may take longer in some cases than in others.

As you go through this process, remember that county extension council meetings and district board meetings are subject to the Sunshine Law.



Phase 1 — Orientation

Recommended timeline for phase	Our council's timeline (specific dates)	Steps	Total running timeline (in days)
Day 1–30		County extension council meets for orientation on the district option. Meeting should include council employees and headquartered MU extension employees. This orientation would be presented by one or more state extension council members or their designees.	
Day 31–60		County extension council meets to discuss forming a single-council district	
By day 60		Move to the fact-finding phase if sufficient interest.	
By day 60		County extension council identifies a district option steering committee to lead the fact-finding phase.	(by day 60)

Phase 2 — Fact-finding

Single-council district timeline (continued)

Recommended timeline	Our council's timeline (specific dates)	Steps	Total running timeline (in days)
Day 1–30		District option steering committee prepares county-specific questions and answers to be used in upcoming discussions. (Documents could include FAQ about the district option for this county, program impacts, council business plan and other relevant materials.)	
Day 31–120		County extension council meets with MU Extension personnel (county program director, MU employees headquartered in county, office manager and regional director) to receive input about forming a single-council district.	
Day 31–120		County extension council meets with key stakeholders to provide orientation and seek understanding and support for the option being considered. Key stakeholders include county commissioners; other funding partners, such as cities and foundations; 4-H leaders; program partners; and other key constituents identified by the council as critical for success.	
By day 120		Move to the assessment and decision phase if sufficient interest.	(by day 180)

Phase 3 — Assessment and decision

Recommended timeline	Our council's timeline (specific dates)	Steps	Total running timeline (in days)
Day 1–30		County extension council meets to discuss moving forward with single-council district formation based on information gathered in the fact-finding phase. Options for a single-council district <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a single-council district • Form a single-council district with taxing authority 	
Day 31–90		The council votes on the question of forming a single-council district. A single-council district can be formed upon a majority vote of the full council.	
Day 90–120		The council initiates marketing or informational plan to inform citizens of decision to form a district.	(by day 300)
By day 120		If there is an affirmative majority vote of the district board to ask the voters of the district to approve a property tax levy in the county, determine the amount of levy to request. Then move to campaign phase. (Reminder: In a single-council district, the council serves as the district board.)	

Phase 4 — Campaign

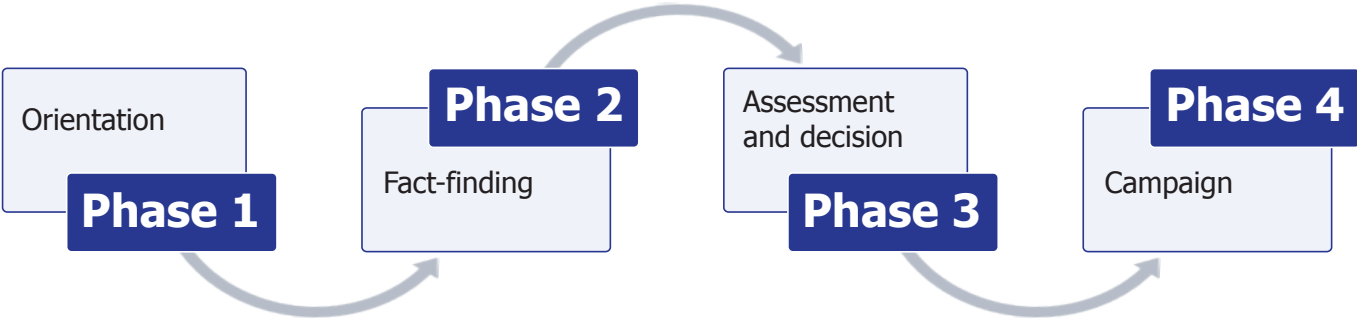
Single-council district timeline (continued)

Recommended timeline	Our council's timeline (specific dates)	Steps	Total running timeline (in days)
Day 1–30		District board identifies campaign committee to champion the ballot measure to provide a property tax levy to fund extension programming.	
Day 1–30		Campaign committee thoroughly reviews the Campaign Phase section of this manual.	(by day 330)
Depends on election calendar. File no later than six to eight weeks before election, which is held the second Tuesday of April.		District board checks election calendar at http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/s_default.asp?id=calendar for pertinent dates. District board votes to place initiative on general municipal ballot. District board provides ballot language to the county clerk before the deadline.	
Time available before election		Chosen political leaders and volunteer campaign committee implement a campaign to inform and encourage the public to support the single-council district through a tax levy.	
Second Tuesday in April		General municipal election is held.	
		District board recognizes champions and supporters.	
		If issue was approved, district board begins implementation If issue failed, district board assesses situation and determines its next step.	

Consolidated district timeline

This timeline is a guide for steps councils should follow when considering the consolidated district option. Review the steps and insert into the timeline the dates that fit your council’s goal or schedule. The recommended times are estimates. The process may take longer in some cases than in others.

As you go through this process, remember that county extension council meetings and district board meetings are subject to the Sunshine Law.



Phase 1 — Orientation

Recommended timeline for phase	Our council's timeline (specific dates)	Steps	Total running timeline (in days)
Day 1–30		County extension council meets for orientation on the district option. Meeting should include council employees and headquartered MU extension employees. This orientation would be presented by one or more state extension council members or their designees.	
Day 1–45		Hold a meeting to discuss forming a consolidated district. The following people from each interested county should attend: the regional director, county council executive board representatives and MU Extension employees. Noninterested counties should also be invited to be a part of the discussion. The purpose of the meeting will be to answer questions and have a frank discussion about forming a consolidated district.	
Day 1–60		Multiple county council executive boards meet as a group to determine interest in forming a consolidated district.	
Day 1–60		Individual county extension councils meet to discuss forming a consolidated district. County commissioners need to be involved in the discussions by this point, if they have not already been involved.	

Phase 1 — Orientation

Consolidated district timeline (continued)

Recommended timeline for phase	Our council's timeline (specific dates)	Steps	Total running timeline (in days)
Day 1–60		Once individual councils understand the law, they communicate with other counties interested in the process. This communication can be done through council chairs, county program directors or regional directors. Open dialogue is necessary to represent the views of the individual councils.	
By day 60		Move to the fact-finding phase if sufficient interest.	
By day 60		County extension councils identify a district option steering committee composed of engaged and committed individuals from each of the counties interested and facilitated by the regional director(s). The committee's purpose is to develop the new district's business plan, consider efficiencies and program delivery, and lead the fact-finding phase	(by day 60)

Phase 2 — Fact-finding

Recommended timeline	Our council's timeline (specific dates)	Steps	Total running timeline (in days)
Day 1–30		District option steering committee prepares county-specific and consolidated district-specific questions and answers to be used in upcoming discussions, including the proposed name of the district. Documents could include FAQ about the district option for this county, program impacts, council business plan, the district option discussion work sheet and other relevant materials.	
Day 31–120		District option steering committee meets with councils and MU Extension personnel (county program director, MU employees headquartered in county, office manager and regional director) to receive input regarding forming a consolidated district. These meetings are facilitated by the steering committee and can be individual-county or multicounty meetings. See the Assessment and Decision Phase section of this manual for discussion guidance.	
Day 31–120		County extension council meets with key stakeholders to provide orientation and seek understanding and support for the option being considered. Key stakeholders include county commissioners; other funding partners, such as cities and foundations; 4-H leaders; program partners; and other key constituents identified by the council as crucial for success. These meetings are facilitated by the district option steering committee and can be individual-county or multicounty meetings.	
By day 120		Move to the assessment and decision phase if sufficient interest.	(by day 180)

Phase 3 — Assessment and decision

Consolidated district timeline (continued)

Recommended timeline	Our council's timeline (specific dates)	Steps	Total running timeline (in days)
Day 1–30		<p>Each individual county extension council meets to discuss moving forward with consolidated district formation based on information gathered in the fact-finding phase.</p> <p>Options for a consolidated district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a consolidated district • Form a consolidated district with taxing authority 	
Day 31–90		Each council involved votes on the question of forming a consolidated district. A consolidated district can be formed upon a majority vote of each participating council.	
Day 90–120		Each council appoints the agreed-upon, equal number of representatives to the district board.	
Day 90–120		Prepare for transition. Begin using the consolidated district name.	
Day 90–120		District board meets to finalize and review operational documents including district bylaws and council minutes, budgets and business plans. Elects officers. Sets standard meeting dates. Discusses reason district was formed and explores possible efficiencies that could be put in place.	
Day 90–120		District board initiates marketing or informational plan to inform citizens of decision to form a district.	(by day 300)
By day 120		If there is an affirmative majority vote of the full district board to ask the voters of the district to approve a property tax levy in the counties of the district, determine the amount of levy to request. Then move to campaign phase.	

Phase 4 — Campaign

Consolidated district timeline (continued)

Recommended timeline	Our council's timeline (specific dates)	Steps	Total running timeline (in days)
Day 1–30		District board identifies campaign committee to champion the ballot measure to provide a property tax levy to fund extension programming.	
Day 1–30		Campaign committee thoroughly reviews the Campaign Phase section of this manual.	(by day 330)
Depends on election calendar. File no later than six to eight weeks before election, which is held the second Tuesday of April.		District board checks election calendar at http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/s_default.asp?id=calendar for pertinent dates. District board votes to place initiative on general municipal ballot. District board provides ballot language to the county clerk before the deadline.	
Time available before election		Chosen political leaders and volunteer campaign committee implement a campaign to inform and encourage the public to support the single-council district through a tax levy.	
Second Tuesday in April		General municipal election is held.	
		District board recognizes champions and supporters.	
		If issue was approved in each county, district board begins implementation If issue failed in each county, district board assesses situation and determines its next step. If issue failed in one county, that county council determines whether to withdraw from the district. Based on that decision, the district board assesses situation and determines its next step.	

Orientation Phase

Explanation of the MU Extension district option

In its 2013 session, the Missouri Legislature passed a bill that authorizes county extension councils to form single-council and multiple-council, or consolidated, districts for the purpose of funding extension programming. A majority vote of the participating council or councils is required to form an extension district. In a single-council district, the existing extension council will serve as the district's governing body. In a consolidated district, a district comprising more than one county council, each participating council will appoint an equal number of representatives (three to five) to the governing board. Districts are authorized, but not required, to submit for voter approval a property tax levy of up to 30 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. The law, which is section 262.598 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri, also includes provisions for withdrawing from a district and for dissolving a district.

Explanation

The left-aligned, bold text is the wording of the law.

The indented, normal text is the explanation.

262.598.1. As used in this section, the following terms shall mean:

- (1) “Consolidated district,” a district formed jointly by two or more councils;**
- (2) “Council,” a University of Missouri extension council authorized under section 262.563;**
- (3) “District” or “extension district,” a political subdivision formed by one or more councils;**
- (4) “Single-council district,” a district formed by one council;**
- (5) “Governing body,” the group of individuals which governs a district.**

262.598.2. University of Missouri extension councils, except for any council located in a county with a charter form of government and with more than nine hundred fifty-thousand (950,000) inhabitants, are hereby authorized to form extension districts made up of cooperating counties for the purpose of funding extension programming. An extension district may be a single-council district or a consolidated district. A single-council district shall be formed upon a majority vote of the full council. A consolidated district shall be formed upon a majority vote of each participating council.

Subsection 2 allows creation of a district to support programming. It includes language that makes St. Louis County the only county not authorized for any of the district options contained within the law. A vote by a council to form a district or to be a part of a consolidated district needs to be recorded as any other

vote. It should be noted that a quorum was present, or the full council in the case of a single-council district, and that there was a majority vote per the council's bylaws or by Robert's Rules of Order. The result of such a vote must be included in the county council minutes and should become a permanent record of the council and the district board.

262.598.3. In a single-council district, the council shall serve as the district's governing body. In addition to any other powers and duties granted to the council under sections 262.550 to 262.620, the council shall also have the powers and duties provided under subsection 5 of this section.

In a single-council district, the county extension council serves as the district board. However, it does not dissolve the county council or take away its duties under the law. The district option creates a separate governing body. Any meetings of the district board or county council should be held separately, and they must be posted as required by the Sunshine Law.

262.598.4. In a consolidated district, the governing body of the district shall consist of at least three, but no more than five, representatives appointed by each participating council. The term of office shall be two years. Representatives may be reappointed. The governing body shall elect officers, who shall serve as officers for two years, and establish a regular meeting schedule, which shall not be less than once every three months.

Each county that is part of a consolidated district should have equal representation on the district board. The formation documents will establish the number of representatives, which must be from three to five per county. Appointment to the district board is a two-year term, and members may be reappointed. After the board is created, the members shall meet and elect officers, who will hold their posts for two years. It would be best for this board to establish bylaws for operational procedures. The board must meet at least once every three months.

5. The governing body of a district shall have the following powers and duties:

- (1) Review the activities and annual budgets of each participating council;**
- (2) Determine, by September first of each year, the tax rate necessary to generate sufficient revenue to fund extension programming in the district, which includes annual funding for each participating council for the costs of personnel and the acquisition, supply and maintenance of each council's property, work and equipment;**
- (3) Oversee the collection of any tax authorized under this section by ensuring the revenue is deposited into a special fund and by monitoring use of the funds to ensure that they are used solely for extension programming in the district;**
- (4) Approve payments from the special fund in which the tax revenue is deposited; and**
- (5) Work cooperatively with each participating council to plan and facilitate the programs, equipment and activities in the district.**

Subsection 5 explains the authority and duties of the district board, including specifying that the board can spend district funds on items that support extension programming, including equipment and services. A district is not required to have a tax. If the district has a tax, very strict guidelines within state law provide for the management and accounting of such funds. (Consult the MU Extension District Option Manual for more information.)

This information in this section is available in the form of a four-page PDF from <http://extension.missouri.edu/districtoption>.

262.598.6. The governing body of a district may submit a question to the voters of the district to institute a property tax levy in the county or counties that compose the district.

The district board is responsible for determining if the district will ask voters for a tax levy.

Questions may be submitted to the voters of the district at any general municipal election.

Per Missouri election law, section 115.121.3, a general municipal election is authorized in April; the August and November elections are not general municipal elections. The district should work with the county clerk if it plans to take the issue to the vote of the people. The extension district will pay for the cost of the election.

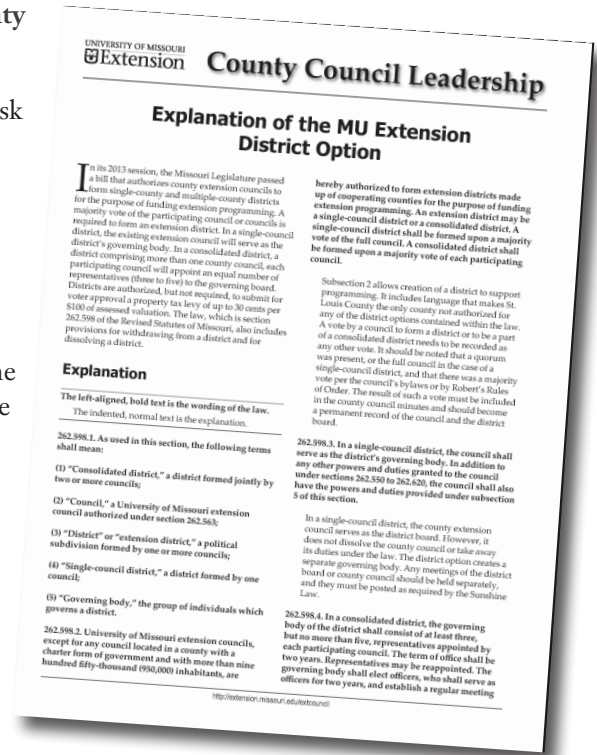
Any such proposed tax shall not exceed thirty cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation. The costs of submitting the question to the voters at the general municipal election shall be paid as provided in section 115.063. Such question shall be submitted in substantially the following form:

“Shall the Extension District in County (insert name of county) be authorized to levy an annual tax of (insert amount not to exceed thirty) cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation for the purpose of funding the University of Missouri Extension District programs, equipment and services in the district?”

The law provides ballot language to be used to submit the question of imposing a tax to the voters of the district. (Later sections of this manual contain information on the election process, the estimated cost of an election and the amount of funding a tax levy might generate. It is always best to discuss the possibility of levying a tax with the county clerks, county commissioners and extension councils of all the counties involved.)

In a single-council district, if a majority of the voters in the county approve the question, then the district shall impose the tax. If a majority of the voters in a single-council district do not approve the question, then no tax shall be imposed. In a consolidated district, if a majority of voters in each county in the district approve the question, then the district shall impose the tax. If a majority of the voters in a consolidated district do not approve the question, then no tax shall be imposed in any county of the district.

In a single-council district, the outcome of the vote on the tax is determined by a simple majority of those voting in the county. In a consolidated district, voters must pass the initial imposition of the tax in each county that is part of the



district by a simple majority vote. If the tax is not passed in each county, the tax is not imposed unless the county or counties in which the tax failed withdraw from the district.

In a consolidated district, if a majority of voters in a county do not approve the question, the council in the county that did not approve the question may withdraw from the district.

The question of an extension council of a county in which the tax failed withdrawing from a district should be handled at a special meeting of that council. A vote should be taken and recorded in the same manner as the council voted to join the consolidated district and thus requires a majority vote of a quorum to pass.

Upon such withdrawal, the district shall be made up of the remaining counties, and the tax shall be imposed in those counties. However, if the county that did not approve the question does not withdraw from the district, the tax shall not be imposed. Revenues collected from the imposition of a tax authorized under this section shall be deposited into a special fund dedicated only for use by the local district for programming purposes.

If a county in which the imposition of the tax failed does not withdraw, the tax is treated as failing throughout the district. How the district moves forward on organization and funding would then be determined by the district board and the participating councils.

262.598.7. The County Commission of any county in which the tax authorized under this section is levied and collected:

- (1) Shall be exempt from the funding requirements under section 262.597 if revenue derived from the tax authorized under this section is in excess of an amount equal to two hundred percent (200%) of the average funding received under section 262.597 for the immediately preceding three years; or**
- (2) May reduce the current year's funding amount under section 262.597 by thirty-three percent (33%) of the amount of revenues derived from the tax authorized under this section which exceed the average amount of funding received under section 262.597 for the immediately preceding three years.**

The statutory requirement of county support for local extension programming is eliminated if the new tax is adopted and produces twice the average funding of the most recent three years. The county may reduce its current-year funding by 33 percent of the amount that the new tax revenue exceeds the average funding for the most recent three years.

262.598.8. Any county that collects tax revenues authorized under this section shall transfer all attributable revenue plus monthly interest for deposit into the district's special fund. The governing body of the district shall comply with the prudent investor standard for investment fiduciaries as provided in section 105.688.

County officials in each county of the district will impose and collect the tax. Any county collecting the tax revenues will transfer the money collected plus

the interest earned on the money to the district on a monthly basis. The district must follow state law regarding proper handling of tax dollars, including investment of funds before expenditure.

262.598.9. In any county in which a single-council district is established, and for which a tax has not been levied, the district may be dissolved in the same manner in which it was formed.

If no tax has been adopted, the county council can dissolve a single-council district in the same manner as it created the district — by a majority vote of the full council.

262.598.10. A county may withdraw from a consolidated district at any time by filing a petition with the circuit court having jurisdiction over the district. The petition shall be signed by not fewer than ten percent (10%) of those who voted in the most recent presidential election in the county seeking to withdraw from the district. The petition shall state that further operation of the district is contrary to the best interest of the inhabitants of the county that seeks to withdraw from the district. The circuit court shall hear evidence on the petition. If the court finds that it is in the best interest of the inhabitants of the county for the county to withdraw from the district, the court shall make an order reciting the same and submit the question to the voters. The costs of submitting the question to the voters at the general municipal election shall be paid as provided in section 115.063. The question shall be submitted in substantially the following format:

“Shall the County of (insert name of county) being part of (insert name of district) Extension District withdraw from the district?”

The question shall be submitted at the next general municipal election date. The election returns shall be certified to the court. If the court finds that two-thirds of those voting on the question voted in favor of withdrawing from the district, the court shall issue an order withdrawing the county from the district, which shall contain a proviso that the district shall remain intact for the sole purposes of paying all outstanding and lawful obligations and disposing of the district’s property. No additional costs or obligations for the withdrawing county shall be created except as necessary. The withdrawal shall occur on the first day of the following January after the vote. If the court finds that two-thirds of those voting on the question shall not have voted favorably on the question to withdraw from the district, the court shall issue an order dismissing the petition, and the district shall continue to operate.

This section details how a county that is part of a consolidated district may withdraw from the district. This process must be followed even if no tax has been imposed. First, a petition is signed by voters equal to 10 percent of the number of voters who voted in the last presidential election. After the validity of the petition is determined, the circuit court conducts a hearing to determine whether withdrawal is in the best interest of the county residents. If the court determines that withdrawal is in the residents’ best interest, the issue of withdrawal is submitted to the voters in the withdrawing county, with the cost of the election being paid by the petitioners or the county. Withdrawal requires approval of two-thirds of the voters. If the issue fails, the county remains part of the district.

262.598.11. The governing body of any district may seek voter approval to increase its current tax rate authorized under this section, provided such increase shall not cause the total tax to exceed thirty cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation. To propose such an increase, the governing body shall submit the question to the voters at the general municipal election in the county or counties comprising the district. The costs of submitting the question to the voters shall be paid as provided in section 115.063. The question shall be submitted in substantially the following form:

“Shall the Extension District in (insert name of county or counties) be authorized to increase the tax rate from (insert current amount of tax) cents to (insert proposed amount of tax not to exceed thirty) cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation for the purpose of funding the University of Missouri Extension District programs, equipment and services in the district?”

In a single-council district, if a majority of the voters in the county approves the question, then the district shall impose the tax. If a majority of the voters in a single-council district does not approve the question, then the tax shall not be imposed. In a consolidated district, if a majority of voters in the district approves the question, then the district shall impose the new tax rate. If a majority of the voters in a consolidated district does not approve the question, then the tax shall not be imposed in any county of the district. Revenues collected from imposition of the tax authorized under this section shall be deposited into the special fund dedicated only for use by the district.

A district may request an increase in an existing tax levy by submitting the proposed increase to a vote of the people in the district. The issue must be passed by the majority of those voting in the district, but it does not require approval within each county in a consolidated district. The increase is imposed in all the counties if approved and in none of the counties if not approved.

Volunteers' role in the district option

Stakeholder relations

County, regional and state extension council members often serve as the interface between MU Extension and elected representatives in local and state government. Council members have many opportunities to be key communicators and advocates for the valuable programs and work that extension does in communities across the state.

How to build relationships with county commissioners and other stakeholders

Listen, listen, listen. Seek first to understand.

- In informal conversation or through a formal interview, ask elected officials and stakeholders to discuss concerns of constituents and extension's role in the community. Ask how extension can help them and the people they serve.
- Keep notes about your conversation, capturing the most important points about the person's interests and concerns about the community.
- Summarize your notes, and share them with your county program director and the whole council.
- Approach the officeholder with respect for the office and the tremendous responsibilities of the position.
- Practice good listening skills. Good listeners listen with their faces, establish eye contact, and concentrate on what is being said rather than planning what to say next. Good listeners listen without interrupting the other person's train of thought.

Stakeholders want to know WIIFM — What's in it for me?

- Ask stakeholders what their biggest problems are. Suggest ways extension may be able to help.
- Refer them to extension faculty, websites, publications and other materials.

Invite stakeholders to programs, offer to host them at local events.

- Cosponsor open houses, information coffees, breakfasts or receptions with the MU Alumni Association or other partners to showcase university and extension programs.
- In cooperation with local staff, provide a tour of extension programs.

More information on council members' role in stakeholder relations

<http://extension.missouri.edu/extcouncil/stakeholder>

Employees' roles in the district option

More information on communicating with stakeholders

<http://extension.missouri.edu/staff/stakeholders/index.html>

Vice provost and director of cooperative extension

- Works directly to assure the federal and state budget support necessary to maintain and build a vital organization.
- Leads legislative strategy development and implementation in cooperation with the MU campus administration and with the UM Governmental Relations office.
- Communicates directly with program leaders, regional directors and administrative staff about budget and program issues.
- Oversees decisions and communications with key stakeholders, including the media.

Program directors

- Provide leadership for determining program priorities, funding strategies, program evaluation and impact, and communications for programs statewide.
- Build relationships with campus, state, multistate, national and international stakeholders, agencies, organizations and constituents.
- Establish and maintain formal partnerships and collaborations to enable external funding opportunities on a state, multistate, national and international level.
- Facilitate meetings with key stakeholders as necessary and work with faculty and local, regional and state extension councils to engage with and develop stakeholder communications.

University of Missouri Government Relations

- Oversees legislative strategies, policies and procedures related to legislative advocacy for the entire university.
- Serves as resource to extension in communication with legislators.

Director of constituent relations

- Implements strategies for communication with legislators and other stakeholders as delegated by the vice provost and director of cooperative extension.
- Coordinates with UM Government Relations staff, MU University Affairs staff, program directors and regional directors in developing training plans and materials for communication.

Associate vice provost and associate director of MU Extension

- Communicates purpose and value of stakeholder relationship program to regional faculty and staff.

- Coordinates with regional directors and regional and state extension councils to develop plans for training off-campus faculty, staff and councils about their roles.
- Assists vice provost in direct communication with stakeholders as requested.

Regional directors

- Coordinate with county program directors and regional councils to develop stakeholder communication strategies and plans on regional and county levels.
- Facilitate sharing of information among administration, county program directors and regional councils.
- Facilitate meetings with key stakeholders as necessary.
- Support county and regional training and communication efforts.
- Meet and get to know key legislators in their region and their primary interests. Discuss what extension has done or might do that relates to them and their constituents.

County program directors

- Mobilize local faculty, staff and volunteers to inventory current relationships with stakeholders; assess strengths and weaknesses; work with regional faculty and volunteers to build ongoing, local relationships.
- Develop annual plan for communication with key stakeholders through personal visits, phone calls, email, invitations to participate in programs, recognition events and other means.
- With county council, support training for faculty, staff and council members.
- Introduce new faculty to local policymakers.
- With county council, orchestrate effort to gain support for county budget.
- Alert director of off-campus operations and regional director to situations needing attention.
- Distribute annual report to key stakeholders, such as county commissioners and legislators.

Associate vice provost for extension

- Assist vice provost with communications as assigned and act in vice provost's stead when necessary.
- Coordinate with campus continuing education directors to inventory current relationships with stakeholders; assess strengths and weaknesses; and encourage faculty, staff and volunteers to build ongoing relationships with stakeholders.
- Alert vice provost of situations needing attention and of opportunities.

Continuing education directors

- Coordinate with campus faculty to develop stakeholder communication plans.
- Report back to associate vice provost on periodic basis concerning situations needing attention and opportunities.

All campus and off-campus faculty

- Follow the news, and be informed about legislative and community issues.
- Inventory and assess current relationships with stakeholders. Share information with county program director or department or unit head.

- Get to know legislators and their aides, county commissioners and other decision-makers, particularly those dealing with faculty member’s academic area.
- Communicate with county program directors, regional directors and program leaders about “connecting points” with stakeholders.
- Develop annual plan for communication through personal visits, phone calls, email, invitations to participate in programs, recognition events and other means.
- Share information about program efforts and impacts through newsletters, news columns, presentations at community groups and personal conversations.
- Involve policymakers in educational program efforts. Work with policymakers on issues of concern for their communities.

County council coordinators

- Coordinate stakeholder relations training for county councils on ongoing basis.
- Serve as resource to county, regional and state councils to implement stakeholder communication plans.
- Report areas of concern and opportunity to the associate vice provost and associate director of MU Extension.

County secretaries

- Are often local residents’ first point of contact with MU Extension and are the “face” of MU Extension for many.
- Share the educational information about the value of MU Extension provided by the council.
- Listen to clients’ concerns empathetically.

All employees

- Educate the public about the value of MU Extension.
- Do not encourage members of the public to vote a specific way or ask them how they are going to vote.

See the *Educating vs. lobbying* section on page 48 to learn about the difference between educating the public and lobbying for an issue. MU Extension employees may educate members of the public about the value of extension, but may not try to influence them to vote a certain way on any ballot issue related to MU Extension.

Fact-finding Phase

Frequently asked questions

Effective Aug. 28, 2013, county extension councils in Missouri have the option to form single-council districts or consolidated districts made up of two or more counties. Since this law — section 262.598 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri — went into effect, council members have been considering the implications of district formation for their councils. This publication answers many of the questions that council members have about the University of Missouri Extension district option and the processes of forming a district and levying a tax to support extension operations and programs in the district.

You may want to also refer to these MU Extension publications for more information:

- *Forming an MU Extension District* (brochure)
- *Explanation of the MU Extension District Option* (four-page guide)
- *MU Extension District Option Law Manual* (detailed manual), coming soon

Phase 1 — Orientation

1. What is the MU Extension district option?

In 2013, the Missouri Legislature passed a bill permitting county extension councils to establish a single-council district or a consolidated district of two or more county councils. Forming an MU Extension district is an option for councils that may result in more efficient and effective use of resources and personnel for county residents. It also allows the created district to seek funding through a tax levy approved by the voters of the district.

2. Is a county council required to join or to form a district?

No, a county does not have to participate in a district. District formation is an option, not a mandate. However, councils may want to explore the districting option to find out if participating in a district might offer some benefit to county residents.

3. Whose idea was districting?

The MU Extension State Council, after much research and discussion, saw districting as an option that could help county councils be more efficient and effective in their use of resources and personnel for the benefit of Missouri residents.

4. Why is St. Louis County excluded from the legislation?

St. Louis County is not excluded by name in the law, but it is excluded because of the stipulation excluding any council located in a county with a charter form of government and with more than 950,000 inhabitants. When crafting the legislation, the legislators did not think that district formation would be beneficial for St. Louis County.

5. Whose decision is district formation?

The decision to form a district is made by the county council itself if a single-council district and the county councils collectively if a consolidated district.

6. Why would a single council form a district?

Only by becoming a district can a single council, acting as the district board, pursue a tax levy to support extension operations and programs.

7. What happens to a county council's local funding and county commission allocations if the council becomes part of a district?

If no tax is pursued and adopted, funding will remain the same as it is before the district was formed, subject to the same variations from year to year. If a tax is adopted, the statutorily required funding by the county commission will be reduced or eliminated. Other sources of funding will remain subject to the same process the funders use in determining allocations to extension. These other funding sources may take the property tax into account, but they are not required to do so.

8. Will my county benefit most from forming a single-council district or joining a consolidated district?

Each county will have to evaluate the benefits and costs of districting, which will vary from county to county depending on local budget considerations, programming plans and council goals. Drafting council and district business plans should help to define priorities and the benefits and drawbacks of a forming a single-council or consolidated district.

9. Can districts be formed across extension regions?

Yes, counties from different extension regions can form a district. As councils explore the option of forming a district, they should think about the best alignment for programming efficiency and similar characteristics. Regional lines are for administrative purposes and will not limit a council's decision about which county or counties might make the best partners for jointly creating efficiencies or gaining support for a tax levy.

10. Who is responsible for the tasks that need to be accomplished in the formation of a district?

County councils are responsible for deciding whether the district option is best for their county and, if so, whether as a single-council or consolidated district. Once a district is formed, the district board is responsible for the decision to seek a tax levy. County MU Extension staff members will continue to provide administrative support to the county councils and will perform similar roles for district boards. The manual describes potential roles of each person who might be involved in creating, conducting and support the efforts of the council and district. (For general information on MU Extension employee roles, go to <http://extension.missouri.edu/staff/stakeholders/employeeoles.html>.)

11. How does a council go about exploring the district option, forming a district and campaigning for a tax levy?

A suggested process and timeline for exploring the district option, forming a district and campaigning for a tax levy can be found in the manual. The process is divided into four phases: orientation, fact-finding, assessment and decision, and campaign.

12. What is the best way to engage the county program directors (CPDs) and regional director (RDs) who serve counties involved in forming districts?

The first phase in the suggested process for exploring the district option suggests that the county extension council meet to discuss the district option. Engaging council employees and MU extension employees in the process from the beginning is appropriate and encouraged.

13. How is a district board formed?

In a single-council district, the county council will be the district board. In a consolidated district, each council appoints an equal number of members to the board. The district formation documents will establish the number of representatives, which must be from three to five per council.

14. If a consolidated district is formed, will any of the county offices close?

Office operation is a local county council decision. The county councils forming the district should consider office operations during the initial discussions and business plan development as they explore the most efficient and effective use of resources and program delivery.

15. Does legal paperwork have to be filed for the creation of a district?

No legal paperwork needs to be filed for the creation of a district. However, each council that becomes part of a single-council or consolidated district should notify its county commission of the district formation.

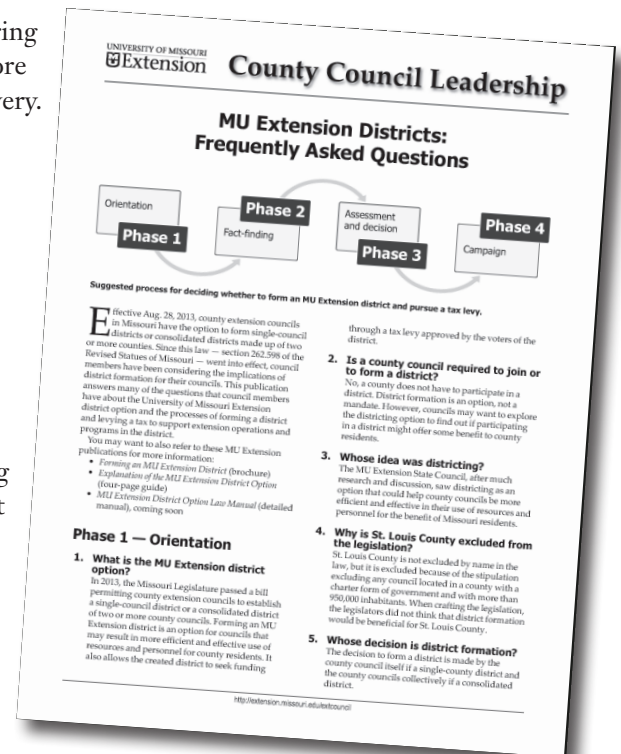
16. How can a district provide more programs than an individual county?

Each district, like each county, is unique. But some ways districting might benefit counties include the ability to jointly acquire a grant that an individual county might not be able to acquire; the ability to provide donors who want to support multiple counties an easy way to do so; and the ability to deliver more programming to the counties through operating efficiencies that enable reallocation of local appropriated dollars. The programming strategy and goals should be explained in the county and district business plans.

17. Will counties get more staff members if a district is formed?

District formation will not necessarily lead to a larger county staff. MU employee allocations and assignments are not determined by the presence or absence of a district. Cost-share opportunities may make hiring additional personnel possible. Numerous memorandums of agreement (MOUs) already exist between counties and MU Extension for staff positions such as youth program development assistants and associates. In some instances, local partners have contributed to salaries for faculty or specialist positions. These arrangements occur on a case-by-case basis to help counties meet program coverage goals. Districts might also consider how they can support current MU employees covering the district to enhance or increase program delivery. The county and district business plans should address the best use of all available staff members.

This information in this section is available in the form of a six-page PDF from <http://extension.missouri.edu/districtoption>.



18. How long does it take to form a district?

Before counties form a district, they need to conduct a thorough exploration of the district option and determine whether forming a district is in the best interest of county residents. See the suggested timeline in the manual for how long these parts of the process may take. To formally form a district requires a majority vote of each participating council. A single-council district can be formed by a majority vote at a single, properly noticed county council meeting attended by the full council. Formation of a consolidated district requires that each participating council vote on the districting. The vote of each council must be taken at a properly noticed meeting attended by a quorum.

19. Where can I find information about counties that have formed districts?

The law only became effective August 28, 2013, and no counties in Missouri have yet formed a district. As districts are formed, we will post details on the council website, <http://extension.missouri.edu/extcouncil>, about what counties have formed districts and which type of district they formed.

20. How should county extension councils respond to county officials and local residents urging them to pursue the district option and adoption of tax funding?

The council should be open and prepared to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of district formation and adoption of a property tax. When the council initially meets to begin exploring the district option, members should consider the best response to such questions. A possible response could be: “The extension council is willing to explore this new option to determine its value and the receptiveness of voters to passing a property tax to support MU extension efforts. Can the council count on your support?” Councils should consider holding a district option orientation meeting that is open to the public, and encourage officials and other interested parties to attend.

21. What help is available for communicating the value of MU Extension to constituents?

Each county extension council is encouraged to have a county business plan that includes sections on marketing and finances. The MU Extension Donor Education office has many resources to help with communicating value (<http://extension.missouri.edu/donoreducation>), as does your county annual report.

22. When can a district tax measure appear on the ballot?

A district tax measure can appear on the ballot during the general municipal election, which is held each April. The district board should work with the county clerk to identify the date on which to submit the measure to the vote of the people. The Secretary of State publishes the official election calendar for each year, including the dates by which ballot measures must be certified (<http://www.sos.mo.gov>).

23. Can councils form a district to create efficiency without pursuing a tax levy?

Yes, councils can form a district simply to increase efficiency and program delivery. Districts are not required to pursue a tax levy.

24. Who pays for the election when the tax measure is on the ballot?

The district pays for the election in which the tax measure is presented to the voters. The cost of the election is prorated to all entities with measures on the ballot. The county clerk is the best source of information on specific costs for a ballot measure.

25. Are councils in a consolidated district required to give money to the district?

In a consolidated district, each district and each individual council should have a budget and a business plan. Programming that is offered by the district is supported by funds from the councils in the district as agreed upon when planning programming, writing the business plan and developing a budget. If a tax is levied in support of the district, funds received from the tax will be managed by the district and may reduce the need for funds from the county councils.

Phase 2 — Fact-finding

26. If voters approve a tax levy, does the county commission's current funding obligation change?

If a tax levy is adopted, the county commission's current statutory obligation will either be reduced or eliminated depending on the amount collected from the tax levy. In the first year of the levy, the funding may be reduced by 33 percent of the amount above two times the three-year-average county commission obligation. The county commission is exempt from the funding obligation if the tax produces revenue twice its statutory obligation.

27. Do counties in a consolidated district have to share a border?

No, counties in a consolidated district do not have to share a border.

28. What does the district pay for?

The district and each participating council will have its own budget. Before a tax levy is adopted, the money in the district's budget comes from the participating counties to fund district programming. Payment for the election when the tax levy is on the ballot is made by the district from its county-provided funds or funds raised during the campaign phase (see the campaign phase section of the manual). Once a tax levy is adopted, the funds from the tax will be the district's to manage to support extension operations and programming in the district, and the amount of money the district receives from the counties may change.

29. How may districts spend funds generated by a tax levy?

Money generated by the tax may be used to fund extension programs, equipment and services in the district.

30. Can a county commission cut funding to encourage a council to form a district and pursue a tax levy?

The county commission is required by section 262.597 of the Revised Missouri Statutes to provide a certain level of funding for extension. If the commission has been funding extension at a higher level than required by law, it has the option of reducing or increasing its allocation.

- 31. Who collects and distributes the tax-generated money for a district?**
County officials in each county of the district will impose and collect the tax. The collected taxes plus interest earned must be transferred to the district monthly.
- 32. How should a council determine the counties to join in forming a district?**
A council should communicate with counties that have similar goals for efficiencies and effectiveness of operations and programming to explore the possibility of forming a district.
- 33. Will county councils that want to form a district with other counties possibly join our county?**
During the fact-finding phase, councils need to communicate about their goals and consider collaborating. Your regional director can provide guidance in identifying councils who may be interested in forming a district. Council business plans will be beneficial in identifying issues and discussion points.
- 34. How do we increase funding after forming a district?**
Creation of a district has no impact on current funding revenues. The existence of a district may be beneficial with some existing revenue sources and an impediment to others. A district can pursue a tax levy to increase funding, with the levy amount capped at 30 cents per \$100 of assessed value. If a district has a current levy that is below 30 cents, it may submit a request to the voter to increase the levy.
- 35. Once a district is formed, if requests for programs come from a nondistrict county, can the programs be shared?**
Programming is a function of job duties for specialists, each of whom is assigned specific counties for program coverage. Formation of a district does not change these assignments. If the district has an MOU with MU Extension for a specialist assigned solely for programming in the district, then whether to share programs with other counties would be a decision of the district board.
- 36. Why would a larger, well-funded county want to form a district with a smaller, less-funded county?**
Many variables come into play when considering whether to form a consolidated district, so predicting a specific outcome is difficult. Counties of different sizes and funding levels may have goals and programming plans that match or complement each other. Councils should discuss the benefits and challenges districting presents for each county and go through the fact-finding process to determine whether districting would benefit their residents.
- 37. How will council business plans be used in the districting process?**
Council business plans help convey the needs and plans for programming to meet the needs of the local residents. Councils can use them to compare residents' needs and programming plans across counties to help determine if districting may help them be more efficient and effective in delivering programming.

38. How much will districting cost the average taxpayer?

Unless a tax levy in support of the district is adopted, districting will not cost the taxpayers anything. If a tax levy is adopted, the cost will depend on the amount of the levy and the definition of an average taxpayer in the county. The maximum amount of the tax levy is 30 cents per \$100 dollars of assessed value. To estimate the amount a tax levy will cost the average taxpayer, you will need to find out from the county assessor the average value of personal property, such as vehicles and livestock; personal residential property; and personal agricultural property in the county. The assessment and decision phase section of the manual describes how you use these numbers to estimate the cost to the average taxpayer.

39. What is the maximum tax that can be requested?

The maximum levy for support of an extension district is 30 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

40. Can counties form a district to share resources, but not request a tax levy?

Yes, councils can form a district simply to increase efficiency and program delivery. Districts are not required to pursue a tax levy.

41. What happens if the ballot measure for a tax levy fails?

If the proposed tax levy measure fails, the district will continue to operate without that source of revenue.

42. How does a council decide what tax rate to request?

The tax may not exceed 30 cents per \$100 of assessed value. To determine at what level the levy should be set, consider the district's revenue needs and the assessed value of property in the district. The district business plan should be helpful in setting the appropriate levy.

Phase 3 — Assessment and decision

43. Can fundraising be done when a district has been formed but is not proposing to put a tax measure on the ballot?

Fundraising can always be done. The state statute that covers extension councils allows for fundraising in addition to county appropriations. Councils, through their business plan, may want to consider gifts and endowments. The MU Extension Donor Education website, <http://extension.missouri.edu/donoreducation>, provides information about these funds as well as development tips on its Gifts and Endowments page.

44. How does a district pay for the cost of the election for a tax measure?

The district will finance the cost of any elections seeking taxing authority. The funds can come from the appropriated dollars or other resources obtained by the district.

45. Can a tax levy be sought later?

Yes, a district may seek a tax levy at any time.

Phase 4 — Campaign

46. What would a campaign for a tax levy involve?

The campaign for a tax levy for the district would be a marketing and informational campaign whose aim would be to educate district residents on the benefits having a well-funded district would bring to the area.

47. Can council members lead the campaign for a district tax levy?

Individual council members may participate in the campaign, but they must not use any resources of the political subdivision.

48. How can the campaign for a tax levy be funded?

Chapter 130 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri governs campaign finance. As political subdivisions, county councils and district boards are subject to these laws. The Missouri Ethics Commission (MEC) offers campaign finance training and tutorials online at <http://mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/Training.aspx>. MEC also provides a summary of the campaign finance law and updates on changes at http://mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/CampaignFinance/CF_Info.aspx.

49. What is the CPD's role in the campaign?

The CPD can only provide educational information and support.

50. What happens if two counties form a district, but the tax measure only passes in one of the counties?

When a tax measure fails in one of the counties in a two-county consolidated district, that county may withdraw from the district. If the county withdraws, the tax goes into effect in the remaining county, which is now a single-council district. If the county in which the tax measure failed does not withdraw, the tax does not go into effect and the consolidated district stands.

51. How is the campaign to educate the citizens about the taxing authority option financed?

Public dollars cannot be used to promote a ballot measure. Therefore, the district would need to secure financing from private sources for the promotion of the ballot measure. The district and county council may provide educational materials and information.

General questions

52. What role do CPDs and other MU employees have in each phase?

MU employees can provide the council with resources and educational information so that council members can make informed decisions.

53. Does the council discuss districting in open or closed sessions?

The Sunshine Law requires the discussions to be held in open sessions.

54. What does a county do if it decides it wants to withdraw from a consolidated district?

A county that decides it wants to withdraw from a consolidated district must first have a petition signed by voters equal to 10 percent of the number of voters who voted in the last presidential election. The circuit court confirms the validity of the petition and then conducts a hearing to determine

whether withdrawal is in the best interest of the county residents. If the court determines that withdrawal is in the residents' best interest, the issue of withdrawal is submitted to the voters in the withdrawing county, with the cost of the election being paid by the petitioners or the county. Withdrawal requires approval of two-thirds of the voters. If the issue fails, the county remains part of the district.

Discussion work sheet

As individual councils explore the district option, they should begin to formalize their thoughts about the benefits districting could bring to their county and the concerns they have about forming a district. A work sheet that can be used for this purpose is on the following page. The sample below shows how the work sheet can be used.

Forming an MU Extension District Discussion Work Sheet

Directions: Working with other council members, identify the benefits of and concerns about districting as you see them.

What districting means to us (The benefits of and concerns about districting)	
Benefits	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher quality of services • Opportunity for greater emphasis on areas of program focus • More personnel resources • Pooling of resources from all counties • Greater reach as specialists work with larger audiences across multiple counties • Potential for increased efficiency in terms of dollar savings and time dedicated to programming • New district structure redefines specialist responsibilities and expectations, which can bring exciting new change for specialists • Flexibility associated with district taxing authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of losing the local connection • District structure potentially a threat to local leadership and county commission may reduce funding to force us to ask for a tax • Increased travel distance/more drive time for specialists • Districting changes research and extension's "traditional" structure, which can be seen as a threat to county residents • Administrative uncertainties associated with organizational changes • New district structure redefines specialist responsibilities and expectations, which can be uncomfortable for the specialists • Questions regarding the effect of districting on the local programming

Forming an MU Extension District Discussion Work Sheet

Directions: Working with other council members, identify the benefits of and concerns about districting as you see them.

What districting means to us (The benefits of and concerns about districting)	
Benefits	Concerns

Sample bylaws for an MU Extension district

BYLAWS _____ MU EXTENSION DISTRICT

As a governing body politic: per Section 262.598, Revised Statutes of Missouri
Approved DD/MM/YYYY

Article I: Name

The name of the group shall be “_____ MU Extension District.”

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the _____ MU Extension District is to provide, under chapter 262.598, educational programs for the district through:

1. Serving as the district’s governing body.
2. Reviewing the activities and annual budgets of each participating council:
 - a. Preparing an annual financial budget covering the district share of the cost of carrying on the extension services contemplated by Sections 262.550 to 262.620, which shall be filed with the county or counties.
 - b. Working with each council on the budget and needed funds to provide high-impact programming, and supporting employees of the district and MU Extension.
 - c. Finding the best possible solutions to increase the district operation’s effectiveness and efficiencies.
3. Determining, by September first of each year, the tax rate necessary to generate sufficient revenue to fund extension programming in the district, which includes annual funding for each participating council for the costs of personnel and the acquisition, supply and maintenance of each council’s property, work and equipment.
4. Overseeing the collection of any tax authorized under this section by ensuring the revenue is deposited into a special fund and by monitoring use of the funds to ensure that they are used solely for extension programming in the district.
5. Approving payments from the special fund in which the tax revenue is deposited.
6. Working cooperatively with each participating council to plan and facilitate the programs, equipment and activities in the district.
7. Making recommendations on topics and issues related to county concerns.
8. Promoting and supporting multicounty planning and programming (when appropriate).

9. Fostering the University of Missouri Extension, University of Missouri Extension State Council and University of Missouri Extension County Council partnership.
10. Creating a _____ MU Extension District Operational Plan for dealing with multiple governing bodies and the revenues for the district that considers the member county councils' business plans.

Article III: Membership

1. The _____ MU Extension District shall be a single-council district, and all elected and appointed county extension council members will also serve as district board members. — OR — The _____ MU Extension District shall be a consolidated district comprising _____, _____ and _____ counties, and the district board will consist of _____ (____) members, appointed equally by each member county.
2. (Only in the case of a consolidated district) Appointees to the _____ MU Extension District will serve a two-year term and be appointed biennially by the member county councils.

Article IV: Term of Office

1. A term of office shall begin in April and be for two years; however, a member may remain in office until a replacement is elected. Members may be reappointed. The governing body shall elect officers, who shall serve as officers for two years, and establish a regular meeting schedule, which shall not be less than once every three months.

Article V: Vacancies

1. If a seat becomes vacant before the end of the normal term of office, the county concerned will be asked to fill the vacancy by appointment. The appointee shall fill the remainder of the unexpired term.
2. A seat will be considered vacant if a county appointee is no longer a resident of the electing county or misses more than two consecutive meetings and the board is not advised of extenuating circumstances.

Article VI: Officers

1. A slate of officers consisting of chair, vice-chair and secretary shall be elected for a two year term at the regular April meeting by a simple majority vote of the members present. To facilitate the election, the chair shall appoint a nominating committee at the regular January meeting to poll the members and prepare a proposed slate of officers for presentation at the April meeting. Nominations from the floor during the election will also be called for.
2. No more than one officer may be from one county.
3. A quorum shall be defined as one more than half of the members of the MU Extension district board being present.
4. Any officer may be removed by the majority vote of the MU Extension district board at any regular or special meeting following a written notice to the officer in question. Written notice must be at least fifteen (15) days before the meeting. A written response from the officer in question must be received

at least five (5) days before the meeting if a MU Extension district board hearing is being requested.

5. If an officer position becomes vacant before the normal term expiration, that position shall be filled by election at the next meeting with the exception of the chair position. If the chair position becomes vacant, the vice-chair shall succeed to chair and the vice-chair vacancy shall then be filled by election.

Article VII: Duties of Officers

- Chair: Set the agenda for each meeting with consult of member county CPDs
Call meetings to order
Assign individual members responsibilities
Appoint committees as needed
Other duties as deemed necessary and approved by district board
- Vice-chair: Perform duties and hold powers of chair during absence of chair
Other duties as deemed necessary by chair
- Secretary: Record, or cause to be recorded, all minutes of regular or special meetings
Record, or cause to be recorded, all votes
Maintain any necessary correspondence
Distribute recordings of proceedings to each district board member, county council member, state council member and regional director
- Treasurer: Prepare an annual financial budget covering the district share of the cost of carrying on the extension services contemplated by Sections 262.550 to 262.620 which shall be filed with each county council on or before January first to be approved by the district board. No moneys shall be spent till the annual budget is approved.

Bond of treasurer — action for breach, by whom brought.

1. The treasurer of the district within ten (10) days after being elected as treasurer and before entering upon the duties of the office shall execute to the council a corporate surety bond of not less than one hundred twenty-five (125) percent of the estimated amount that will be in his or her hands as treasurer at any one time. All such bonds shall be conditioned on the treasurer's faithful discharge of the duties of the office. The amount and sufficiency of all bonds shall be determined by the district board, and upon that approval endorsed on the bond, the bond shall be filed with the county clerks of each member county, who shall notify the chairman of the district board and the county treasurer of the approval and filing. The cost of such bond shall be paid by the district.
2. In the event of the breach of any condition thereof, the chair of the district board shall — and if the chair does not, any member of the council may — cause a suit to be commenced thereon in his or her own name for the benefit of the council, in which suit it shall not be necessary to include the treasurer as a party and the money collected shall be applied to the use of the council, as the same should have been applied by the treasurer.

Deposits of funds — how disbursed — records — report and settlement of treasurer.

1. All moneys received by the treasurer for the district shall be deposited by the treasurer in a bank or trust company designated by the district and authorized to receive public deposits.
2. The treasurer shall pay out, on the warrant of the secretary of the council, or by a combination warrant check, signed by the chairman of the district board and treasurer of the council, all moneys which come to his or her hands for the use of the district, and the treasurer shall not pay any sum from the funds of the district in any other manner.
3. The treasurer shall keep a book in which he or she shall enter all the moneys he or she receives and disburses, specifying the person from whom received and to whom paid, and the object for which same has been paid out.
4. The treasurer shall present to the district at each meeting of the district board a written report containing a statement of all moneys he or she received from the county treasurer and from any other source since the last meeting of the district, and of the disbursements he or she made with the items of such disbursements, and exhibit the warrants or checks or combination warrants and checks therefore, which report shall be recorded by the secretary of the district; and at the close of his or her term of office shall settle with the district board; and shall hand over to his or her successor the books and all other records and papers coming into his or her hands as treasurer, together with all moneys remaining in his or her hands as such treasurer.

Article VIII: Meetings

1. _____ MU Extension District Board will meet minimum of four (4) times per year and other times as needed.
2. The executive committee is responsible for setting dates and locations for the meetings.
3. The executive committee is responsible for setting both regular and special meeting agendas in order to carry out the stated purposes as specified in Article II (1–10).
4. Meeting notice will be mailed or emailed to each district board member and each county program director for posting. All meetings are subject to the Sunshine Law and open to the public.
5. Issues requiring vote shall be decided by a simple majority vote of a quorum. A quorum to conduct district business is half of the members plus one.
6. All meeting shall be conducted in a manner to ensure open and honest discussions and apply rules that follow Robert Rules of Order.

Article IX: Financial Responsibility

1. _____ MU Extension District Board will adhere to sound practices for management of public funds according to the laws of Missouri.
2. _____ MU Extension District Board will be responsible for conducting an audit biennially and publishing it in the local newspaper.

Article X: Amendments

Amendments and additions to these bylaws may be made as follows:

1. A written notice of the proposed change or addition must be sent to each member and member county extension council at least fifteen (15) days before a regularly scheduled meeting.
2. Proposed changes or additions must be approved by a simple majority of members present at a regularly scheduled meeting.

The need for a council business plan

A county council business plan is an important tool all of the time. It is especially important if your council is considering the MU Extension district option. A business plan articulates the council's vision for extension in the county and details how that vision will be realized.

The information in the business plan will be useful when discussing forming a multicounty district. It will also be useful when developing arguments and educational materials to present to stakeholders, voters, supporters and others if the district chooses to pursue a long-term revenue stream through a tax levy.

Councils developing their business plans can find a template and some sample council business plans on the extension Share drive in the S:\Special Projects\County Business Plans folder. Other resources include state council members, regional directors and the county council coordinator.

Writing a county business plan

The process of creating and adopting a business plan for your county council will take about four months. The first step is for the council to agree that a business plan would be a beneficial tool and should be developed. Then the council appoints a committee to draft a business plan. In addition to a few council members, this committee should include other key stakeholders to MU Extension on the local level.

Over the next three months, the committee works on the plan and updates the entire council each month at the council meeting. At the fourth meeting following the resolve to create a business plan, the council adopts the plan.

Once the business plan has been adopted, the council adopts a communication plan about how to share the business plan with stakeholders. The business plan should be reviewed quarterly and revised as needed.

MU Extension county appropriations

A Microsoft Excel workbook of current county appropriations for MU Extension is available online at <http://extension.missouri.edu/districtoption>. This file contains several worksheets that enable councils to assess a tax levy two ways: by entering the total income they would like the levy to provide, which will calculate the tax per \$100 valuation; or by entering the targeted tax per \$100 valuation, which will calculate the income the tax would generate.

University of Missouri Extension – County Appropriations By Alphabetical Order												
Region	County	Total assessed valuation 2012	County appropriation 2013	Percent of mil	Cents per \$100 total valuation	1 cent per \$100 valuation	30 cents per \$100 total valuation	Cents per \$100 total valuation needed to replace appropriation	Target income from assessment	Cents per \$100 total valuation needed	Target tax (cents per \$100 valuation)	Income that would be generated
WC	Cass	\$1,357,985,109	\$54,000	0.040	\$0.0040	\$135,798.51	\$4,073,955.33	\$0.0080		\$0.0000		\$0.00
WC	Cedar	\$157,026,157	\$39,133	0.249	\$0.0249	\$15,702.62	\$471,078.47	\$0.0498		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NE	Chariton	\$181,041,107	\$31,000	0.171	\$0.0171	\$18,104.11	\$543,123.32	\$0.0342		\$0.0000		\$0.00
SW	Christian	\$1,011,627,957	\$65,153	0.064	\$0.0064	\$101,162.80	\$3,034,883.67	\$0.0129		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NE	Clark	\$97,573,584	\$25,987	0.266	\$0.0266	\$9,757.36	\$292,720.75	\$0.0533		\$0.0000		\$0.00
UR	Clay	\$3,699,951,849	\$50,885	0.014	\$0.0014	\$369,995.18	\$11,099,855.55	\$0.0028		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NW	Clinton	\$274,943,636	\$22,156	0.081	\$0.0081	\$27,494.36	\$824,830.91	\$0.0161		\$0.0000		\$0.00
EC	Cole	\$1,328,790,785	\$95,164	0.072	\$0.0072	\$132,879.08	\$3,986,372.36	\$0.0143		\$0.0000		\$0.00
WC	Cooper	\$224,644,297	\$54,151	0.241	\$0.0241	\$22,464.43	\$673,932.89	\$0.0482		\$0.0000		\$0.00
EC	Crawford	\$284,539,475	\$49,840	0.175	\$0.0175	\$28,453.95	\$853,618.43	\$0.0350		\$0.0000		\$0.00
SW	Dade	\$101,933,800	\$12,500	0.123	\$0.0123	\$10,193.38	\$305,801.40	\$0.0245		\$0.0000		\$0.00
WC	Dallas	\$151,689,774	\$32,000	0.211	\$0.0211	\$15,168.98	\$455,069.32	\$0.0422		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NW	Daviess	\$112,777,986	\$29,500	0.262	\$0.0262	\$11,277.80	\$338,333.96	\$0.0523		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NW	DeKalb	\$148,520,457	\$11,000	0.074	\$0.0074	\$14,852.05	\$445,561.37	\$0.0148		\$0.0000		\$0.00
EC	Dent	\$154,600,642	\$37,500	0.243	\$0.0243	\$15,460.06	\$463,801.93	\$0.0485		\$0.0000		\$0.00
SW	Douglas	\$131,319,844	\$10,000	0.076	\$0.0076	\$13,131.98	\$393,959.53	\$0.0152		\$0.0000		\$0.00
SE	Dunklin	\$302,855,241	\$35,000	0.116	\$0.0116	\$30,285.52	\$908,565.72	\$0.0231		\$0.0000		\$0.00
EC	Franklin	\$1,855,905,619	\$167,400	0.090	\$0.0090	\$185,590.56	\$5,567,716.86	\$0.0180		\$0.0000		\$0.00
EC	Gasconade	\$213,759,301	\$45,000	0.211	\$0.0211	\$21,375.93	\$641,277.90	\$0.0421		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NW	Gentry	\$89,324,012	\$25,970	0.291	\$0.0291	\$8,932.40	\$267,972.04	\$0.0581		\$0.0000		\$0.00
SW	Greene	\$4,467,927,003	\$10,000	0.002	\$0.0002	\$446,792.70	\$13,403,781.01	\$0.0004		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NW	Grundy	\$115,285,258	\$20,000	0.173	\$0.0173	\$11,528.53	\$345,855.77	\$0.0347		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NW	Harrison	\$102,879,663	\$31,000	0.301	\$0.0301	\$10,287.97	\$308,638.99	\$0.0603		\$0.0000		\$0.00
WC	Henry	\$307,463,126	\$58,600	0.191	\$0.0191	\$30,746.31	\$922,389.38	\$0.0381		\$0.0000		\$0.00
WC	Hickory	\$109,077,359	\$34,278	0.314	\$0.0314	\$10,907.74	\$327,232.08	\$0.0629		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NW	Holt	\$110,687,628	\$35,040	0.317	\$0.0317	\$11,068.76	\$332,062.88	\$0.0633		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NE	Howard	\$111,520,378	\$27,878	0.250	\$0.0250	\$11,152.04	\$334,561.13	\$0.0500		\$0.0000		\$0.00
SW	Howell	\$430,967,107	\$79,203	0.184	\$0.0184	\$43,096.71	\$1,292,901.32	\$0.0368		\$0.0000		\$0.00
SE	Iron	\$190,848,490	\$27,000	0.141	\$0.0141	\$19,084.85	\$572,545.47	\$0.0283		\$0.0000		\$0.00
UR	Jackson	\$9,660,988,374	\$225,980	0.023	\$0.0023	\$966,098.84	\$28,982,965.12	\$0.0047		\$0.0000		\$0.00
SW	Jasper	\$1,485,200,701	\$55,941	0.038	\$0.0038	\$148,520.07	\$4,455,602.10	\$0.0075		\$0.0000		\$0.00
UR	Jefferson	\$2,992,073,507	\$81,000	0.027	\$0.0027	\$299,207.35	\$8,976,220.52	\$0.0054		\$0.0000		\$0.00
WC	Johnson	\$540,995,776	\$50,000	0.092	\$0.0092	\$54,099.58	\$1,622,987.33	\$0.0185		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NE	Knox	\$71,180,517	\$30,411	0.427	\$0.0427	\$7,118.05	\$213,541.55	\$0.0854		\$0.0000		\$0.00
WC	Laclede	\$398,133,572	\$43,900	0.110	\$0.0110	\$39,813.36	\$1,194,400.72	\$0.0221		\$0.0000		\$0.00
NW	Lafayette	\$369,452,132	\$45,000	0.122	\$0.0122	\$36,945.21	\$1,108,356.40	\$0.0244		\$0.0000		\$0.00
SW	Lawrence	\$420,344,615	\$38,000	0.090	\$0.0090	\$42,034.46	\$1,261,033.85	\$0.0181		\$0.0000		\$0.00

Election costs

To find out the cost of a countywide election, you will need to meet with the county clerk. The county clerk can give you much of the information you will need to estimate the cost of an election.

The key questions you need to ask the county clerk are listed below. You will be asking questions about the last April election. Even if no countywide issue was on that ballot, the county clerk can give you a good estimate of the cost.

- What was the cost for a countywide election at the last April election?
- If there was no election, can you estimate what the cost would have been?
- If we were to have an issue on the ballot for the MU Extension district option, when would we have to pay the estimated election costs?
- What happens if the final election costs are more or less than the estimated costs we paid?
- How can we keep the costs down?
- When do we need to file the ballot issue in your office?
- What is the best and cheapest way to get a list of voters in the last April election? Can we get that information on a CD or in other formats?
- What is the total number of registered voters in the county?
- How many registered voters do you estimate will vote in the upcoming April election?
- What other information do we need to know from you about elections and their costs?

Cost of tax levy to average taxpayer in county

Property tax for the district option law is paid on all property: land, vehicles, equipment and housing — everything that an individual or a business might own.

When estimating what a tax levy will cost individual county residents, your two key sources of information will be the MU Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis’s (OSEDAs) website and your county assessor.

For housing information and other demographic data, go to OSEDAs Missouri County Summary of Social Economic Indicators page, http://www.oseda.missouri.edu/countypage/county_seir.shtml, and select your county’s data table. For housing information, look for this data in the table:

Housing Data	Number	Missouri
Total Housing Units, 2009	18,774	2,682,066
Home Ownership Rate, 2000	81.2	70.3
Pct units in multi-unit structures, 2000	8.2	20.0
Median House Value, 2000	\$102,700	\$89,900

To find out more about averages for property owned in your county, visit with the county assessor. Your objective for this meeting is to find out the value on which county residents will pay the tax. Asking for the assessor’s help will provide the best possible estimates. Explain to the assessor why you are seeking this information.

Here are some question you should ask the assessor:

- What is the average value of personal property in the county?
- What is the average value of all nonfarm property owned in the county?
- What is the average assessed value of that property?
- What would be the average value of a farm property county?
- What is the average assessed value of that farm land and other farm assets?

You might also ask individual taxpayers if they would be willing to provide a copy of their property tax receipts for the council to use in estimating the cost of a tax to county taxpayers.

For further guidance on estimating the cost of a tax, contact Tony DeLong, county council coordinator, at 573-882-4592 or delongt@missouri.edu.

Naming your MU Extension district

If you are forming a single-county extension district, the easiest option would be to name your district the _____ County MU Extension District. This name takes care of almost any issue that may arise for a new district, complies with the law, and makes the collection and payment of tax revenues simple, if you pursue a tax.

If you are forming a consolidated district, naming is not as simple. Here are a few recommendations:

- Ask the collector of each county for a list of all taxing entities in the county. Even if you are not going to pursue a tax levy right away, it is best to know what names are already being used by taxing districts in each of the counties.
- Consider some combination of the county names. For example, if Carter, Shannon and Reynolds counties were to form a district, it might be called the CaShaRey MU Extension District; or Boone and Cooper counties could form the BOCO MU Extension District.

You have many options for names, but you do not want to have the same name as another taxing district anywhere in the state. Such duplication could lead to confusion and cause funds to be sent to the wrong entity.

Assessment and Decision Phase

Educating vs. lobbying

Educating

All employees and volunteers should educate and inform decision-makers about University of Missouri Extension.

We can communicate:

- *What* we do
- *Why* we do it
- *Why* we do it
- *How* we do it
- *What difference* it makes

These communications should be from the viewpoint of the receiver and connect to that person's particular interests and concerns — that is, “What's in it for me?” Educating is our business and is everyone's job.

Lobbying

Lobbying involves communication and interaction to influence a legislator or decision-maker to make a particular decision on specific legislation. While lobbying by most university faculty and staff is not allowed, a few university employees are registered to serve as lobbyists. Additionally, MU Extension council members and other nonemployee volunteers are allowed to lobby on issues related to the university.

Testifying before a legislative committee or commission

On occasion, University of Missouri Extension faculty members are asked by members of the legislature to testify before a legislative committee or commission. This invitation usually is the result of recognition on the legislators' part that the faculty member has particular expertise in an issue that is being discussed or considered for legislation. If you are asked to testify before a committee or commission, first review MU Extension's *Guidelines on Testifying Before a Legislative Committee or Commission* and *Missouri House of Representatives Witness Appearance Form* for appearing before a committee.

Points to remember

- Policymakers have all the talents and shortcomings found in the general population.
- All politics are local.
- Although politics are often partisan, our purpose in educating policymakers about extension resources and impacts is not.
- Representative government and long-range planning are often conflicting ideas.
- Term limits make it imperative to educate legislators on a continuing basis because experience, history and relationships are lost more quickly. In Missouri, no officeholder can serve more than eight years in either the House or Senate.

The documents to review before testifying before a committee or commission are available as PDFs from <http://extension.missouri.edu/staff/stakeholders/educating-vs-lobbying>.

The process of communication

Communication is a three-way process

Communication involves a sender, a message and a receiver. If any one of these components is absent, the process is not complete.

Strong communication skills are crucial when communicating with council members, legislators, stakeholders — anyone.

Barriers to communication

Jumping to conclusions

We see or hear... **facts or happenings.**

We skip... **statements of fact.**

We make... **statements of inference.**

We then behave on the basis of inference rather than fact.

Losing information

Use these strategies to reduce loss of information:

- Give details in order.
- Slow down.
- Use sketches or visual aids.
- Ask questions; play back the information.
- Give a quick overview.

Listening only to words

We assume that words contain the meaning of what the speaker says and that the speaker is using the words the same way we would. Words are just pointers used by individuals. Meaning is found in people, not in words. To influence a person, one must know how the person thinks. Pay close attention to the nonverbal messages.

Becoming a better communicator

- Enunciate.
- Be aware of sending mixed messages through the use of body language.
- Be a receptive listener.

Developing effective listening skills

“We are given two ears but only one mouth because listening is twice as hard as talking.”

Three listening modes

Competitive or combative listening

We do not listen to the speaker but eagerly wait for our turn to speak. This mode does not encourage effective communication.

Passive or attentive listening

We listen intently and assume we heard correctly, but stay passive and do not verify the message. This mode does not facilitate effective, interactive communication.

Active or reflective listening

We are genuinely interested in understanding what the speaker is thinking and feeling. We restate or paraphrase our understanding of the message and reflect it back to the sender for verification. There is a real distinction between merely hearing the words and really listening for the message. Active or reflective listening is the most important listening skill and one we should strive to achieve.

Listening tips

- Paraphrase, and avoid parroting back the words.
- Look for the feeling or intent beyond the words.
- Inhibit the impulse to immediately answer questions.
- Know when to quit listening and when to respond with your own message.
- If you do not understand, be honest and ask for clarification.
- Avoid looking at your watch or other activities around you.
- Be empathic and nonjudgmental.

Capturing the essence of good listening

Good listeners listen with their faces.

- Tilt your face toward the channel of information.
- Use other receptors besides your ears; look for nonverbal clues.
- Look at the speaker; always maintain eye contact.

Good listeners are attentive.

- Avoid distractions.
- Ask questions; respond verbally and nonverbally.
- Don't interrupt.

Good communicators know the importance of listening, which is perhaps more important than speaking. If you are really listening intently, you should feel tired after the speaker has finished. Effective listening is an active rather than a passive activity. The receiver must be an active participant for the cycle of communication to be complete.

Assessing your access and influence

Level 1: No existing relationship

Level 2: Introduction

(visit, phone call, pass-along card)

- My name is...
- I am a member of the University of Missouri Extension Council (4-H Council, EXCEL, etc.) in _____ County.
- Extension links people to education and resources from the University of Missouri.
- We have a connection (community organization, church, school, sports, interest in higher education, agriculture, 4-H, economic development, etc.)
- I'd like to get to know you better and learn how extension is helping and can help you in the future.

Level 3: Follow-up conversations

(visit, phone call, e-mail, print materials, testimonial letters)

- You indicated an interest in...
- I can put you in touch with appropriate resources.
- Here's what others say about the value of extension programs in your interest area.

Level 4: Development of trust and commitment

(informal chats, phone call, e-mail, notes, tokens of appreciation; stakeholder initiates some conversation)

- Come to a program and see extension in action.
- I can help you with your request.
- Thank you for your support.
- We want to recognize you.

Level 5: Confidante/Advisor/Collaborator

- Solicitations of advice (initiated by both parties).
- Calls at odd hours, asides in the hall, chatty email messages.
- Opportunities for program support.
- Invitations to testify on issues.

Adapted from work by Cindy Bigger, University of Minnesota.

Building relationships with select stakeholders

1. “Adopt” one or more stakeholders with whom you want to build a relationship. These stakeholders should be people who can benefit from your knowledge and who can help extension accomplish more for the local community.
2. Use the “Assessing your access and influence” section of this manual to assess the current level of your relationship with each of these persons: from level 1, no existing relationship, through level 5, confidante/advisor/collaborator.
3. Use the Stakeholder Communication Plan form available from <http://extension.missouri.edu/stakeholder> to create a plan for communicating and developing a relationship with your adopted stakeholders.
4. Reassess the relationship several times during the year to see if your level of interactive communication has increased. You can keep track of your progress developing these relationships using the form below.

Commissioner: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____

Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____

Legislator: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____

Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____

Other officeholder: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____

Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____

Program partner: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____

Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____

Other: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____

Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____ Level: _____

Your role in building stakeholder relationships

County extension council members play a key role in establishing and maintaining positive relationships with MU Extension's stakeholders and communicating to them the value of extension programs for local residents. A stakeholder is someone who is involved with an organization and therefore has responsibilities to it and an interest in its success. In the case of extension, stakeholders include county commissioners and other county officeholders, state and federal legislators, city government officials, local funding partners and community leaders. Extension stakeholders are decision-makers who have ownership for supporting extension programs and who, along with their constituents, benefit from those programs. They have the capacity to generate goodwill and obtain resources to support the University of Missouri Extension mission.

During a focus group discussion with representative county commissioners in November 2004, commissioners said they desire ongoing communication, instigated by extension councils and extension faculty and staff — particularly about programs that can help them in their decision-making role and programs that can help county residents improve their lives.

State statutes

The intent of state statutes 262.550–262.620 is for county commissioners to be involved in decisions about extension programs, to assume fiscal responsibility for local support of those programs, and to receive ongoing reports of results accomplished. County extension councils are responsible for communicating with commissioners about extension programs, governance and membership. Council members also have an important role in communicating with other key stakeholders. Communication requires county extension council members to build and maintain ongoing relationships with those who have interest in and responsibility for programs.

Several sections of the Revised Statutes of Missouri address county extension council responsibilities for communication:

262.597 Financial budget for extension programs — appropriations from counties.

The council, in cooperation with the county commission and the university, shall prepare an annual financial budget covering the county's share of the cost carrying on the extension services contemplated by sections 262.550 to 262.620 which shall be filed with the county commission on or before January first each year and the county commission shall include the budget so filed in...the budget of county expenditures...

262.600 Monthly requisitions on county commission, how issued, amount of...

Immediately following the close of each month the council shall requisition the county commission for the estimated amount of the month's expenditures and within ten days after filing the requisition, shall submit to the county commission a certified, itemized statement of all expenditures covered by the requisition. The requisition shall constitute the basis for immediate issuance by the county commission and it shall, if there be funds available therefore, promptly issue a warrant covering the requisition in full and drawn in favor of the treasurer of the council.

262.603 Names of council members and officers given university and county commission, when.

Before the allocation of funds is made by the county commission, the council shall present to the university and the county commission a list of members of the council and of its officers with statements signed by the chairman of the council certifying that the named officers have been duly elected and qualified as specified in sections 262.583 and 262.607.

262.617 Annual report to county commission.

At the close of each calendar year the council, through the secretary, shall make an annual detailed report to the county commission, covering all receipts and expenditures, together with a summary of work undertaken and results accomplished. The report shall be filed with the county commission not later than February first, following the close of the year or portion of year covered by the report.

How to build relationships with commissioners and other stakeholders

Listen, listen, listen. Seek first to understand.

- In informal conversation or through a formal interview, ask elected officials and stakeholders to discuss the concerns of constituents and the role of extension in the community. Ask how extension can help them and the people they serve.
- Keep notes about your conversation, capturing the most important points about the person's interests and concerns about the community.
- Summarize your notes, and share them with your county program director and the whole council.
- Approach the officeholder with respect for the office and the tremendous responsibilities of the position.
- Practice good listening skills. Good listeners listen with their faces, establish eye contact, and concentrate on what is being said rather than planning what to say next. Good listeners listen without interrupting the other person's train of thought. (See "The process of communication" section.)

See commissioners and other stakeholders as extension clients, not just as funding sources.

- Stakeholders are interested in WIIFM — What’s in it for me?
- Ask stakeholders what their biggest problems are, and suggest ways extension may be able to help.
- Refer them to extension faculty, websites, publications and other materials.

Invite stakeholders to programs or host them at local events.

- Cosponsor open houses, information coffees, breakfasts or receptions with the MU Alumni Association or other partners to showcase university and extension programs.
- In cooperation with local staff, provide a tour of extension programs.

Invite stakeholders to serve on council committees.

- Match stakeholders’ talents and skills with program needs.

Recognize stakeholders for their achievements.

- For example, if a stakeholder appears in the local paper, clip the article and send it to him or her with a congratulatory note.
- Keep a scrapbook of extension articles, and display the scrapbook at public events.

Recognize extension supporters.

- Recognize members of the community in the stakeholder’s subgroups — business, agriculture, government — as “extension’s heroes.”
- Give these extension supporters public recognition through the media.

Communicate throughout the year, not just at budget time.

- Ask each council member to “adopt” at least one vital stakeholder. Have the council member learn about the stakeholder’s interests and background, and devise a plan to keep in touch with that person regularly. (See the “Assessing your access and influence” section in this manual. Also see the Profile on Missouri Stakeholders and the Stakeholder Communication Plan online at <http://extension.missouri.edu/stakeholder>.)
- Learn about the stakeholder’s concerns. County commission minutes are public documents. Request copies of the minutes and scan them for issues or needs that extension can address. Read local papers and listen to newscasts to learn about county commission, city council or legislative issues. Determine if there is an extension connection to any of the issues.
- Ask the county commission representative on the council to periodically report on what is happening in the county and suggest ways extension might help.
- Drop by or make appointments to visit stakeholders. Share program impacts in the person’s area of interest through personal stories, email messages, letters, postcard announcements and phone calls.
- Provide copies of newsletters, brochures, program fliers and other materials as appropriate. (See the pass-along cards online at <http://extension.missouri.edu/stakeholder>.)
- Provide testimonial letters from extension learners to show program value and importance.

- Send thank-you notes or letters when legislators, commissioners or other stakeholders provide fiscal and other support for programs.

Participate in local fairs, displays and events.

- Keep the University of Missouri Extension name in the forefront in the community.
- When appropriate, speak to service clubs, organizations and local groups about extension and your personal extension-related success experiences.

Participate in the annual University of Missouri Alumni Alliance Legislative Day in Jefferson City.

- Go to Jefferson City prepared to share stories about how extension has affected your life
- Also take testimonial letters from extension clients and learners to share.

Additional resources

Role of County Extension Councils in Marketing: <http://extension.missouri.edu/extcouncil>

County Commissioner Focus Group Report on the extension Share drive:
S:\MUCampus\Community Development\CD POW fy06-11 documents\County Commission Focus Group Report final report (3).doc

County Plan of Work

Communicating With Your State Legislators: http://extension.missouri.edu/staff/stakeholders/documents/dos_and_dont's_Feb2010.pdf

Share stakeholder relations ideas with the regional council and other county councils.

- Let all MU Extension councils benefit from your ideas about strengthening relationships with stakeholders.

Be enthusiastic!

- When a stakeholder or anyone asks how you are, mention your involvement in the extension council and the difference extension is making for you, your community and the state.

Evaluating a ballot issue proposal

Before a county council announces its intention to pursue the district option, or a district board announces its intention to pursue a tax levy, members should prepare to educate MU Extension stakeholders and local taxpayers about the ballot issue.

Be prepared to provide the following information, when applicable:

- An overview of the proposed ballot issue, highlighting the benefits for the community
- A current budget or financial overview of the project or operation related to this issue
- A detailed budget showing the affect of the expected proceeds should the proposed ballot issue pass

Be prepared to answer the following questions, when applicable:

- If approved by voters, how will this issue affect business and economic development in our area?
- If approved by voters, how will this issue affect our community's quality of life?
- If approved, how will the city or county sales tax compare to surrounding communities?
- If approved, how will the MU Extension district tax levy compare with that of surrounding districts?
- What is the cost to businesses?
- What is the cost to residents?
- What is the organization's record of accountability with previous tax revenues?
- Is the proposal specific?
- Does the proposal include a sunset clause or other accountability measures?
- What other alternatives to this proposal have been considered?
- How have other communities dealt with this issue?
- What are the consequences if voters do not approve this proposal?

Defusing public decision

A way to minimize controversy while facilitating public decision-making

At least two sides

There are at least two sides to most issues. Sometimes when public decisions are involved, efforts that begin as a search for a better understanding degenerate into heated controversy. This eventuality can be minimized through the use of what many public affairs educators have come to call “the policy method.” This chapter describes the policy method and explains its relevance to community decision-making.

How decisions are made

Decisions, be they public or private, are made on the basis of beliefs, facts and values. People do not hold the same beliefs as to what the facts are. Even if they did hold the same beliefs as to the facts, they might still disagree as to what should be done. Decisions are not based on fact alone or on what we believe to be fact; they are also based on the values we hold, on our ideas of what is important.

Individuals have different sets of values. No two people have had the same initial endowments or the same cultural, political and religious backgrounds. Thus, even if people agree on the facts and the relevance of the facts, they can still disagree on what is the appropriate decision. Educational programs involving public decision must take this possibility into account, for both philosophic and practical reasons.

Information programs built around as-yet-unmade public decisions that tell people what decisions ought to be made attempt to force a particular set of values on those participating. Thus the program becomes indoctrination, not just the presentation of information. Such a program is in a sense dishonest and thus inappropriate for either a public educational agency or a group billing itself as nonpartisan. The practical reason for not prescribing solution in advance is that advocacy frequently stirs up a reaction that makes it “hot” for the program presenters.

The policy method

Using the policy method, educators and public officials can educate the public with a minimum of heated exchange. This five-step method applies whether the educational process involves a meeting, a newspaper series, a radio or television program, or just a series of personal encounters.

1. Define the problem.
2. List goals and objectives.
3. Develop alternative solutions.
4. Explore the consequences of alternatives.
5. Leave the decision to the people.

The following sections expand on this method, describe how to use it, and explain why it enables us to avoid unnecessary controversy.

Step 1: Clearly define the problem.

The problem must be defined with sufficient generality to avoid argument over what the problem is. One way of achieving a clear definition is to never define the problem in terms of a solution to the problem.

For instance, a problem facing a county might be poor assessment of real property. It would not be helpful to define the problem as either the lack of good assessment or the lack of a competent or honest assessor. It would be much more palatable to define the problem as “difficulty in maintaining equitable assessments.” This definition suggests the problem and not the solution. The problem is stated in sufficient generality that few people will argue it is not a problem and even fewer will argue against equitable assessments in principle.

Controversy over definition of the problem is to be minimized, yet the definition must be sharp enough that those discussing the topic are not addressing themselves to different matters.

Step 2: Develop a list of the goals and values of those affected by the problem and of decisions that might be made.

What do various groups wish to accomplish? What, not how. This list of objectives becomes the criteria by which alternative solutions will be evaluated.

Suppose the problem is downtown parking. The police and fire agencies, the merchants (both downtown and in shopping centers), the customers, the taxpayers and school children are some of those who will have an interest in or be affected by actions that are taken.

The public agencies will want uncongested streets. The downtown merchants will want their customers to have easy access to their business places; their competition in the shopping centers may regard downtown congestion to be to their own benefit. The customers want to get where they are going and do it easily, but as taxpayers they wish to do it at minimum public cost. The school children, while unable to press their point, will have an interest in the safety of pedestrians.

Step 3: Develop alternative approaches to solving the problem.

Categorize a maximum of five solutions that cover the range of possibilities. A universal alternative is doing nothing or leaving things as they are. Others vary with the problem.

If downtown parking is the problem, the alternatives might be:

- Do nothing.
- Develop a one-way street system.
- Develop public parking lots.
- Develop a downtown traffic free area.
- Combine some of the above alternatives.

The list could be extended or shortened, but three to five alternatives seem optimal.

Step 4: Develop the consequences of each alternative in the light of its impact on those affected.

The way the consequences are developed is key to effective use of this method. Develop the consequences and state them in the form of positive statements. Avoid value judgments; that is, don't use words like pro and con, advantage and disadvantage, and good and bad. Here is why:

If the problem is downtown parking and the alternative under analysis is developing a downtown traffic-free area, some of the consequences are as follows:

- Pedestrian movement will be made easier.
- Automobiles must move around the restricted area.
- Front-door delivery to stores will be more difficult.
- Parking within the restricted area will be banned.
- Need for parking will be increased on the edge of the restricted area.

Now, if this information is put in a good or bad, pro or con, or advantage or disadvantage framework, an equal number of each will be needed or there will be accusation of bias. Also, what may be an advantage to one group may be to the disadvantage of another. A consequence stated positively but neutrally avoids these problems.

For instance, the banning of traffic within the restricted area may be an advantage to the pedestrians and even most merchants, but the bank with a drive-in window within the area may have mixed feelings. The drive-in cleaning establishment will certainly be hurt. Telling them that something is an advantage when they know very well that for them it is a disadvantage may cause hostile feelings. A consequence may be stated neutrally, and then each person is free to assign the statement to his or her pro list or con list.

Step 5: Leave decision as to the "best" alternative up to the people.

Decision is based on fact, belief, values and goals. Therefore, you cannot prescribe for another unless you presume you know the relevant facts and can accurately predict the goals and values held by another. If we try to tell people how they should decide and thus by implication that we know better than they what is good for them, we ensure conflict and controversy.

Limits of method

The method described here is not appropriate for the advocate of a cause who wishes to sell his or her view. It is appropriate for those who wish to provide a way public decision-making can be facilitated by providing opportunity for issue exploration before sides have been chosen and while unbiased information is still welcome. At that time, new information is not a threat to established positions that are likely to be defended with a tenacity that hardly makes for an open, exploring mind. Community groups often have a problem coming to a decision about projects to undertake. Quite often, resources, both human and financial, are limited; the number of problems seem overwhelming; or there are forceful advocates of a "pet" project. How can a group overcome these difficulties?

The four decision-making techniques shown in this guide will make the task easier. The first two techniques generate ideas about community goals or projects, while the last two prioritize the alternatives you have identified.

For more information, contact your area MU Extension community development specialist through your local MU Extension center.

Decision-making techniques for community groups

Community groups often have a problem coming to a decision about projects to undertake. Quite often, resources, both human and financial, are limited; the number of problems seem overwhelming; or there are forceful advocates of a pet project. How can a group overcome these difficulties?

The four decision-making techniques shown in this guide will make the task easier. The first two techniques generate ideas about community goals or projects, and the last two prioritize the alternatives you have identified.

Idea-generating techniques

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a technique that generates a large number of ideas in a short time period. It works best when group members know each other and have some degree of trust. The most important thing to remember about brainstorming is that it is intended to generate ideas — not judge ideas.

You will need the following supplies for a brainstorming session: Paper or a chalkboard; felt-tip markers or chalk and an eraser; and masking tape.

Begin the brainstorming session by writing the topic on the paper or chalkboard. Make sure everyone understands the topic — but don't give too many details, it might influence their opinion. Brainstorming continues as long as people have ideas, but limit their time by saying: "We will take the next two minutes to think of as many ideas as we can about."

Time limits help people be creative and spontaneous without the pressure of thinking they will be at the task forever. If there are additional ideas after the time limit, continue the process, but be careful not to let it go on too long.

Next, ask people to call out ideas as quickly as they can and write them on the paper or chalkboard exactly as they were stated. It is important to resist the urge to write what you think people mean, rather than what they say.

In fact, it is a good idea to point out that this activity is not to evaluate the ideas; evaluations come later. No idea should be rejected as being impractical, silly or off-the-wall.

Encourage everyone to give one idea, but don't force those who are reluctant. End the brainstorming session while people are participating enthusiastically, rather than forcing them to think of just one more. Usually, brainstorming is not the ultimate decision-making activity. The results of a brainstorming session will probably be used in other decision-making processes such as the nominal group technique or paired weighting, which will be discussed later.

MU Extension publication DM463,
*Decision-Making Techniques for
Community Groups*, by Johanna Reed
Adams, Charles M. St. Clair and William
E. Robertson, Department of Community
Development.

Brain drain

The brain drain is like brainstorming except it introduces a competitive element into the activity. Begin by dividing the participants into groups of three to five and provide each group with a sheet of paper and a marker. Ask them to write down as many ideas as they can in one minute that relate to the topic under consideration.

After one minute, stop and find out which group has the most ideas. Give the groups one more minute to add to their list. Stop and once again find out which group has the most ideas. Give the groups another additional minute. Stop and ask each group to report on their ideas.

Consolidate ideas by listing them on a master list. Encourage combining and clarifying ideas if necessary, but don't eliminate ideas. Once again, elimination is done using other decision-making techniques.

Idea-prioritizing techniques

Paired weighting

Paired weighting is a good way for a group to prioritize items because it ensures consideration of every item. The activity is relatively easy to do after the list of items has been generated. Here are the steps:

- The list of items is displayed or given to each person.
- Each person receives a “Paired weighting form” and is asked to work individually.
- Everyone starts by comparing item No. 1, in line one, with item No. 2, in line one, circling the one they believe is most important. Similarly, item No. 1 is

Paired weighting form

$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{3}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{5}$	$\frac{1}{6}$	$\frac{1}{7}$	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{9}$	$\frac{1}{10}$	1 =
	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{2}{4}$	$\frac{2}{5}$	$\frac{2}{6}$	$\frac{2}{7}$	$\frac{2}{8}$	$\frac{2}{9}$	$\frac{2}{10}$	2 =
		$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{3}{6}$	$\frac{3}{7}$	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{3}{9}$	$\frac{3}{10}$	3 =
			$\frac{4}{5}$	$\frac{4}{6}$	$\frac{4}{7}$	$\frac{4}{8}$	$\frac{4}{9}$	$\frac{4}{10}$	4 =
				$\frac{5}{6}$	$\frac{5}{7}$	$\frac{5}{8}$	$\frac{5}{9}$	$\frac{5}{10}$	5 =
					$\frac{6}{7}$	$\frac{6}{8}$	$\frac{6}{9}$	$\frac{6}{10}$	6 =
						$\frac{7}{8}$	$\frac{7}{9}$	$\frac{7}{10}$	7 =
							$\frac{8}{9}$	$\frac{8}{10}$	8 =
								$\frac{9}{10}$	9 =
									10 =

then compared with No. 3, No. 4, etc. Continue comparing the items for each line.

- Each person then totals the number of times No. 1 is circled and puts it in the blank at the end of the line.
- The process continues until all lines have been completed.
- The number circled the most often is considered the most important item to the person doing the weighting.
- The last step of the process is to total the group's "votes" for each item. This shows the relative importance of items for the group.

Although this technique seems complicated, it becomes easy to use with practice. It can be used to rank a maximum of 20 items and is a good tool for helping groups prioritize decisions in a logical fashion.

Nominal group process

The nominal group process (NGP) is a technique used for complex problems or to focus action on a community issue. NGP is most useful in situations where individual judgments need to be considered and combined with others to arrive at a decision that cannot be made by one person.

It is a method of pooling knowledge and judgment for the group's benefit. It consists of seven steps that may take several hours to complete, depending upon the number of people involved. This process works effectively with groups of all sizes.

NGP steps are:

- The leader states the question to be considered.
- Individuals generate ideas.
- Ideas are listed.
- Ideas are clarified and similar ideas are combined.
- Ideas are ranked.
- Initial ranking of ideas is discussed.
- Final ranking and consensus.

Running an NGP session is not difficult, but it takes some planning and organization. For example, groups larger than 15 should be subdivided into groups of six to eight. One leader per small group is helpful, although one person could do the session alone with proper preparation.

Supplies needed for a NGP are:

- 3 × 5 note cards (at least three for each participant),
- Pencils or markers, and
- An easel (or masking tape) and flip chart.

A typical NGP session might go something like this:

Step 1

The group leader states a question to be considered. For example, the question might be: "List the five most important reasons why you consider your community to be a good place to live."

Step 2

Each person lists their reasons on a 3 × 5 card without discussing them with the others. Allow five to 10 minutes for this activity. A typical card might look something like this:

- It has a good park.
- The crime rate is low.
- I can always find a parking place downtown.
- The shops have a good selection of clothes.
- Taxes are low.

Step 3

The group leader asks each person in turn to give one answer to the question which is then listed on the flip chart. Do not discuss the items listed; the goal is simply to record. This round-robin listing continues until each person has all of their ideas on the flip chart. This may take 20 to 40 minutes. A typical flip chart might look like this:

1. The crime rate is low.
2. It's a good place to raise children.
3. Downtown shops carry a good selection.
4. The school system is very good.
5. I can always find a parking place downtown.
6. Good place to raise tomatoes.
7. Taxes are low.
8. AAA-rated school.
9. Good park.
10. Joe's prices on pig's feet are pretty good.
11. Nice place to raise kids.
12. Good place to raise Cain.

Do not debate the ideas. The purpose is not to eliminate good ideas that seem unworkable; this culling takes place during the ranking phase. Keep this section at 20 minutes in length. This is what a flip chart might look like after items have been combined:

1. The crime rate is low.
2. It's a good place to raise children (combined with previous No. 11).
3. Downtown shops carry a good selection.
4. The school system is good — AAA-rated (combined with previous No. 8).
5. I can always find a parking place downtown.
6. Good place to raise tomatoes.
7. Taxes are low.
8. Good park (renumbered).
9. Joe's prices on pig's feet are pretty good (renumbered).
10. Good place to raise Cain (renumbered).

Step 5

Now the group ranks the ideas on the flip chart. The leader numbers a second sheet of flip chart paper. Each person picks five items (more than five makes tabulation difficult) and writes them on their second 3 x 5 card along with the item's number. For example, the items selected might look like this:

- It's a good place to raise children.
- I can always find a parking place downtown.
- Good place to raise tomatoes.
- Taxes are low.
- Good place to raise cain.

Using the third card, each person writes down the numbers 1 through 5. Referring to their five items, each person ranks those items from 1 to 5 (1 is most important; 5 is least important). The card would then look like this:

1. No. 6
2. No. 7
3. No. 2
4. No. 5
5. No. 10

When everyone has finished, the leader tabulates the individual rankings. The completed tabulation might look like this:

1. 2, 4, 1, 1, 5
2. 4, 5, 5, 1
3. 2, 1
4. 1, 1, 2, 1
5. 3
6. 3, 2, 4
- 7.
8. 1, 3, 2
- 9.
10. 4, 4, 3, 3, 5, 5, 3, 2, 2, 4, 3, 5, 5

The group leader then adds the “votes” for each item and divides by the number of votes that item received. Based on the scores, item No. 4 — The school system is good — ranked as most important receiving an average vote of 1.2; No. 3 — Shops downtown carry a good selection — was second; No. 8 — Good park — was third; No. 1 — Low crime rate — was fourth; and Nos. 5 and 6 tied for fifth.

1. $2, 4, 1, 1, 5 = 13 \div 5 = 2.6$
2. $4, 5, 5, 1 = 15 \div 4 = 3.75$
3. $2, 1 = 3 \div 2 = 1.5$
4. $1, 1, 2, 1 = 5 \div 4 = 1.2$
5. $3 = 3 \div 1 = 3$
6. $3, 2, 4 = 9 \div 3 = 3$
7. $= 0$
8. $1, 3, 2 = 6 \div 3 = 2$
9. $= 0$
10. $4, 4, 3, 3, 5, 5, 3, 2, 2, 4, 3, 5, 5 = 48 \div 13 = 3.7$

Step 6

The group then has the opportunity to discuss the ranking. If the group is satisfied with the outcome, the process is complete.

Step 7

If the group is not satisfied with the outcome, it can decide to vote again. For example, vote on the top ranking items to be sure the ranking reflects the group's judgment. Occasionally, an item may rank high because it received only one or two votes, but those votes placed it as most important (for example, only two people voted for item No. 3 — Shops downtown..., yet it was ranked as the second most important item; item No. 10 received 13 votes, but it did not show up in the top five because of its higher average).

There is nothing wrong with revoting. The NGP is not a rigid process. It is simply a way to take a look at how the group feels; it is a way to come to consensus about a collection of individual ideas.

Although it can seem complicated, after you have used it a few times you will see how useful it can be in helping a group come to a decision they can all support.

Conclusion

The decision-making techniques presented here represent only a few that can help you assist groups in identifying and choosing community projects or activities. If you would like to learn about other decision-making techniques, the following books may be of help:

The Volunteer Organization Handbook, by Marie Arnot, Lee J. Cary and Mary Jean Houde, published by the Center for Volunteer Development, Cooperative Extension Service, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA.

Group Techniques for Program Planning, by Andre L. Delbecq, Andrew H. Van de Ven and David H. Gustafson, published by Scott, Foresman and Company, Glenview, IL.

Working with resource people

Resource people can and should play a vital role in changing communities. City governments, community institutions, organizations and groups are often confronted with issues that make special knowledge and assistance a must in forming intelligent decisions.

Printed materials assist in exploring information that adds meaning to community decision making. But, many community issues cannot be resolved by canned or packaged programs. It is impossible to design a program to fit every local community situation. Complex or technical problems can best be explored with the help of experts or consultants.

Many community issues require people with special training or competencies. When their knowledge or experience is consulted and weighted by local working groups, many pitfalls can be avoided.

There are many recognized authorities available to communities concerned about specific issues. Communities searching for an authority may be confronted with difficulties if the community problem is only identified in general terms. A generalist may be needed to assist local people in specifically identifying the issue in question. This type of resource person should be competent in community development principles and techniques — the problem solving process, group dynamics and other related skills.

A generalist can often be found in the community. Local institutions and agencies often have trained people who can assist. The University system has area community development specialists who can be contacted through your local MU Extension center. Many other local institutions, organizations and agencies may be points of contact for general community concerns.

Specialists

There are many public and private organizations with specialists that may be consulted on community issues. In specific situations authorities (because of training, experience and special focus of their agencies' programs) may disagree on principles or procedures. Such disagreements may be frustrating to local groups who consult a number of experts. However, different points of view and various approaches allow the study committee to choose the best solution or to develop a new solution from the several features.

Qualifications

Consider these six criteria when selecting a technical expert or resource person:

- Intelligence
- Successful experience
- Education and training
- Availability
- Ability to communicate with the group
- An open mind

MU Extension publication DM490,
Working With Resource People,
by Gerald Gabriel, Department of
Community Development.

It is difficult to find a person with these six factors to assist a group in decision making. Experience working as a resource person with similar groups, issues and situations is invaluable. Firsthand knowledge of experience of other groups with the expert may also be helpful.

Other important considerations in choosing resource persons are:

- Do they know the current facts — have they kept up to date in their fields of expertise?
- Are they relatively free from bias or do they have a package to sell or a profit to make from their recommendations?
- Are reports concerning them current?

MU Extension community development specialists are a good source of information on trained and experienced experts.

Role of the resource person

The resource person's training and experience will greatly affect what he or she thinks he or she is expected to do. Many experts believe their role is to tell, advise, inform or give answers. Others believe their role is to consult, to assist in consideration of the possible solutions, to give information and facts, but to leave the decision to the group.

Local groups with little experience in working with resource people may expect absolute answers. Because of lack of competency regarding the complexities of the issue, local people may fear to display ignorance by asking the expert questions.

Community decisions involve more than the technical aspects of the issue. The expert may not know about local customs, local needs and local ability to implement proposals. Non-tangible and often unobservable feelings, beliefs, values and attitudes are important to continuing, ever-changing community development programs.

Technical assistance in a cooperative effort with local people is often the most fruitful approach to community development. Both the expert and the local people have a vital role to play.

References

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- Spiegel, Hans B. 1968. *Citizen participation in urban development*. Washington, D.C.: National Training Laboratory, Institute of Applied Science.

For more information, contact your area MU Extension community development specialist through your local MU Extension center.

How to have a successful educational meeting on a public issue

Citizens have the duty and opportunity to help make many group decisions about complex issues. Group decisions are those in which two or more people have a voice or vote. The decision may affect one or more persons individually or as a group. The group decision may be of a local nature such as a change in school tax, or a state problem such as water legislation, or a national issue such as commodity referendum.

Issues that relate to broad national programs such as energy, international trade or other complex subjects are becoming more common. For these types of issues, there must be broad public support before much can be accomplished by legislation.

To make wise decisions or to encourage and support elected representatives in their decision-making requires:

- Assembling facts and information not always available immediately.
- Disseminating this information to stimulate public discussion. Helping to assemble and disseminate information is the purpose of extension educational programs on policy.

The approach used is based upon the philosophy that the final decision on public issues must be left to the individual. Educational tasks preceding this decision are: identifying the real problems, pointing out alternative solutions, and exploring the consequences of each. Using this approach, educational programs can be carried out on controversial issues when adequate educational resources are available. The emphasis here is on the problems and issues affecting agriculture and rural people, but the ideas can be applied to other subjects and audiences.

Who is the audience?

Because not everyone is interested in policy questions, special effort must be given to identify those who are interested in a given topic. Participants should include those already interested and those who may become interested with additional information and insight.

Participants should be identified together with the topic or public issues selected for an extension education program.

Who are the people who have an interest in the topic or a stake in the outcome? Should the focus of educational effort be the town or the township, the county, the region or should it be a multiregional endeavor?

These questions may have no easy answer. Often the answer is obvious and determined by the density and geographic distribution of those who will have an interest in the public issue. Consultation with other field staff, the regional director and state specialists may be appropriate. In every case, having a clear idea of the audience for which the meeting is planned is essential.

Large crowds are not necessarily the setting for an effective policy meeting. A group of 40 to 50 may be more desirable, especially if they are leaders.

MU Extension publication CM1306,
How to Have a Successful Educational Meeting on a Public Issue, by Robert J. Bevins, Department of Agricultural Economics.

Getting attendance — general long-run efforts

Some general tasks can and ought to be done whether a policy meeting is planned immediately or not:

- Compile a mailing list in each county of leaders who are likely to have an interest in topics considered for public issues programming. Get a list of all the recipients of the Department of Agricultural Economics Economic and Marketing Information Newsletter in your county. That can be a good nucleus list.
- Develop a list of all officers in the farm organizations plus their various committees who are concerned with policy issues and are probably looking for information.
- Go over these lists with other regional specialists who may have contacts you do not have. The community development specialist may be able to provide a list of leaders in the League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women, and the Missouri Planning Association. The extension specialist who serves as secretary for the Soil and Water District might help develop a list of leaders especially interested in natural resource policy. Your local government specialist can identify formal and informal leaders in local government and in education. The dairy specialist will know some of the leaders in the dairy industry. The livestock specialist will know the leaders in other animal agriculture.

Continue to compile and add to these lists. This is part of the task of maintaining a readily usable tool kit. The discipline of developing lists is useful as it forces one to know people well or to know those who do know the people. Either way, the result is becoming more knowledgeable about clientele groups with which we should be working.

Regardless of the approach used, the important point is to develop a list of people by county who are a potential audience for educational work in policy — like a mailing list of dairymen, pork producers or other special-interest groups.

Public issues are those resolved by some sort of group action. The immediate impact on an individual usually is limited. Public announcement may be sufficient for promoting a meeting to discuss new technology with immediate application and immediate implications for individual pocketbooks. But don't be surprised that a similar approach for a meeting on the "Public Issues in Agricultural Policy Development" results in an attendance flop. Such a topic is too general and most individuals cannot relate to it.

Planning the topic to mean more to the audience and raising issues in which the potential audience has a stake are key publicity approaches for any extension meeting. These are even more important in meetings dealing with policy issues. Public decisions do have significant impact on groups and individuals; the job is to help them see it.

Getting involvement — short-term efforts

Personal contact is the key to getting attendance. You can make use of mailing lists and write people, but you should personalize letters. Circular letters have limited use for this purpose.

Don't be afraid of repetition or reminders. An initial letter followed by a second letter or a telephone call from a specialist or from a secretary may be useful. Never miss the opportunity to remind your leaders of upcoming events. Do this when

you see them in the course of other activities. Do not just tell them a meeting is scheduled, ask them if they are coming, or better still ask them, “You are coming to such and such a meeting, aren’t you?” There is no substitute for knowing personally those individuals who naturally, or because of their position in some organization, have an interest in the complex problems facing society.

Another way to get leaders involved is to set up a steering committee in planning and conducting the program. This may be the extension council or another group organized for this special purpose. You also might consider joint sponsorship with some other appropriate organization. The more you can give others the feeling that what is happening is theirs and not just yours, the greater the success of the public issues educational effort will be. Work to get your meeting announced in other organizations’ newsletters and at their meetings.

One way to increase the chances of success is to find a local group that will support the program and maybe provide a dinner or refreshments. Meetings where food is served generally seem to go better.

Mass media use

After you have made complete plans for the personalized contact necessary to ensure the involvement of the people, you can go the traditional public announcement and mass media route. Do this and do it well. A personal call on one or more editors may be needed. Mass media coverage can reinforce the personal contact and possibly bring out an additional few not contacted personally.

Do not depend on mass media alone as a way to get people out and involved in public issues educational efforts. You probably will be disappointed if you do.

Time and format

For public issues educational work, no single time of day or format fits all situations. In some settings, all-day meetings with lunch work very well. In others, a late afternoon and evening session with a meal in between seems more appropriate. The meal could be planned together or you could have people eat on their own.

Another approach is to piggyback public issues educational work onto other kinds of programs. For instance, when you have an agricultural technology meeting, perhaps you will also want to look at related agricultural policy and the issues involved.

On other occasions, credit courses are an appropriate way to encourage people to engage in public analysis and participation.

Multiply your efforts

Whatever format you use and however you choose to do it, you will want to multiply your efforts and extend the subject matter as far as possible. If you have visiting state specialists or other speakers assisting with the program, use them on radio and television spots. Make a radio tape to use in your own radio program. Make arrangements ahead of time for the visiting persons to speak to local clubs and organizations. Quite often the local editor welcomes an opportunity for an interview. Such activities will multiply your educational efforts.

Use follow-up news articles so people who were not involved will have a chance to know what went on and perhaps to become interested in participating the next time.

A reminder

Remember that public issues educational efforts are not promotions of a particular point of view. For more detail, review MU publication DM461, *“Defusing” Public Decision*. If you follow the approach outlined in this publication, you can make an educational contribution in very controversial areas. You can help people obtain data and better understand complex issues. In turn, they can evaluate proposed solutions made in legislatures or elsewhere. Our founding fathers were aware of the need for a well-informed citizenry. The need has not passed.

Other pertinent MU Extension resources

DM464, Town Meetings That Work: A Guide to Organizing the Process

29 pages, \$2.

Want to get things done in your community? Whether it's beautification or economic improvement, all community projects take cooperation. This publication outlines how to have productive town meetings, from deciding who to invite to the first meeting to setting and fulfilling goals by the fifth meeting. It even provides outlines for each session. Appendices include charts for organizing, setting goals, action plans and more. References to further information are also included.

These publications can be ordered from MU Extension, <http://extension.missouri.edu>.

NCR203, Public Policy Education: Key Concepts and Methods

16 pages, \$2.

Public policy education is an MU Extension program that applies the knowledge of the university to public issues and educates citizens to enable them to make better-informed policy choices. The subject of this publication is MU Extension's opportunity, or obligation, to educate the public on the major public policy issues of the day. The philosophical basis for extension is briefly reviewed. Some organizational issues — prerequisites for successful involvement — are explored. The publication discusses questions of what issues to choose, when to teach, whom to teach and how to teach. The purpose of the publication is to stimulate thought and discussion on the opportunities and pitfalls inherent in public policy education and some of the practical issues involved in conducting policy education programs.

MP506, How to Organize Neighborhoods

15 pages, \$1.

Does your neighborhood need to speak in unison on an issue? Many voices can be louder than one, but only if they say the same thing. This publication talks about organizing neighborhood programs and continuing them with strong leadership and recognition.

Suggestions such as visiting other neighborhoods that have organized are included, as well as a list of issues a community may be interested in tackling. Once begun, these groups must be maintained. Communication, a capable board and a knowledge of the specific functions of a group will help. This booklet talks about each.

Campaign Phase

Election calendar and timeline

2014 MISSOURI ELECTION CALENDAR

Official Election Day	Style of Election	Last Day to Register to Vote	First Day for Candidate Filing	Last Day for Candidate Filing	Final Certification Date
February 4, 2014	Bond elections may be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in February but no other issue shall be included on the ballot for such election.	January 8, 2014	October 15, 2013 [Jurisdictions in Kansas City begin filing October 22, 2013]	November 19, 2013	November 26, 2013
March 4, 2014 (see local charter)	Charter cities and charter counties ONLY	February 5, 2014	November 12, 2013 [Jurisdictions in Kansas City begin filing November 19, 2013]	December 17, 2013	December 24, 2013
April 8, 2014	General Municipal Election Day	March 12, 2014	December 17, 2013 [Jurisdictions in Kansas City begin filing December 24, 2013]	January 21, 2014	January 28, 2014
August 5, 2014	Primary Election	July 9, 2014	February 25, 2014	March 25, 2014	May 27, 2014
November 4, 2014	General Election	October 8, 2014	July 15, 2014* [Jurisdictions in Kansas City begin filing July 22, 2014]	August 19, 2014*	August 26, 2014

The final date for new party and independent candidates to submit their petitions to the Secretary of State is 5:00 p.m., July 28, 2014. Independent candidates for county offices and those wishing to form a new party within a county must submit their petition to the local election authority (county clerk or election board) by 5:00 p.m., July 28, 2014. (§115.329.1, RSMo).

Official Election Day – §§ 115.121, 115.123 2. Style of Election – §§ 115.121, 115.123 3. Last Day to R
4. First Day to File – §§ 115.127.5, 115.329.1, 115.349.2, 115. 5. Last Day to File – §§ 115.127.5, 115.329.
6. Final Certification Date – §§ 115.125, 115.387, 115.401, 116.240

*Opening and closing of filing for jurisdictions authorized to elect directors in November, such as 911 & Emergency Services directors.
[Bracketed dates apply to any jurisdiction partially or wholly located in Kansas City, Missouri.]

The current year's election calendar is available on the Missouri Secretary of State's website, <http://www.sos.mo.gov>.

Election and campaign finance online resources

Election

- Missouri elections and voting: <http://www.mo.gov/government/elections-and-voting>
- Missouri Secretary of State: <http://www.sos.mo.gov>
- Elections calendar: <http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections> and click on “For Candidates” and “Filing Calendar(s)”
- Local election authority: <http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/countyclerks.asp>

Campaign finance, ethics and transparency

Publicly available data

The Missouri Ethics Commission website, <http://www.mec.mo.gov>, has many resources related to transparency in campaign finance:

- Campaign finance: <http://www.mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/CampaignFinance/CampaignFinance.aspx>
Search campaign finance reports by campaign committee and candidate.
- Complaints and conflicts of interest: <http://www.mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/Compliance/Compliance.aspx>
- Lobbying: <http://www.mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/Lobbying/Lobbying.aspx>
Search registered lobbyists and the expense reports they file.
- Training: <http://www.mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/Training.aspx>
- Advisory opinions: <http://mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/Opinions/Opinions.aspx>

Filings with the Ethics Commission

- Candidates and committees: <http://www.mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/CampaignFinance/CampaignFinance.aspx>
Candidates and committees must file campaign finance reports.
- Personal Financial Disclosure Resources: <http://mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/PFD/PFD.aspx>

Campaign finance for MU Extension districts

Steps for complying with Missouri campaign finance requirements

Step 1: Identify the committee type

For the purpose of pursuing a tax levy for an extension district, the committee type is “campaign committee.” A campaign committee is formed to support or oppose a ballot measure.

Your campaign committee will need a name. A name might be the “Everybody’s County Extension District Funding Committee.”

Step 2: Form the committee within the required time frame

The deadline for forming a campaign committee is 30 days before the election date.

Step 3: Register the committee

File a Statement of Committee Organization (MO 300-1308) within 20 days after forming the committee and no later than the first disclosure report deadline. This form must have original signatures and can either be mailed or hand-delivered to the local election authority (county clerk or board of election commissioners).

This form and instructions for filing it can be found online at http://www.mec.mo.gov/WebDocs/PDF/Fillable/CampaignFinance/Committee_Registration_Packet.pdf.

Step 4: Identify where to file the campaign finance reports

A campaign committee for a local ballot measure files campaign finance reports with the local election authority.

Step 5: File campaign finance reports

All persons and committees required to form a campaign finance committee and file a Statement of Committee Organization must file subsequent campaign finance disclosure reports as required. A committee discloses its campaign finances on campaign disclosure reporting statements, consisting of either a Statement of Limited Activity or Full Disclosure.

Committee filing dates can be found online at http://www.mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/CampaignFinance/CF_Brochures.aspx.

Step 6: Amending committee information

An Amended Statement of Committee Organization must be filed any time the required information is changed within 20 days of the change, but no later than the date of the filing of the next report required to be filed by that committee. The

Visit the Missouri Ethics Commission’s campaign finance page periodically to keep up-to-date on the latest requirements, http://www.mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/CampaignFinance/CF_Info.aspx.

treasurer of the campaign committee must sign the form. The Amended Statement must contain original signatures and can be mailed or hand-delivered to the Missouri Ethics Commission.

Step 7: Distribute any remaining funds and dissolve any debt

See Sec. 130.034 RSMo., <http://www.moga.mo.gov/statutes/C100-199/1300000034.HTM>, for allowable uses of contribution.

For campaign finance training, visit
<http://www.mec.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/Training.aspx>.

Step 8: Terminate the committee

Within 10 days of committee dissolution, file a Committee Termination Statement (MO 300-1317) and a full disclosure report for the time period through the closing date. The termination statement must include the disposition of remaining funds (surplus or deficit) and the name, mailing address and telephone number of the person responsible for maintaining committee records and accounts.

This form and instructions for filing it can be found online at <http://www.mec.mo.gov/WebDocs/PDF/Fillable/CampaignFinance/CO3.pdf>.

Committee reporting requirements for contributions received

Contributions are funds (including loans), goods and services donated to a committee and include a candidate's own funds or property. (See Sec. 130.011 RSMo., <http://www.moga.mo.gov/statutes/C100-199/1300000011.HTM>, for full definition of contribution.) Any funds received by the committee must be deposited in the committee's official bank account (depository). All contributions and other receipts received by a committee are reported electronically (or for local filers, on the Contributions and Loans Received (MO 300-1312), <http://www.mec.mo.gov/WebDocs/PDF/Fillable/CampaignFinance/CD1.pdf>). The following contribution types have the specified reporting requirements:

- **Contribution (including loans) over \$5,000** — Any individual or committee receiving any contribution (including loans) from any single contributor over \$5,000 must electronically report to the Missouri Ethics Commission within 48 hours of its receipt. This contribution must also be reported in the committee's next filed report.
- **Late contributions (including loans)** — Any receipt of a contribution (including loans) over \$250 that is received between the 11th day through the day before the election, must be reported within 24 hours of its receipt. The disclosure may be made by any written means of communication. This contribution must also be reported in the committee's next filed report.

Contributions prohibited to be received by a committee

A committee cannot receive the following contribution types:

- Cash contributions of more than \$100
- Contributions totaling more than \$25 from a person without the name, address and employer or occupation of the person making the contribution
- Anonymous contributions, for the entire calendar year, exceeding the greater of \$500 or 1 percent of the total amount of all contributions received by the committee in that same calendar year

Campaign material identification requirements

Printed matter

Printed matter is pamphlets, circulars, handbills, sample ballots, advertisements (including newspapers and periodicals), signs (including signs for display on motor vehicles) or other imprinted or lettered materials. Items excluded as printed matter include items used for personal use (such as campaign buttons, pencils or clothing), given away or sold, that are paid for by a candidate or committee, are obvious in their identification with a specific candidate or committee and the costs of which are reported as required by law.

Any person publishing, circulating or distributing printed material about a candidate for public office or a ballot measure within Missouri must comply with the identification requirement of specifically stating, in a clear and conspicuous manner on the face of the printed matter, “Paid for by” with the sponsor’s proper identification. Abbreviations and acronyms cannot be used in the sponsor identification. The required sponsor information depends on the sponsor:

- **Committee** — Committee name as required to be registered by Missouri campaign finance law, and committee name and title of the treasurer serving when the material was paid for.
- **Corporation, business entity, labor organization or other organization (not a committee or organized for influencing an election)** — Name of the entity, entity’s principal officer’s name, known title, and mailing address of entity or principal officer (if entity has no mailing address)
- **Individual(s)** — Individual(s) name(s) and mailing address(es). If more than five, may print “for a list of sponsors contact (name and address of one individual responsible for having material printed).” This individual must keep a record of the names and amounts paid by all other individuals.

TV and radio

A broadcast station transmitting matter about a candidate or ballot measure must provide sponsor identification in accordance with federal laws.

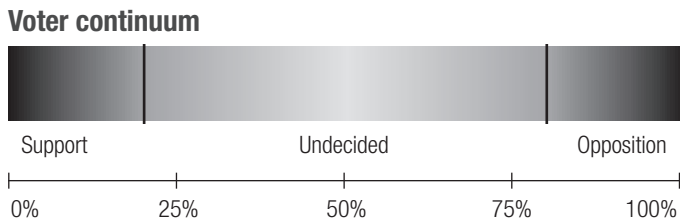
Preparing to seek an MU Extension district tax levy

A campaign for a tax levy will take time and dedication. You should consider it to be a **three-year** effort. The effort begins with some detailed planning that has to be done before the issue is put before the voters.

Develop a plan

Know the number of positive votes you will need to pass the tax levy. Also, understand that no matter what you do, 20 to 30 percent of the voters will support the issue and 20 to 30 percent of the voters will oppose it. Target your marketing and all of your efforts at the 40 to 60 percent of undecided voters. You might be able to change their votes, but you won't change the others'.

LBJ's advice about running for office or taking an issue to the voters:
Announce early and announce often.



Educate the voters

First and foremost in this effort, extension needs to have the trust of the voters in the district. Does extension have a proven track record in the area? Does it deliver on its promises? Two ways to increase that trust level are for council members to be prepared to answer some very important questions for residents, some of which are listed below; and for the district to have a well-developed plan for use of the funds to gain the support of the voters.

Educating the voters is key. Before voters will really begin to listen to *why* you want a tax levy, they are going to want answers to several questions. If they trust you, believe in what you have to offer, and know you will be open and transparent, they will be more likely to show their support by voting for the tax levy.

To prepare for educating voters and presenting the tax levy issue to them, consider how you will answer the following questions:

- How much is this tax going to cost me?
- How does the extension district plan to spend the money?
- What programming or services are going to be provided beyond what extension is already providing?
- Why can't the current funding meet the needs?
- Why is the tax needed now?
- Where do the county commissioners stand? Do they support the tax levy? What will they do with the funds they currently are giving the extension council? Beware: Refrain from making negative comments, assigning blame, or expressing other such comments that may be perceived as "us vs. them."

Always return to the benefits of that MU Extension brings to the area.

Finding local political leaders

The success of many public initiatives rests upon identifying people who will have the greatest affect on attitudes in the local area. One process for determining who these people is to ask questions of opinion leaders in your community to help identify individuals who will be most sympathetic to the issue and effective in promoting it.

If you don't ask questions of these leaders, you may not identify the right people, or you may miss a component that would make the tax levy effort successful. However, asking questions involves risks, too. Local political leaders may not appreciate the sensitive nature of the questions and may express concern about why extension needs the information. Assure the leader you interview that you consider their responses to be confidential, that the information you gather from your interviews will be presented as a whole and their individual answers will not be linked with their names.

Who to interview

No more than two or three extension council members should conduct the interviews and collect the information. Try to select council members who know the individuals selected for interviews.

Identify at least six individuals to interview; for example, the current or past county chairpersons of the Democratic and Republican parties, a longtime county board of supervisors member, a leading banker in the county, a local newspaper publisher, the League of Women Voters chairperson, and a local radio station owner.

Suggested interview questions:

- What individuals in this county have been involved in other local ballot issues?
- What individuals have been a chairperson for a successfully elected state senator or representative?
- Which of these individuals are most likely to be supportive of education issues in this county?
- Which of these individuals would work well together with nonpolitical issues?
- Who would be a good person to lead the effort to pass an MU Extension district property tax?
- Who else should we meet with to discuss these questions?

How to use the data

Create a list of people that were suggested. Indicate how many times each person was suggested, but do not reveal who suggested them.

To help the council members choose the best balanced campaign committee, the list should also indicate each individual's experience with extension and provide demographic data, such as gender, geographical location, and political and socioeconomic information, on each individual.

Share the list with the member of the participating county extension councils. Have the council members add individuals not on the list that they know are familiar with and supportive of extension. Once those individuals have been added to the list, have council agree on a list of 25 to 30 people to consider as potential committee members.

Interview the one individual from your county that was mentioned most often by the political leaders and council members. Review with that person the list of potential committee nominees.

Suggested interview questions:

- Which of the individuals on the list are most likely to be supportive of education issues in this county?
- Which of these individuals work well together with nonpolitical issues?
- Who would be a good person to lead the effort to pass an MU Extension district tax levy?

Review the interview results with all county extension council members before contacting any of the individuals suggested at this interview.

The county extension council does not appoint members of the campaign committee for an extension district tax level. This committee must be organized independently from council action.

Finding local political leaders: Interview schedule

Person interviewed: _____ Date: _____

Position: _____ Interviewer: _____

Introduce yourself, and explain why the interview is being conducted. Tell the interviewee that the information collected will be considered confidential and used only by the extension council. Ask the following questions, and record the answers in the space provided.

1. What individuals in this county have been involved in local ballot issues in the past?

Name	Issue
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. What individuals have been a chairperson for a successfully elected state senator or representative?

Name	Candidate's name
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Of the individuals you have mentioned, which individuals are most likely to be supportive of education issues in this county?

_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Of the individuals you have mentioned, which would work well together on nonpolitical issues?

_____	_____
_____	_____

5. Who would be a good person to lead the effort to pass an extension district tax levy in this county in 20__?

6. Is there someone else we should interview and ask these questions?

_____	_____
_____	_____

Review the interview results with all the county extension council members before contacting any of the individuals identified through this process.

Raising money for a political campaign

Political fundraising is necessary because a political campaign cannot run without money. For the rules about raising money for campaign materials and educating voters, please visit the elections and voting section of the Missouri Secretary of State's website, <http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections>.

The following online resources explain the basics of raising and managing money for a political campaign:

- How to raise money for political campaigns: http://www.ehow.com/how_7388702_raise-money-political-campaigns.html
- How to raise campaign money: http://www.ehow.com/how_7308969_raise-campaign-money.html
- How to establish a budget for political campaigns: http://www.ehow.com/video_4461973_establish-budget-political-campaigns.html
- Having an advisory committee for a political campaign: http://www.ehow.com/video_4461987_having-advisory-committee-political-campaign.html
- Printing needs for a political campaign: http://www.ehow.com/video_4461984_printing-needs-political-campaign.html

“There are two things that are important in politics. The first is money and I can’t remember what the second one is.”

—Mark Hanna, political strategist and campaign manager for President William McKinley

Ideas that work: Iowa State University Extension resources

Iowa is one of the 26 states that adopted a districting strategy before Missouri did. Iowa State University Extension has granted MU Extension the right to use the following campaign resources to support the efforts of MU Extension districts seeking a tax levy to ensure long-term funding of county councils.

Remember to identify campaign material sponsors

As detailed on page 78, Missouri law requires the sponsor to be identified on all campaign materials. For example, an advertisement paid for by a registered committee must include a line that states “Paid for by the [committee name], [treasurer name], Treasurer.”

Note about FUNd Raising

The second page of the *FUNd Raising* resource, page 106, suggests asking for donations of grain as farmers wait in line to sell their corn at the elevator. Although asking for grain gifts is a valid request, we recommend asking for this type of donation from farmers before they take their grain to market. Most often, grain is already under contract by the time it is being hauled to the elevators.

Campaign Plan for Local Ballot Issues

Voters

Number of registered voters in county: _____

Expected number of voters on your issue: _____

Number of positive votes needed to win: _____

Campaign Theme

Single theme about why the issue should pass:

Short messages (maximum seven words) that support the theme:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Counter arguments to no votes:

Campaign Activities

Activity	Person Responsible	Start Date	Completion Date
Presentations to groups			
Public mailings			
Yard signs			
Posters			
Newspaper ads			
Radio ads			
TV ads (or Cable TV)			
Canvass			
Other:			
Other:			

Campaign Budget

Category	Budget	Actual
Printing		
Brochures	\$ _____	\$ _____
Yard signs/posters	\$ _____	\$ _____
Letters	\$ _____	\$ _____
General printing	\$ _____	\$ _____
Postage	\$ _____	\$ _____
PowerPoint program	\$ _____	\$ _____
Newspaper ads	\$ _____	\$ _____
Radio ads	\$ _____	\$ _____
TV ads	\$ _____	\$ _____
Canvassing	\$ _____	\$ _____
Meetings	\$ _____	\$ _____
Contingency	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____	\$ _____
TOTALS	\$ _____	\$ _____

Campaign Fund Raisers

Activity	Person Responsible	Start Date	Completion Date
Individual contacts			
Direct mailings			
Event:			
Event:			

Potential primary contributors:

Campaigns

Tips for Internet Campaigns

The Internet is a powerful tool for getting information to the public. As part of a well-planned political campaign, it can complement your media mix and all of your other campaign activities.

Issues to Consider

E-mail and World Wide Web campaigns for politicians and political issues have become a mainstream effort and can be an effective tool for your campaign. Consider these issues as you develop your campaign strategy.

- The Internet permits you to reach a broad and highly educated audience inexpensively.
- Today's Internet is accessible and portable. With wireless technology, users can link to the Internet from virtually anywhere.
- The interactive nature of the Internet allows users to communicate in a dialogue rather than a monologue.
- Users can choose what they want to see, when they want to see it, and for as long or as often as they want to see it.

Weaknesses to Address

The Internet isn't a perfect medium. Be aware of these weaknesses.

- The Internet presents users with unlimited choices, so your website can easily get lost. Users must be directed or encouraged by other outreach programs to divert their attention from these unlimited choices to your specific site.
- The Internet is not, in and of itself, an attention-getting medium. Your website will never jump out at people from the screen, the page, or the side of the road. Visitors will have to perform several steps to get to your site.
- A substantial "digital divide" still exists in the United States based on education, age, race, and income.
- According to a study by the Institute for Politics, Democracy, and the Internet (www.ipdi.org), less than one-quarter of Internet-ready voters use the Internet for information about political races or issues.

Again, treat the Internet as just another tool—a supplement to, but not a substitute for—a traditional media campaign.

Your Campaign Website

A lively and interesting website is the first step in engaging potential supporters, volunteers, and campaign "investors" and making them frequent visitors.

- Update your website often with new photos and accurate information so users will be more likely to come back.
- Provide information in small chunks. A large website is hard to navigate through, and Internet users prefer summaries or excerpts. Studies have found that too much information can result in “well-informed futility”—citizens know so much about a subject they feel immobilized to take action.¹
- The Iowa Code requires that your website contain the words “paid for by” and identify the person or entity that paid for the website.
- Create a dialogue with your visitors through chat rooms and other means to reach them with personalized information. Studies show that “clearly, user satisfaction and interest is tied to interactivity.”²
- Do not dazzle the user with trendy electronic modifications and flash applets that can make your logo wiggle and glisten. These devices not only interfere with continuity and readership, they increase the time it takes for your site to load. They also may make it difficult for users with disabilities to access your site.

The goal of your website must be to get people interested, informed, and motivated. You can get people to your site, but can your words translate into offline actions?

E-mail campaigns

E-mail campaigns have no dollar cost and can have a great impact on the outcome of your campaign. Campaign volunteers should conduct e-mail campaign efforts through personal e-mail accounts.

- Start a month in advance of the election to capture any absentee voters.
- Create a “vote yes” e-mail message series, such as the sample at left. Send your first e-mail message one month before Election Day. Send the second message two weeks before the election. Send your final message on the Friday prior to Election Day. In each message, encourage people to forward the message to others.
- If your issue is nonpartisan, be sure to indicate that fact in your messages.
- Provide interesting and accurate information.
- Include a link to your website in your e-mail messages.

The campaign chairperson should send the e-mail messages to all committee members, volunteers, and supporters of the issue. It’s OK if people get more than one copy of the e-mail. That will show that people support your issue.

Sample Message

On November 7, cast a yes vote for (the issue). (Add a statement that explains why it is important to county residents that they vote for the issue. What are the benefits?)

Vote yes on November 7. Please forward this message to other people in _____ County.

... and justice for all

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Campaigns

Tips for News Releases

The news release is a vital tool. Good ones can swing voters to your side. They can influence editors to the point of endorsement. Effective news releases can clarify issues, motivate voters, and most importantly, confound opposition.

Very few good news releases cross an editor's desk. An average U.S. city newspaper, such as the Des Moines Register, receives as many as 1,000 news releases each week. Small town newspapers receive up to 200 per week.

Essential Ingredients of an Effective News Release

Purpose. Before writing, you must know clearly what you wish to accomplish. Each news release should be a planned part of a campaign.

Targeting. Choose the best newspaper to reach your audience and tailor your release to fit the needs of that paper.

A strong lead. The beginning of the news release has to get the attention of a busy editor and reader; focus on the central point of the release; and include the necessary information for the lead to stand alone as a short article.

- After starting with a strong lead, follow up with journalism's basic five W's— who, what, when, where, and why. Then add supporting details, a lively quotation, or a summary.
- This style of writing is called the inverted pyramid. It allows the editor to cut paragraphs from the end of the release without compromising the overall message. Write so that the release can be shortened to a single lead paragraph and still make sense.

News value. Editors say that puffery or hype is the single most common flaw in political news releases. Stick to the facts; tie them to the newspaper's audience.

Brevity. Editors love short releases. The average typewritten page translates into six to 10 column inches of newspaper copy. Effective news releases should be short. Limit the news release to one point. Remove unnecessary adverbs and adjectives.

Clarity. Help potential voters understand your message by eliminating jargon, redundancies, and clutter.

Accuracy. Editors demand accuracy. Editors and voters resent being misled. Mistakes can cost an election.

- Be careful with details. Double check spelling, punctuation, dates, places, and names. Make sure all names are spelled correctly.
- Make sure the date and day of the week are correct.

Timing. To maximize your media opportunities, meet deadlines. Most weekly newspapers are published on either Wednesday or Thursday. Learn your local deadlines and submit your news release well in advance of the deadline. Call the editor and inquire if he or she got your news release, but don't be pushy.

Style. To be successful, you must mesh your writing style with the style of the newspaper.

Proofread. Proofread news releases before and after final typing. Make sure they include the essential ingredients.

Preparing News Releases

- Put the name of the contact person with daytime telephone at the top of the release.
- At the top of the page type the release date and the name and phone number of the person submitting it. For maximum flexibility use open dated releases and label them "For Immediate Release." If the information is valid only before or after a certain date, say, "For Release on or (before/after)_____."
- Try to keep the release to one or two pages.
- Indicate the end of your release by typing -30- on a final line by itself, centered.

Submitting News Releases

First find out how the editor would prefer to receive your new release—either electronically or as a hard copy on paper.

Electronic delivery. Ask the editor if he or she would like to receive your release in the body of an e-mail message, as an e-mail attachment, or on a CD or other medium. Find out what word processing program the editor uses, so that you can send your release in the same or a compatible program.

Hard copy delivery. Follow these guidelines.

- Type double or triple spaced, and print on one side of the paper only.
- Leave lots of space, at least one third of a page, between the heading information and the copy. Use wide margins. The extra room allows editors to write headlines, make changes, and include instructions for the typesetters.
- At the bottom of each page of a longer release type "more."

Adapted from "The Effective Press Release: Key to Free Media," by Sallie Randolph, in Campaigns and Elections: "The Communicator's Handbook," Association for Communication Excellence; and "The Political Campaign Handbook," by Arnold Steinberg.

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Campaigns

Tips for Paid Newspaper Advertising

Newspaper advertising can achieve name identification and issue familiarity; it also can consolidate support, secure volunteers, persuade the uncommitted, and turn out the vote.

Newspaper advertising, like newspaper articles, can reach those with a higher probability of voting, especially community activists, joiners, members of community service organizations—in short, those who actively interact with others.

Cost

The cost of newspaper advertising is usually based on a line rate—that is, the number of lines per column inch multiplied by the number of column inches. Most newspapers have six or eight columns, and their advertising reflects that varied format. The advertising rates may assume camera-ready copy, which is a reproducible proof of the advertisement exactly as it is expected to appear.

Strategy

Advertising strategy calls for selecting the newspaper and sections of each newspaper best able to reach the priority voters.

- Try to get placement on the right-hand side of the page for a greater likelihood that the ad will be seen.
- White space helps an ad stand out better.
- Bold (2 to 5 point) borders help your ad stand out.
- Develop “white space” by using few words.
- Use a good photo to help catch people’s attention.
- Develop an advertising budget.
- Be equitable in how you spend money with local media (e.g., buy both print and broadcast ads) if you want both media to cover your story.
- Keep your message short. Emphasize why your campaign is important.
- Use a consistent design in all ads. It may be a good investment to pay for a professional graphic look.
- Use a slogan, if an effective one has been developed.
- Avoid flamboyance—don’t be too slick. This can be insulting to many voters.

- Contrast with other ads. Have yours look “different.” Lay a copy of your ad on last week’s paper. Does it stand out?
- Proof the ad. Then proof it again. Have someone else proof it.
- Avoid “cute” novelty ads.
- Know the campaign law. Include the “Paid for by_____” line in your advertising.
- Tell your reader the desired outcome.
- Repeat the ad. The more your audience sees the ad, the more likely readers will remember it.
- Ask for and listen to the advice of your local newspaper advertising staff.
- Write a headline that gets people’s attention and piques their interest in just a few words.
- Understand the advertising deadlines and procedures at the newspaper.

Adapted from “The Political Campaign Handbook,” by Arnold Steinberg.

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Campaigns

Tips for Broadcast Media

Radio

Radio advertising has the advantage of sound; daily and weekly newspapers are more passive media. The reader can avoid an advertisement by turning the printed page; the listener finds it more difficult to “tune out” the more intrusive radio spot. Like the print media, radio can be used to reach both general audiences and targeted groups.

- Generally 30-second spots give you enough time. Frequency is the key. It is better to invest in ten 30-second spots, than five 60-second spots. Changes in voter perception usually are not sudden; they are a function of repeated exposures.
- Remember in radio, you get one chance to be understood.
- Visual imagery is the key to writing for radio. Make your listeners “see” what you are saying. Researchers have found that audience recognition is much higher when you use imagery eliciting words and phrases in your copy.
- Never exclude anyone who may be a listener. Present your message in such a way that it will be of interest to many listeners.
- Write short. Use short, easily read, easily understood sentences. If you use a long sentence, follow it with a short one. This will permit you to catch your breath. Strive for a comfortable rhythm. Remember your listeners have to understand instantly.
- Numbers in radio present a special problem. According to most broadcast style manuals, it's hard for people to understand numbers used quickly. To avoid the problem, try not to use long lists of numbers.
- Avoid starting a sentence with an exact number.
- Round off large and detailed numbers.
- Don't hesitate to repeat or re-emphasize any part of your message that listeners might have easily missed.
- Read aloud. Test your writing by reading it aloud. This is the best way to catch poor phrasing and tongue twisters.
- Use contractions. Your copy will read more easily and sound more natural if you use contractions. For example, use don't instead of do not. But beware of contractions such as could've and would've. They sound like could of and would of, which are improper grammar.
- Practice writing to exact times. As a rule, figure 60 words equal approximately 30 seconds of time.

Cable TV

Through the local channels you are able to place advertising at a very affordable rate. Cable TV (if available in your area) is a good market to target. Mediamark Research Inc. determined that cable television subscribers are

- 25 percent more likely to work actively for a political candidate than non-cable users
- 9 percent more likely to have taken part in a local civic organization than non-cable users
- 13 percent more likely to have written a letter to the editor of a paper or magazine than non-cable users
- 10 percent more likely to have written a letter to an elected public official than non-cable users

Try to access the public affairs programming opportunities.

Adapted from "The Political Campaign Handbook," by Arnold Steinberg, and "The Communicator's Handbook," by Association for Communication Excellence.

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Campaigns

Tips for When a Reporter Calls

Chances are you have mixed feelings when a reporter calls. You want to be helpful, provide information and get your message across. Yet you may be apprehensive and worry that the reporter may misunderstand or misinterpret what you say.

These suggestions are designed to help with the dilemma you face when a reporter calls. Follow these suggestions to improve the accuracy of the stories in which you are quoted.

Talk slowly. The reporter will be writing or typing furiously as you talk. If you answer your questions in normal 120 words per minute speaking voice, the reporter will likely get only one third to one half of what you say.

Repeat key thoughts. After discussing the subject, try to pull together your major points in concise, everyday language. This is what the reporter must eventually do when writing the story.

Be elementary. Most reporters are likely to be generalists.

Encourage a face-to-face interview. Clearer, more complete communication is likely to occur in a face-to-face interview than in a telephone conversation. Invite the reporter to your office or other place of work if time permits.

Take an active role in the interview. Answer the questions that the reporter asks as completely as possible, and don't hesitate to volunteer information that is not specifically sought. Most reporters will welcome an angle or idea that could give them a better story. You may be able to help the reporter see the possibility for a second or even third story.

Stay in control. If the reporter asks three or four questions consecutively, pick the one you want to answer. If the reporter interrupts you before you finish your answer, pause, let the reporter finish, and then continue your answer.

Don't let the reporter put words in your mouth. If the reporter uses inaccurate facts when asking a question, reword the question using accurate facts.

Beware of manipulation. If a reporter asks, "would you say" and then quotes a statement for your agreement, don't. Don't let anyone determine your agenda. Make your own statement—"what if" questions are lures and can be dangerous.

Support the interview with written material. Try to put something tangible in the hands of the reporter, something he or she can refer to when writing the story. If the subject is extremely sensitive, you may want to prepare a written statement specifically for the reporter.

Identify yourself clearly. Just because a reporter calls, does not mean he or she really knows who you are and what you do. State how you and your organization should be identified in the story.

Offer to be of further assistance. Most reporters are not likely to let you read their story before it is printed. However, you should let reporters know that they are welcome to call back if they need additional help or clarification of technical information.

Be brief—especially on television. Broadcast news is presented in small components of information. Keep to a few key points and be sure to make your point as often as possible.

Respect deadlines. A reporter's life is ruled by deadlines. News broadcasts occur within a fraction of a second of the time at which they are scheduled to go on the air. Newspaper presses are stopped only in the movies. Therefore, try to return a reporter's call immediately.

Watch for pitfalls. Make sure you have the facts before commenting on any situation that might be controversial. Stay on your turf even if this upsets a reporter. Suggest who might be a better source.

Offer compliments and say “thanks.” Much feedback to reporters is negative. If a reporter does a credible job with a story, tell her or him. Better still, tell the reporter's boss.

Seek help. If you have a problem with a reporter, ask another individual involved with your campaign to intervene.

Don't get mired in statistics. Sometimes this kind of information can detract from your bottom line. Keep numbers out of the information. Tell a story, not a mathematical formula.

Expect nothing to be off the record. Say nothing to a reporter you wouldn't want to see on the six o'clock news or the front page of tomorrow's newspaper.

Adapted from a leaflet prepared by Tom Byrd, Head Press, Radio and Television Section; Department of Agricultural Information, North Carolina State University; “The Communicator's Handbook,” Association for Communication Excellence; and “Ten Tips to Consider Giving a Successful Media Interview,” by Jonathan Schenker in *The Professional Communicator*, April/ May 1988.

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Campaigns

Tips for Brochures

Brochures are typically printed on standard 8 1/2 x 11 or legal size 8 1/2 x 14 paper. Most brochures are printed to conserve resources, either by using a single color ink, often black, on white paper, or any single color ink on contrasting color paper. The most aesthetic brochure is irrelevant unless its theme reflects the campaign strategy.

Brochure Copy

The most common error in any printed campaign material is too much copy and too few, or no photographs. Copy for brochures should include

- benefits,
- what the reader will miss if the campaign is not successful,
- commonly asked questions in the campaign,
- testimonials of satisfied customers,
- how to vote, and
- whom to contact for additional information.

More Tips

- Remember the 6 Rule — any piece should have the campaign’s name on it at least six times.
- Remember the 20-Second Read—that’s the average time people spend on written pieces.
- Ensure the piece doesn’t look costly. Consider using recycled paper and soy ink.
- Use photos. People like to look at people, especially children and babies.
- Include a “Paid for by” message on printed material.
- Be sensitive to diversity.
- Do not use sexist language.
- Target bulk mailing to “good” mailing lists.

Adapted from “Effective Seminar Marketing,” Ralph Elliott, Clemson University; and “The Political Campaign Handbook,” by Arnold Steinberg.

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Campaigns

Tips for Letters to the Editor

- Avoid campaign form letters—editors will throw them all out except one. Letters are more likely to be published when they are “original” and in your own words.
- Keep them short.
- Give a personal example and a concrete benefit stating why people should support your campaign.
- Use a variety of letter writers to appeal to different types of readers.
- Tell readers what you want them to do in your campaign.
- Know the policies of your local papers regarding letters to the editor for campaigns. For example, some papers won’t run campaign letters one week before an election.
- Type the letter, so there won’t be any questions about what it says.
- Proofread well.
- Sign the letter.
- Provide your address and phone number.
- Hand deliver the letter if possible.

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Campaigns

Tips for Signs

Yard Signs

- Make them big enough to be read in 1 1/2 seconds.
- Keep them simple.
- Colors and theme should not be identified with political parties. Choose a color exclusive to your campaign.
- Make it look enough like a campaign sign—not a “for sale” sign.
- Use many or none. Five to 10 per town is not enough.
- Yard signs can be placed on private property, with the owner’s consent, at any time 45 days before the election, and must be removed within 7 days after the election.
- Replace wet and torn signs.
- Ensure signs are on private property, not on public property.
- Watch the time frames when yard signs can legally be put up.
- Make signs look professional. Generally, hand lettered signs should not be used.
- Consider using 8 1/2 x 11 signs for community bulletin boards to place on cars, handouts, etc.
- Buy coated stock for yard signs, or cover them with clear contact paper, so the signs are weatherproof.
- Better yet—use inexpensive particleboard to spray paint and stencil. It is easier to put up and more durable than coated stock yard signs.
- Put up all yard signs on the same day to lend the appearance of a mushroom effect.
- Stay neutral of all political campaigns and try not to put signs on any yards where there are political signs. Signs should be located near political signs only if both major parties are represented.
- Put up signs on highways and on busy roads, etc. Place strategically—e.g., signs right outside the elevator as farmers take their grain to market, etc. Follow local city ordinances and the Iowa Department of Transportation guidelines for placement of political signs on highways.
- Invest in two or three big signs that can go on backs of pickup trucks. They can go up before the legal time and you can travel to public events like football games, etc.

Billboards

Billboards require the printing of sheets (usually to cover a standard area of 104 inches by 234 inches) and a monthly rental of billboard space. Billboard rental costs are based on the number of people likely to see the billboard. A typical advertising package is rated for its “showing.” A 90 percent showing means the billboard company estimates that 90 percent of the voting public will see the message during a 30-day period.

- Some advertising companies offer nonprofit campaign discounts.
- Keep the message simple, because people are seeing it for only seconds, while they are trying to drive.

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Campaigns

Tips on Canvassing

Canvassing citizens is a way to encourage your supporters to vote for the issue. It also is an opportunity to answer questions that undecided voters may have. Research shows that canvassing is a critical factor in the outcome of many local ballot issues. Try to conduct your canvassing as close to Election Day as possible. The Monday before Election Day is the best day to canvass. If you start too early, people simply forget.

Types of Canvassing

Canvassing is done in many ways. It is most effective when done in person. However, any form of canvassing is better than none. Types of canvassing that you might want to consider include

- distributing brochures or doorknob flyers to each household,
- telephoning potential voters to seek support and answer questions,
- distributing brochures to office buildings,
- contacting potential voters door-to-door, and
- poll watching to determine if the known supporters have voted.

Planning a Canvassing Effort

A much higher percentage of voters will vote in a general election (every two years in November) than in a special election. In a general election it is important to make at least some contact with as many voters as possible. In a special election, canvassing can be done with only those voters that are expected to support the issue.

The following information may serve as a blueprint to help you set up your canvassing effort.

Request a list of voters in the county from the Auditor's Office. The list can be sorted by a number of items. However, for most local ballot issues it is best to have voters selected by date last voted and sorted by precinct to determine the most likely voters in the next election. The list can be provided on 3x5 cards, mailing labels, computer paper, or on computer disks. The cost of the list will vary with the number of voters and the format requested.

Identify supporters in each precinct who can serve as precinct captains, and canvassers. Potential precinct captains should be contacted at least six weeks before the election. One month before the election, mail the precinct captains background information about the issue and sample brochures. At this time they need to select precinct workers and provide the list to the canvassing committee. Prepare a master list of precinct captains and their workers for all precincts.

Conduct a meeting for the precinct captains and their workers about two weeks before Election Day. Provide background information and answer questions on canvassing.

- Show samples of future newspaper and radio advertising to answer questions about the issue and help the canvassers understand the campaign theme.
- Distribute background information and brochures about the issue.
- Have a successful canvassing organizer in the community speak about his or her approach to canvassing.
- Distribute a suggested script that canvassers may use as they contact their voters in their precinct. Do a few role-playing situations that canvassers might experience.
- Answer questions and help people know how to deal with the opposition.
- Give precinct captains time to have precinct group meetings to divide the list of voters to be contacted.

Another canvassing option is to develop a calling pyramid. Each precinct captain will identify 10 additional names that agree to contact at least two potential voters. The canvassing committee contacts these precinct captains about one month before the election and provides them with ballot issue information. The precinct captains need to remind their callers five days before Election Day to make the final calls. This method of canvassing can be the least effective since there is no method to determine which voters have been called, but it is better than not doing anything.

And Finally

- Make sure that precinct captains are following up on progress. Have back up people available.
- During the week of canvassing, have a person knowledgeable about the issue available to answer questions from canvassers.
- Respect signs that say no soliciting.
- Do not put anything in a mailbox; it is against the law.

Canvassing is a campaign idea that works. Plan ahead and make the commitment to do a good job.

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Campaigns

Tips on Giving Presentations

An effective speaker has something to say and the skill to say it. That person uses to best advantage the three main parts of speech delivery: voice usage, physical behavior, and mental attitude.

Speech Delivery

Rate or time. You need a variety when you deliver a speech. Pauses are the punctuation marks of speech. Pause to let ideas sink in for, meaning and emphasis. However, when you do pause, do so in silence. Avoid vocalized pauses, such as “uhs,” “ers,” or “ahs.”

Pitch. A good speaking voice has range and flexibility or pitch. Pitch your voice so you can easily raise and lower it for emphasis.

Force or loudness. Your voice must be loud enough to be heard. It should also be used as a tool for emphasis.

Articulation. Don't mumble, mutter, run words together, or go back over words. Use your teeth, tongue, and lips to enunciate words.

Body Action

Posture. Don't let posture draw attention away from your message. It's best to remain relaxed, but not slumped; erect, but not stiff. Be comfortable without being sloppy.

Gestures. Movements of any part of the body can reinforce your oral presentation. Know the difference between meaningful gestures and a case of the fidgets. Use hand gestures to reinforce your ideas. Make your gestures strong. Avoid those that are halfhearted, weak, wishy-washy, or apologetic. A relaxed body will help prevent stiff or awkward gestures. Make positive gestures, but vary their intensity to suit the point.

Movement of the body as a whole. Movement can indicate transitions between thoughts, but avoid undesirable types such as shuffling feet, shifting weight, or fidgeting with the microphone or other equipment. Forward or backward movements are often associated with how important a point is. A step forward indicates a more important point, while a step backward says, “Relax. Think about the last idea.”

Eye contact and facial expression. Look at and talk to your audience. It makes your listeners feel you're interested in sharing information as well as feelings with them. Avoid the “poker face” approach to public speaking. Your face reflects your attitude. Use it effectively to emphasize or support your message. Concentration tends to bring a frown to the face. Know your presentation well enough to avoid concentrating too heavily on it. Take time to get comfortable

before speaking. Don't suddenly relax at the conclusion of your talk. This indicates to your audience that you are relieved your "ordeal" is over.

Physical Aspects of Speech

The most powerful words in the English language are the short ones, such as live, love, hate, die, war, etc. Since short words have more "sound-a-likes" and alternate meanings, they are often mispronounced and misunderstood. The following tips are worth remembering:

Sound is energy. It passes through the air in different wavelengths. Faster puffs will shorten wavelengths and yield a higher the pitch. Vary pitch, loudness, and speed; it is speech variability that adds interest and understandability to what is said. A soft monotone speech often leaves the impression that the speaker is uncertain or unprepared.

Listen to yourself. Acoustical feedback from the inner and especially the outer ear can help you modify your voice and make necessary adjustments. A keen awareness of these "side tones" is essential for good speech. This is why a radio or TV announcer sometimes wears a headset or cups a hand between the mouth and ear to catch more of what is being said.

Pace your pauses. Pauses can add dramatic impact and understandability. However, when they are heard as halting, uncertain delivery, pauses can reduce speaker credibility and confidence. Remember that the average speed of delivery is about 150 words per minute. Fast talkers who deliver about 180 words per minute are more highly regarded, more persuasive, and can communicate more in less time. With speed usually comes enthusiasm.

Think and speak in units of thought. The more adept you become at expressing total units, rather than mere words or lines, the more interesting and distinct you will be.

Concentrate on using your entire voice. Practice breathing with your abdominal muscles. Rather than using the diaphragm and upper chest, use abdominal muscles to provide a steady breath stream and the power needed for good speech. Throat and neck muscles should be relaxed. Your lips, tongue, and jaw, however, should be mobile and active in shaping each puff of air or syllable clearly and distinctly.

Watch the internal consonants. Don't replace the "t" in words like "quantity" with a sloppy "d."

Adapted from "The Communicator's Handbook," Association for Communication Excellence.

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Campaigns

FUNd Raising

Plan Basics

- Make it “fun.”
- Involve lots of people.
- Keep the process simple.
- Know your needs. How will the money be used?
- Appoint a chair for your fund raising committee.
- Recruit several people to be on the fund raising committee.
- Give specific quotas for individuals to raise. Coordinate the efforts with the entire committee.
- Develop a potential donor list.
- Don't overlook people who have participated and benefited in the past from your organization's programs. Individuals who have moved from the community may support your cause.
- Segment your fund raising efforts. For example, large potential donors should be asked individually. Don't forget to ask individuals who are not able to give monetary support to provide assistance in telephoning, putting up yard signs, addressing letters, etc.

General Tips

- Ask for money more than once.
- Don't take rejection personally. People will say no. Sometimes lots of people will say no.
- Get right to the point when requesting money.
- When requesting from previous donors, thank them for their earlier gifts.
- State your needs with specifics; for example, “a donation of \$20 will buy a 30-second radio spot on our local station.”
- Request a higher amount than you think people will give, so you will have room to negotiate.
- Tell them you have donated to the fund.
- Keep accurate records.

Ways to Raise Money

- One-on-one is the most effective.
- Telephone campaigns
 - Call only individuals who know of your campaign and are likely to support your cause.
 - Have only individuals who are familiar with the benefits of your cause and who are articulate make the phone pitch.
 - Write out a script before making the phone call, but don't read it, have the written material there as back up.
- Direct mail
 - Create a credible and personal feel in the written message.
 - Hand address letters.
 - Use a stamp even if it is a bulk mail stamp, it will increase the response.
 - Hand sign the letters.
 - Provide a return address envelope.
- Event fund raisers
 - Auctions: Individuals who may not be able to make a monetary contribution, may be able to crochet an afghan, or donate items for an auction, etc. Provide them with documentation for their taxes of the value of the gift.
 - Bake sales, craft items, etc.: Have current participants in the organization provide goods for sale, or have a group of individuals get together and make items for sale, etc. If the group does not have adequate funds to purchase the inputs, (such as flour, sugar, etc., for cinnamon rolls), provide them the funds.
 - Grain gifts: Many campaigns that work with agricultural organizations have found that an effective way to raise money is to ask for donations of grain as farmers wait in line to sell their corn at the elevator, etc.
 - In kind gifts: Donation of copy machine, computer time, etc.
 - Suppers, luncheons, etc.: Great way to get community involvement and publicity.
- Publicity is especially important for your event fund raisers to be successful. Let people know what they are donating to and the benefits of supporting your organization.
- Set up challenges among groups, e.g., have a contest in which two local groups compete to see who can raise the most money.
- Have FUN and be creative.

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Campaigns

Tips for Direct Mail: Fund Raising

Whether you love it or hate it, there is no question that direct mail has mushroomed as a key political tool.

Direct-mail fund raising is first and foremost a process of financial management. Contrary to first impressions, it is not a process of creating clever or cute mailings. Successful direct mail fund raising begins with a plan.

National statistics tell us we can expect a response rate of 1 to 2 percent with an average donation of \$18 to \$22 from individuals who are unfamiliar with your issue.

When you mail to people who know about your issue, you can expect a response rate of 6 to 15 percent. The average gift is in the \$20 to \$25 range.

The Message

Next to a personal visit or a phone call, direct mail is the most intimate of all the media. It's an "I" to "you" communication. The success of direct mail—both the fund raising and the voter persuasion variety—rests on the fundamental bond, established when one human being communicates with another in person, in conversational terms. The trick is to create that credible, personal "feel" of a direct mail letter.

- **Get right to the point.** After you've written your first draft, look down to the third or fourth paragraph. That's probably where your letter should have begun in the first place.
- **Recognize the reader.** Early in the letter, tie the reader into the message. If you're writing to a person who has already given, recognize his or her involvement and generosity.
- **State what you want the reader to do.** Let the reader know what it is he or she can do to help.
- **State the problem using specific examples.** Remember, nobody buys a Buick because General Motors needs the money. You've got to tell how you're going to use the money and what difference it will make.
- **Include a "Paid for by" message on printed material.**
- **Restate the situation and the solution.** People don't read everything word by word. They scan; they jump around.
- **Ask for money.** Don't beat around the bush. Tell the reader how much you want, what you want it for, and when you want it. Confusion is the enemy of

good sales techniques. Nothing is more confusing than an otherwise moving letter that doesn't give the reader any clue of what you're expecting.

- **Design and use an attractive envelope.** If the letter doesn't get opened, the fund raising message won't be read.
- **Personalize the letter.** Even if you are using a bulk mailing permit, use a "live" stamp. Hand address envelopes. Sign the letter with blue ink.
- **Ask for money from individuals more than once.**
- **Don't take rejection personally.** People will say no. Sometimes even a lot of people will say no. But as stated by the editors of Campaigns and Elections, "if love means never having to say you're sorry, fund raising means never feeling sorry for yourself." Expect to be turned down a lot; it comes with the territory.
- **Keep accurate records.**

Adapted from Roger Carver, "The Direct MailBox: The Tastelessness of Success," "The Direct MailBox: Better Read than Dead," and "The Direct MailBox: Launching an Effective Fund raising Effort," in Campaigns and Elections.

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Campaigns

Tips for Preparing a Speech

A speaker's committee prepares and presents service club programs about the issues of your campaign. Here are some guidelines on preparing a good speech.

- Adapt the presentation to audience interests.
- Determine in advance the reaction desired from the audience.
- Prepare so that your remarks are effective, relevant, and valid. Prepare with a purpose in mind.
- Prepare the talk. If you haven't time to prepare a talk, don't accept the engagement. Keep in mind that thorough preparation is the best available fear remover!
- Divide your speech into two or three main headings or points. Most listeners can't remember more than that.
- Adjust your language to the audience members' educational level and knowledge of the subject.
- Use your conclusion to stress the purpose of your talk. You don't want anyone to leave with any doubt about what you tried to say.
- Practice aloud. Don't practice so much that you get stale, but have material well in mind. Then don't read the speech, talk it. Many people prefer to speak from note cards that list the main point of the talk.
- Keep the speech short—15 minutes maximum.

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Campaigns

Tips for the Unexpected Crisis

How should you react when an unexpected crisis threatens to cripple your campaign? Those experienced in damage control methods suggest the following guidelines:

Seize control fast. The most important aspect of crisis management is quick, decisive action. Procrastination does nothing to defuse the situation, and silence simply fosters speculation. To the media ASAP means within five minutes.

Learn all the facts. Just because you have been accused of wrongdoing does not mean you have done something wrong.

Assess the crisis carefully. Not every charge warrants a response. Sometimes rebutting a minor attack only brings more publicity. Determine whether the story will simply go away if unanswered.

Never, ever lie. This is a cardinal rule and it is especially applicable under the spotlight of a crisis. Any lie you tell will eventually be caught, either by the media or the opposition. At that point, you not only will find yourself engulfed in an even deeper crisis, but you will lose your credibility.

Focus your defense. Take a key element of the situation and turn it into your advantage. Keep in mind that you need not try to persuade everyone; your primary concern should be reassuring swing voters and loyal supporters.

Do not attack the press. No matter how wronged you may have been, you will gain little by publicly blasting the press. If you truly have a legitimate beef, take up the matter quietly with the particular reporter and editor involved.

Put the crisis behind you.

Adapted from "The Art of Damage Control," by Pamela Lalond in *Campaigns and Elections*, October/November 1988; and "Ten Commandments You Don't Want to Break!" by Jerry Dahmen in *IABC Communications World*, August 1992.

