



# Briefing Memorandum

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To: Mayor Wilson

From: Kerri Nakamura, Chief of Staff

Subject: Urgent need to secure a Brand Manager position

Date: August 10, 2022

Due Date: August 10, 2022

## Summary

On Tuesday, August 16, 2022, the County Council will receive another briefing regarding the launch of the new County website. The goals of the website redesign were findability of services and information, awareness/education about what the county offers, and usability/access, particularly to the county's underserved and diverse constituencies. Salt Lake County has invested significant resources, including extensive public surveying, internal alignment of policymakers and stakeholders around functionality and design, and the time of our internal teams to build and launch the new site. Additionally, we had design and implementation assistance valued at well over \$500K. To protect this investment, it is time for the County to dedicate operational resources to ensure that the integrity of the website and County brand is maintained. Best practice suggests that Salt

Lake County should hire a Brand Manager to:

- Oversee and manage key messages and changes to the website (i.e., no fireworks in July, water wise during the summer, elections, opening of new facilities, etc.)
- Develop and ensure agencies adhere to a style and brand guide
- Advise and support agencies across the County in updating service information on the website
- Assist agencies and elected offices in promoting and marketing services and encouraging public participation through the website
- Coordinate translation of website information/materials

We estimate that the total compensation required for a Brand Manager is about \$160,000 (equivalent grade 17 position).

## Background

Salt Lake County recently launched its new website. Aside from traditional IT support, best practices suggest inclusion of a Brand Manager position to support the content side of the website. This function is not typically managed by IT, but rather is a communications function. The Brand Manager is charged with maintaining website integrity in terms of messaging, style, and accessibility of services. We have attempted to meet the need two times without asking to expand government.

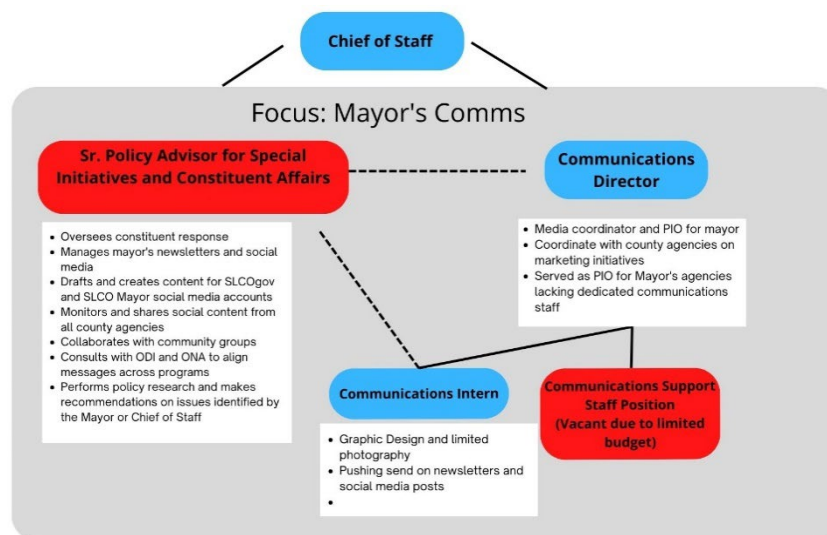
- First, when the Sr. Policy Advisor for Special Initiatives and Constituent Affairs went vacant last November, we contemplated re-purposing this position into the Brand Manager role. The position was eliminated by the County Council as part of the 2022 budget process.
- Secondly, there was a vacant Sr. Policy Advisor position in Human Services that was vacant in April, we re-purposed the position into a Brand Manager role and the position was out to bid when the County Council eliminated the position as part of the June 2022 budget amendment process.

Now that the website is launched, it is increasingly apparent that we cannot wait until the budget process to request a new position. We need the Brand Manager position as soon as possible to maintain the investment we have made in the new website. There is no position in County government that is currently assigned the responsibilities of the Brand Manager role. Just this week, a change was initiated by an agency that needed to be walked back because the change was inconsistent with messaging for Salt Lake County. A Brand Manager would not have allowed the change to move forward.

## Issues to Consider/Action Item

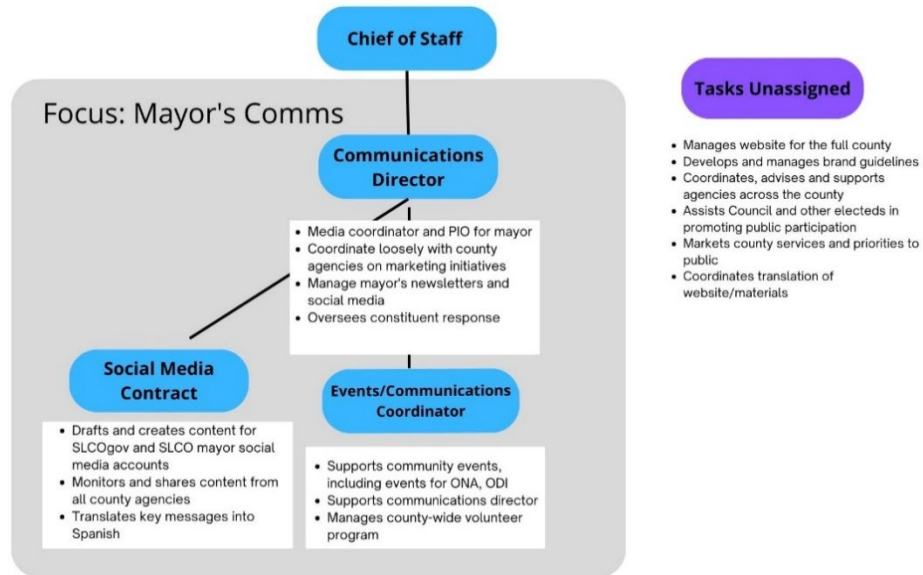
The request to fund a Brand Manager position does not increase staffing in the Mayor's office. The chart below shows the communications team staff level in the Mayor's Office as of June 2021. At that time, there were 3 FTEs for communications, although one position was not filled because it didn't have adequate budget allocated. The positions highlighted in red, and the related budget, were eliminated by the County Council during the 2022 budget process. As 2022 began, the Comms program had Communications Director (one FTE) and a communications intern.

**June 2021 Comms Staff**



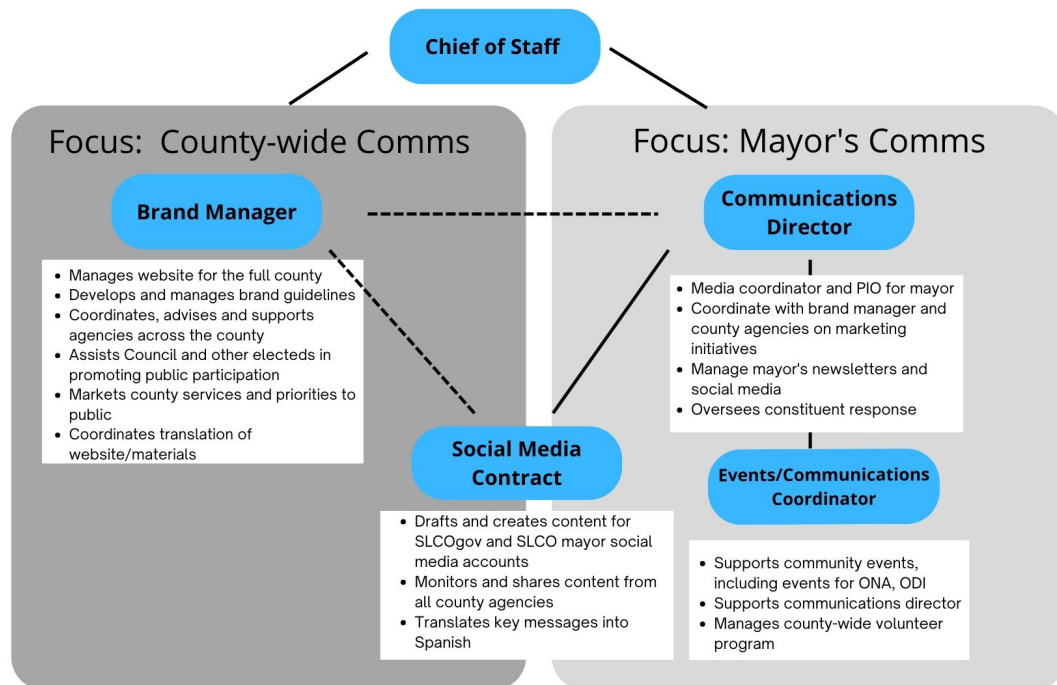
Following the budget cut, the Mayor's Office re-assigned some responsibilities and went out to bid for a social media support contract as there was no one in the office to assist with social media planning and execution and the level of support needed was beyond the capabilities of an intern. When a junior level position went vacant in another area of the Mayor's Administration in early Spring, we repurposed the position to provide additional staff support (beyond what an intern can provide) to the Mayor's Director of Communications. The chart below shows our current communications program in the Mayor's Office. On the right side are the responsibilities that are currently unassigned and cannot be completed at the existing staffing level.

## Current Communications Team



If we are successful in securing a Brand Manager position, we will assign the unassigned tasks to that position and we will also have that position take a strong, countywide focus – not only with the website, but also with assisting in the management of the social media contract as it relates to accessibility of services and messages. If a new position is allocated, the organizational plan for the communications function will be:

## Communications Team with a Brand Manager



Even with the addition of a Brand Manager position, the Mayor's Administration will remain down 2.0 FTEs and the associated budget from the 2021 level.

## **Analysis**

We recently asked an intern to complete a comparative analysis of Salt Lake County's communications team as compared to teams in peer organizations. Overall, Salt Lake County's existing commitment of two full-time staff in the Mayor's Office appears to be inadequate for an organization of our size. Most organizations we examined have hybrid systems like Salt Lake County's where there are decentralized staff as well as a centralized team. This analysis focuses on the centralized portion of the team:

- Spokane has a centralized comms staff of 12 with a web content team of 3.
- King County has a comms staff of 3 with 3 additional non-direct report staff assigned to the centralized team.
- Clark County has a centralized staff of 7 and is planning to add several additional positions.
- Salt Lake City has a centralized staff of 3.5

## **Recommendation**

To maintain the integrity of the new website and to propel Salt Lake County forward in the use of the website as an accessible way for residents to learn about and receive services, a Brand Manager position needs to be created as soon as possible to assume these functions and responsibilities. We should not invest further in the website if we are not going to protect the investment with operational support.

## **Timeline**

As soon as possible.