



02-13-2025 [Revised from 12-07-2024]

City of St. Helens
City Council
265 Strand Street
St. Helens, OR 97051

Dear St. Helens City Council,

Subject: Proposal for Consideration of FAFODDS- Media Access for Executive Sessions

We hope this letter finds you well. We are writing on behalf of FAFODDS, a nonprofit public-benefit corporation operating exclusively for charitable, scientific, and educational purposes under IRS Section 501(c)(3). Our mission includes supporting victims of unsolved crimes, requesting and publishing public records, collecting and disseminating news information to the community through modern media platforms. We formally request access to executive sessions as media representatives. Our commitment is to uphold transparency, ethical reporting, and compliance with the highest standards of journalistic integrity while respecting the confidentiality and governance of these sessions.

Organization Information

Organization Name: FAFODDS

EIN: 92-3681195

Public Charity Status: IRC Section 501(c)(3), Public Charity Status 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)

Oregon Secretary of State Registration Number: 2106408-92

Staff: Four Voluntary Board Members (non-compensated)

Insured: Yes, American Family Insurance, available upon request

Professional Liability: Yes, HISCOX insurance Company, available upon request

Legally Represented: Yes, Harang Long, LLC

Purpose and Media Presence

FAFODDS utilizes prominent social media platforms, including the Columbia County Transparency and Accountability (CCTA) Facebook Page and the Justice for Sarah Zuber Facebook Page, which collectively reach approximately 4,700 followers to disseminate media information. These platforms represents an estimated 31.33% of the Columbia County population, highlighting our significant community engagement. Additionally, many traditional newspapers and media outlets actively monitor our pages for current events and key indicators to guide further reporting efforts.

Social media has proven to be the most effective way to reach citizens, surpassing traditional methods that have “pay walls” and others like AM radio. Unlike radio, which requires active engagement from the audience, social media ensures timely and accessible updates by pushing information directly to users who follow our pages. FAFODDS employs a variety of methods to share information, including but not limited to:

- Publishing FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) request documents.
- Live streaming local events directly to our social media platforms.
- Sharing community updates and real-time news.

We remain fully aware of the confidentiality required for executive session discussions and are committed to adhering strictly to these guidelines.

Media Access to Executive Sessions

Under the guidance of the Oregon Attorney General (No. 8291, Apr 18, 2016, 2016 WL 2905510):

The term “representatives of the media” is not defined by the ORS or by any judicial opinion to date. However, the Oregon Attorney General’s office has issued an advisory opinion wherein it concluded that under Oregon law “news-gathering representatives of institutional media” are permitted to attend executive sessions and the term is “broad and flexible enough to encompass changing technologies for delivering the news.” The conclusion reached by the attorney general seems to imply that *bloggers and other social media news entities are authorized to attend executive sessions*. In reaching this conclusion, the attorney general relied heavily on what it believes are the stated reasons the Legislative Assembly allowed the media to attend executive sessions when the law was originally adopted.

Both general interest media and specialized online media platforms, such as blogs, may qualify. Media representatives can attend executive sessions as long as confidentiality standards are upheld.

Conflict of Interest Reporting: We will disclose and manage any conflicts to ensure unbiased reporting:

- **Error Correction:** Any inadvertent errors will be promptly corrected, including any necessary revisions based on board decisions or legal guidance.
- **Executive Session Violations:** We recognize the importance of confidentiality and will ensure no unauthorized disclosures occur.
- **Complaint Process:** Any concerns raised regarding our reporting will be presented to the board for review, where rules and policies will be applied fairly and consistently.
- **Board Review & Legal Counsel:** The board will render decisions on any reporting concerns, document them appropriately, and seek legal counsel as needed.
- **Revisions & Corrections:** If rehabilitation of published content is required, we will make appropriate edited corrections based on board decisions or legal guidance.

Examples of Independent Journalism by FAFODDS:

To support our media application for access to executive sessions, we present the following examples of investigative journalism and actions taken by our organization that have directly contributed to transparency, accountability, and justice within our community:

Cold Case Investigation – Sarah Zuber:

- Conducted in-depth investigative reporting into the cold case of Sarah Zuber, uncovering new evidence that had previously been overlooked.
- Our findings led to the reopening of the case by the Major Crimes Team, resulting in active investigations and renewed pursuit of justice.

Illegal Dumping Investigation(s):

- Investigated illegal dumping. One arrest has been made, and another is pending as a direct result of our reporting.

Uncovering Financial Mismanagement in Public Contracts:

- Findings resulted in a formal criminal complaint and an FBI investigation into the city's subcontractor.

These are just a few examples of the impact our independent journalism has had in holding institutions accountable, uncovering critical information, and ensuring the public remains informed. Given our proven track record of responsible investigative reporting, we respectfully request access to executive sessions to continue our mission of transparency and public service.

Key Points from the Attorney General's Guidance:

Gathering and Disseminating News: A representative must engage in activities that involve gathering and distributing news or information.

Formal Affiliation: While this term is mentioned, the guidance does not strictly limit eligibility to traditional "institutional" entities. It opens the door for platforms such as blogs, nonprofits, or organizations that provide reliable, structured news dissemination.

Nonprofit Organizations as Media:

A nonprofit with a robust platform that actively gathers, reports, and disseminates news and public information can qualify as a representative of the news media under this guidance. The nonprofit would need to demonstrate:

- **A Track Record of Reporting:** Evidence of consistent reporting or dissemination of public information.
- **Community Engagement:** An established audience and a role in informing the public.
- **Adherence to Ethical Standards:** A commitment to accuracy, transparency, and confidentiality where applicable (e.g., respecting executive session boundaries).

Given our established role in gathering and disseminating community information, FAFODDS qualifies as a media entity under this definition.

Request for Consideration

We respectfully request that FAFODDS be recognized as a media entity and granted permission to attend executive sessions. This request includes the following FAFODDS board staff/members:

- Adam St. Pierre- Board Member
- Brianna Gaston- Secretary
- Mercedes Massey- Board Member

Our presence at these sessions would allow us to further our mission of promoting transparency and effectively engaging with the community, all while strictly adhering to ethical and legal requirements, including maintaining confidentiality and omitting any information or issues discussed during executive sessions.

While a formal affiliation with a traditional institutional news media entity is one path, the guidance allows flexibility for nonprofits or other organizations that function as credible sources of news. Our nonprofit (FAFODDS) demonstrates that it meets these criteria, and can be considered a representative of the news media under the Oregon Attorney General's interpretation and the guidelines for non-traditional media outlined by the city of St. Helens.

We appreciate your time and consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or for additional information.

Sincerely,

Adam St. Pierre
Behalf of FAFODDS
503-881-5856
fafodds@gmail.com

Enclosures:

- Department of the Treasury
- Secretary of the State
- Facebook Analytics



Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service
Tax Exempt and Government Entities
P.O. Box 2508
Cincinnati, OH 45201

FAFODDS CORP
185 CLARK STREET
SAINT HELENS, OR 97051

Date:
05/04/2023
Employer ID number:
92-3681195
Person to contact:
Name: Customer Service
ID number: 31954
Telephone: (877) 829-5500
Accounting period ending:
December 31
Public charity status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 / 990-EZ / 990-N required:
Yes
Effective date of exemption:
April 12, 2023
Contribution deductibility:
Yes
Addendum applies:
No
DLN:
26053517003633

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to www.irs.gov/charities. Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Martin
Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements

Letter 947 (Rev. 2-2020)
Catalog Number 35152P



FAFODDS

Business Overview

Business Name

FAFODDS

Entity Type

Domestic Nonprofit Corporation(DNP)

Registry Number

210640892

Registration Date

04/12/2023

Renewal Due Date

04/12/2024

Activity Description

NONPROFIT PUBLIC-BENEFIT CORPORATION OPERATED EXCLUSIVELY FOR CHARITABLE, SCIENTIFIC, OR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF UNSOLVED CRIMES AND REQUESTING AND PUBLISHING PUBLIC RECORDS. CONSIDERED MEDIA

Describe the type of business activity (250 characters or less)

Business Email

Select From List | Clear Email

Notifications may be sent to this address.

FAFODDS@GMAIL.COM

Re-enter Email

FAFODDS@GMAIL.COM

AMENDED ANNUAL REPORT



Corporation Division
sos.oregon.gov/business

E-FILED
Mar 02, 2024
OREGON SECRETARY OF STATE

REGISTRY NUMBER

210640892

REGISTRATION DATE

04/12/2023

BUSINESS NAME

FAFODDS

BUSINESS ACTIVITY

NONPROFIT PUBLIC-BENEFIT CORPORATION OPERATED EXCLUSIVELY FOR CHARITABLE, SCIENTIFIC, OR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF UNSOLVED CRIMES AND REQUESTING AND PUBLISHING PUBLIC RECORDS. CONSIDERED MEDIA

MAILING ADDRESS

185 CLARK ST
SAINT HELENS OR 97051 USA

TYPE

DOMESTIC NONPROFIT CORPORATION

PRIMARY PLACE OF BUSINESS

185 CLARK STREET
SAINT HELENS OR 97051 USA

JURISDICTION

OREGON

REGISTERED AGENT

ERICA TATOIAN

111 SW COLUMBIA ST
SUITE 950
PORTLAND OR 97201 USA

If the Registered Agent has changed, the new agent has consented to the appointment.

PRESIDENT

JENNIFER MASSEY

185 CLARK ST
SAINT HELENS OR 97051 USA

SECRETARY

BRIANNA GASTON

58698 NOBLE RD
SAINT HELENS OR 97051 USA



Columbia County Transparency & Accountability (CCTA)

Public group · 2.6K members

Community roles

Settings

Group settings
Manage discussions, permissions and roles

Add features
Choose post formats, badges and other features

Insights

Growth

Engagement

Admins & moderators

Group experts

Everyone

Feb 14, 2024 - Feb 12, 2025

Download

All

921 Posts

18,052 Comments

40,425 Reactions

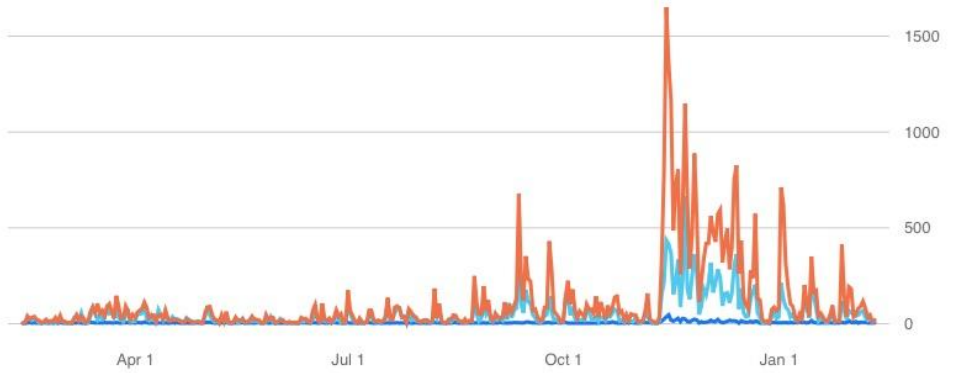
Feb 13, 2024 - Feb 11, 2025

Posts

Comments

Reactions

All



Columbia County Transparency & Accountability (CCTA)

Public group · 2.6K members

Add features
Choose post formats, badges and other features

Insights

Growth

Engagement

Admins & moderators

Group experts

Participants

Guides

Support

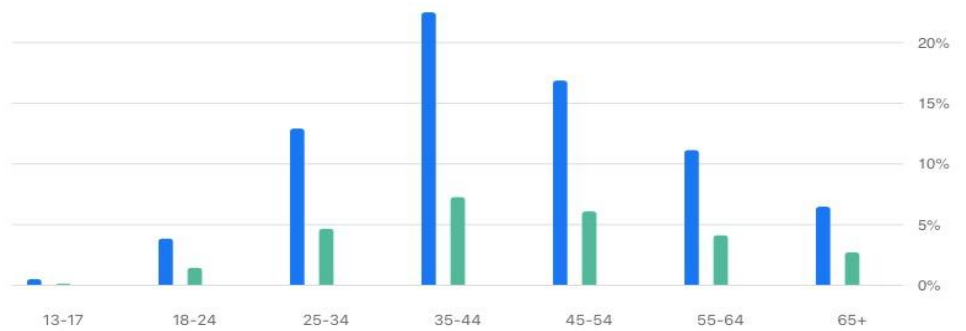
Help Center

Groups Hub

+ Create a chat

Age and gender

74% Female 26% Male 0% Custom



Top countries

United States	2,609
Bangladesh	13
Pakistan	6
Nigeria	5
South Africa	2

Top cities

Saint Helens, OR	1,140
Scappoose, OR	352
Portland, OR	109
Rainier, OR	107
Columbia Ctv. OR	80