



EARLENE WILSON
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May 27, 2010

NACRC Executive Director
2501 Aerial Center Parkway
Suite 103
Morrisville, N.C. 27500

Dear NACRC:

Enclosed is our Best Practice submission for the "Clerk to Board" field.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Earlene Wilson".

Earlene Wilson,
Tulsa County Clerk

EW/lc
Enclosures

Problem: Public perception of lack of transparency

Solution: Provide Information on the Tulsa County website

There is talk about government from every level being more open, transparent and accessible for the people. Most citizens want to know what their governments are doing, how money is being spent and what decisions are being made. But taking time to attend a public meeting is something most citizens don't have time to do. With technology finding its' place in every facet of government, it is incumbent upon government to provide this information quickly and timely. This is most commonly done through a government website.

In October of 2006 the Sam Adams Alliance, a nonprofit organization in Chicago, was founded with the explicit purpose of reviewing and grading websites for openness and transparency for all of the states, cities, counties, and school districts in America. This project is called the sunshine Review project. This can be found at www.sunshinereview.org.

In September 2009, Tulsa County had received a C-grade. Of all Oklahoma counties, 55 failed for not having any website at all. The C- was the highest grade of any county in the state. It was decided that Tulsa County would settle for nothing less than an A grade. So the work began in earnest to put as much information for the public on the Tulsa County website, which is www.tulsacounty.org.

Earlene Wilson, Tulsa County Clerk, posted Tulsa County's Government Finance Officers Association's award winning Comprehensive Annual Financial Report together with the approved agreements and contracts to the website each week. Meeting dates and agendas were already being posted.

Other information includes a stimulus website on where stimulus money is being spent in Tulsa County, zoning codes and procedures, a list of the professional associations which Tulsa County is a member of, contact information for all of the elected officials and public information officer, and a social media site with Twitter and Facebook.

After three weeks, Sunshine Review was asked to do a re-grade on the new and improved site. Kristin McMurray, Senior Editor, Sunshine Review and her staff reviewed the improvements and, with excitement, gave Tulsa County an A+. At that time, Ms. McMurray said: "We at Sunshine Review are thrilled that Tulsa County moved so quickly to earn a perfect score on our Transparency checklist. The Tulsa County elected officials are providing essential information and engaging in being an open and honest government for the people and Tulsa County constituents will be better served because of it.

“Not only does Tulsa County have the highest grade of any government in Oklahoma, but with the A+ it is one of only 5 counties out of over 3000 nationwide who have gone above and beyond even our requirements. We think it is fantastic how quickly Tulsa County jumped on the transparency band wagon.” McMurray said.

All of the Tulsa County elected officials are committed to preserving this highest of grades on being an open and accessible government to the citizens of Tulsa County. This starts by bringing this information directly to the citizens through the most transparent tool available – the award winning Tulsa County website.



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County News

National Association of Counties Recognizes Tulsa County Website

TULSA, Okla. (April 19, 2010) - In its April issue of County News, the National Association of Counties recognized Tulsa County's website as one of only seven among county websites in the U.S. that achieved a perfect score for transparency. Tulsa County was recently awarded the annual Sunny Award by Sunshine Review.

"Sunny Award winners are recognized for making information available to citizens and for setting a transparency standard that all governments can and should meet," said Mike Barnhart, president of Sunshine Review.

Upon review of Tulsa County's website in 2009, it became apparent that more information was needed on the site. "I felt that our organization could work together to make the website as helpful as possible," said County Commissioner John Smaligo. "With help from our information technology department and County Clerk Earlene Wilson's office as well as Tulsa County's other elected officials, we transformed the website providing taxpayers much more access to their county records," he added.

Tulsa County and six other counties were chosen among 5,000 government websites analyzed by Sunshine Review.

Related Links:

- BOK Walking Art Tour
- Chandler Park staff kicks off youth baseball
- Community Center at Chandler Park Open House Saturday, April 24
- County Clerks from Across Oklahoma Training in Tulsa for First Time
- Recycled Medication Program Receives Top Award
- Route 66 Keepsake Club
- Tulsa County Commissioners Willing to Forge Ahead with Mayor Bartlett
- Tulsa County Receives Excellent Rating In Financial Reporting
- Tulsa County Receives National Recognition for Transparency
- Tulsa County Receives United Way Awards
- Tulsa County took time to honor its employees who serve not only our community, but also our country
- Veterans Day Proclamation and Ceremony Videos

Tulsa County, Oklahoma

From Sunshine Review

Tulsa County is a county located in the state of Oklahoma. As of 2000, the population was 563,299. Its county seat is Tulsa.

Contents

- 1 Website evaluation
 - 1.1 The good
 - 1.2 Website upgrade
- 2 External links
- 3 References

Website evaluation

Main article: Evaluation of Oklahoma county websites

The good

- Budget information is provided.^[1]
- County board members are listed with contact information.
- Board meeting dates are posted, as well as meeting agendas and documents.^[2]
- Local tax information is available on the treasurer's website.^[3]
- Building permits are available on the Inspections page^[4] as well as the county's zoning codes.^[5]
- Administrative officials listed under their departments.
- Post who the public information officer is and how to contact him.^[6]
- Stimulus information is posted for the county.^[7]
- Discloses membership to taxpayer-funded lobbying associations.^[8]
- Posted the 2008 audit.^[9]
- The county posts its contracts.^[10]



- Budget ✓
- Meetings ✓
- Elected Officials ✓
- Administrative Officials ✓
- Permits, zoning ✓
- Audits ✓
- Contracts ✓
- Lobbying ✓
- Public records ✓
- Local taxes ✓

- ✓ PRESENT
- ✗ MISSING
- INCOMPLETE

Website upgrade

After the results for Oklahoma counties was released, the County Board Members jumped to upgrade their website and achieved a perfect "A" in less than three weeks. As of October 2009 it is the only Oklahoma county with an "A" grade.



External links

- Tulsa County website (<http://www.tulsacounty.org/>)
- Tulsa County clerk removes online copy fee (<http://www.journalrecord.com/article.cfm?recid=97715>) , The Journal Record, April 15, 2009
- Tulsa County Assessor (<http://www.assessor.tulsacounty.org/>)
- Epodunk, Tulsa County (<http://www.epodunk.com/cgi-bin/genInfo.php?locIndex=16157>)
- Tulsa County Sheriff (<http://www.tcsso.org/>)
- Tulsa County Bar Association (<http://www.tulsabar.com/>)
- Tulsa County GOP (<http://www.tulsagop.org/>)
- Tulsa County Democrats (<http://www.okdemocrats.org/tulsa-county>)



Evaluation of Oklahoma county websites

From Sunshine Review

What information can people find on their county's website in Oklahoma?

This page captures a snapshot of the information contributed by Sunshine Review users after they've studied the information made available on Oklahoma county websites.

See also: County websites, state-by-state comparison, to compare what you can find on Oklahoma's county websites to what can be found on county websites in other states.

Reading the chart

In the chart below:

- ✓ means that information is included on the government website
- * means that the information was not provided on the government website
- ⊓ means that information was partially provided

Check the Sunshine Review page about each county for more detailed information about what information is available on the county website, along with recommendations SR users have made for positive changes.

Contents

- 1 Reading the chart
 - 1.1 Conclusions chart
- 2 Comparison chart
- 3 Counties without websites (55)
- 4 Correcting errors

MY GOVERNMENT WEBSITE

My Government Website

Transparency Checklist
How to evaluate websites
Progress reports

County website project
County comparison chart

City website project
List of cities

School district website project
List of school districts

Action steps

Conclusions chart

	Budget?	Meetings?	Elected officials?	Admin. Officials?	Permits/Zoning?	Audits?	Contracts?	Lobbying?	Public records?	Taxes?
✓	2	10	15	13	3	1	1	1	6	11
⊓	1	8	9	8	3	0	0	0	2	6
*	28	12	7	10	26	30	30	30	23	14
No Website	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55

Comparison chart

County	Budget	Meetings	Elected Officials	Admin. Officials	Permits/Zoning	Audits	Contracts	Lobbying	Public records	Taxes
Atoka County, Oklahoma	*	⊓	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	⊓	*
Beaver County, Oklahoma	*	✓	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	⊓	✓
Blaine County, Oklahoma	*	⊓	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	✓	*
Canadian County, Oklahoma	*	✓	✓	✓	⊓	*	*	*	*	⊓
Carter County, Oklahoma	*	✓	⊓	⊓	*	*	*	*	*	✓
Cherokee County, Oklahoma	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Cleveland County, Oklahoma	*	*	⊓	*	*	*	*	*	*	⊓
Comanche County, Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊓	✓	*	*	*	⊓
Craig County, Oklahoma	*	⊓	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	⊓	*
Creek County, Oklahoma	*	✓	*	*	✓	*	*	*	*	⊓
Grady County, Oklahoma	*	*	✓	⊓	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jackson County, Oklahoma	*	✓	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	*	✓
Jefferson County, Oklahoma	*	*	⊓	*	*	*	*	*	*	✓
Kay County, Oklahoma	*	✓	✓	⊓	*	*	*	*	*	✓
Murray County, Oklahoma	*	*	⊓	✓	*	*	*	*	*	*
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	⊓	*	✓	✓
Payne County, Oklahoma	✓	✓	⊓	⊓	*	*	*	*	*	⊓
Rogers County, Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊓	*	*	*	✓	✓
Tillman County, Oklahoma	*	⊓	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	*	✓
Tulsa County, Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Washington County, Oklahoma	*	⊓	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	*	⊓
Woodward County, Oklahoma	*	*	⊓	⊓	*	*	*	*	✓	⊓

EDITORIALS

County kudos

'Perfect' score allows more sunlight

Tulsa County could have been content with the C- score it received in September from a national Sunshine Review Project, a group that grades government Web sites for transparency.

But several public officials including Commissioner John Smaligo, County Clerk Earlene Wilson and Terry Simonson, director of development and governmental affairs, believed citizens didn't deserve a below-average Web site. Over the next three weeks Simonson, working with Wilson and the county's IT department, flew into action, loading "an incredible amount of information" onto the Web site.

Then, officials contacted Kristin McMurray, the Sunshine Review's managing editor, asking for a re-grade. The result? An A+.

The grade was the best for any county, city or school district in Oklahoma, and the state's own Web site. In fact, only five counties in the nation — out of 3,063 counties — received an A+ rating.

"The citizens of Tulsa County should be very proud that their county government is letting the sunshine on essential information and taking steps to be an open and honest government for the people," said McMurray. "To start off, they (Tulsa County) were still the best Web site

Tulsa County's example should not stand alone. Transparency is important. Other cities and counties need to climb on the sunshine bandwagon.

in Oklahoma, but they've got a perfect 10 now."

McMurray told Simonson the reason Tulsa County received the A+ rating was that "we did more than they expected and went above and beyond. We are a national example."

The county received perfect scores for transparency on budget matters, meetings, elected and administrative officials' activities, permits and zoning, audits, contracts, lobbying, public records and taxes.

Sunshine Review's report gave passing grades to only eight of Oklahoma's 77 counties.

Sunshine Review is a project of the Sam Adams Alliance, a Chicago nonprofit agency that aims for greater government accountability and transparency.

Tulsa County's example should not stand alone. Transparency is important. Other cities and counties need to climb on the sunshine bandwagon.