

Discussion with Agency Heads and Staff
Tuesday, January 28, 2003

- 1) Agency Heads and prominent staff (department/division directors) need to take a more active role in promoting the Governor and his agenda – must work to increase visibility in the community.
- 2) Based on what we are hearing there are several areas of concern that need to be proactively addressed by Directors and Department Heads
 - a. “need to be more helpful to minorities” (whether it is someone seeking a job, working to put together a contract bid, applying for a grant or loan, or simply seeking information/guidance on an agency’s services)
 - b. “Governor has not done anything in the black community” (we need to be out there aggressively promoting the Governor’s efforts to increase minority participation in all aspects of government – **visibility** and **accessibility** – the Governor travels, works hard, and makes numerous appearances to promote his agenda, we must help him – it is good for our community to hear about the things he is doing from someone who knows first hand and is involved in helping him do those things)
 - c. “Agencies and their staff spend more time trying to thwart minority participation than they do trying to encourage it” (we should be the “foot in the door” for so many people in our community, it is not enough that the Governor has put people in place – those people must demonstrate their interest in serving the community, this means that we must spend extra time/work extra hard trying to help those in our community who approach us and demonstrate an interest in advancing themselves and the community – we must stay in touch, follow-up, and if we cannot offer direct assistance we must work with the individual or group to ensure that they find someone or some organization/agency that can help)
- 3) Keep us informed about the things you are doing, the places you are appearing, and the people you are meeting with:
 - a. we need to be aware of your activity so that we can also talk about your work as we are out in the community
 - b. if there are constituents/companies/organizations that you have met with that we need to know about – let me know
 - c. contracts, hirings, grant and loan requests, business assistance, etc. – keep us up-to-date so that the Governor can do follow-up when appropriate
- 4) Accomplishments and Good News from your agency:
 - a. we want to share in the publicity/help promote your agency’s “good news” when you award a contract, announce a program or initiative, publicize accomplishments of your agency in the community – we need to be involved

- 5) All Areas of the State are important:
 - a. make sure that you are looking beyond Jackson, beyond the traditional areas and brokers in development
 - b. work to seek out and develop projects, business, communities in all areas of the state (Delta and Southwest Mississippi have large constituencies and must be focused on – keep in mind that there are projects to be developed all over the state)

- 6) Know your budget and be able to discuss the way that your funds can benefit (and have benefited) the community
 - a. the Governor's budget recommendation is attached – it does not get more specific than an agency's overall budget, Gov. is requesting budget flexibility