



September 2024 Report

August in Idaho is known for its fire seasons, rodeos, recreating outdoors, and being the month of “back-to-school”. Naturally, this is also the time when we start to see more familiar faces from agencies, governor’s staff, and legislators returning from trips and vacations to reengage in the downtown scene. Now that we officially have passed the Labor Day weekend; we anticipate seeing even more political actors return to their busy schedules. BB&A always takes advantage of the “slow” season, as we packed our summer schedules full of meetings and events all summer to keep up to date on the most recent changes and keep things moving for you. While others are catching up from the summer news, our team is ready for the anticipated uptick in conversations, events, and policy work as deadlines being approaching again.

The end of August and leading into September has been full of political campaign fundraisers for PAC’s and candidates as they gear up once again for another contentious November General Election. Presidential election years always lead to more citizens paying closer attention to politics, driving higher turnouts than midterms and statewide elections but it can be hard for local and legislative candidates to break through the noise created at the national level. This process also leads to more controversial political rhetoric which can cause further problems across all ideologies. The number of fundraisers and events will only grow as the next few months speed past towards the November 5, 2024, General Election.

Many interim committees have continued their work through the summer and receiving updates from agencies to plan for potential policy changes in the upcoming 2025 Legislative Session. The next few months have already had numerous meetings scheduled to continue these conversations, including JFAC, who has been very eager to hear updates about the contentious pieces of policy that were passed this past session. BB&A has and will continue to keep up to date on these meetings, especially as the committees discuss policy areas that may have repercussions on your policy goals.

September and October are notorious for being conference season, as most people have wrapped up their family vacations and summer hideaways. This time of the year also aligns with budget and policy setting negotiations and conversations. The state now starts to look deeper at the additional funding, or lack of funding, that has not been set aside for automatic property tax relief. While we remain ahead, this is a critical time for us, in order for us to be as prepared as possible for what’s to come in January when session kicks off.

BB&A has been cautious to not step on toes during this delicate process, but we remain engaged and helpful as we offer strategy and solutions to those decision makers who are moving through the stages of budget and policy drafting. While others may “wait and see” in January, being involved now helps thwart bad ideas early, often with less energy than killing a bill during session. It can also promote and engrain your goals and ideas with agencies and legislators’ priorities to align them with the needs of Idaho. We have been on high alert for decisions that may inadvertently hinder your work. Budget requests were due August 30th, but unofficial tweaks and alterations will be made until late October.

BB&A would also like to take this opportunity to formally welcome our newest member of the team, Todd Dvorak. Todd joined BB&A on September 1, 2024, as our new Senior Associate and Director of Strategic Communications. Todd brings to our team extensive and ranging experience in the world of strategic communications and understanding of media and public affairs. His professional career includes more than 20 years as a journalist, including leading the Idaho bureau of The Associated Press. He is a former communications director for the Office of the Idaho Attorney General, and most recently he spent more than seven years working as a consultant. His background includes executing media strategies, building communication strategies for ballot initiatives, managing social media and overseeing internal and external client communication. He spends a good deal of his free time camping, hiking, flyfishing waters here in Idaho and beyond, and skiing. Todd can be reached at his new email: Todd@bennbrocksomeandassociates.com. Todd will be joining us on calls and in meetings as he gets to know you and he will be quick to offer new and fresh perspectives.