MINUTES REPORT
BUILDING INDUSTRY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (BIOC)
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2021

Committee Members Present
Bobby Lyons
Steve Wojcechowskyj
Steve Gabor
Matthew Johnson

Committee Members Absent
Bob Knight

Lee County Government Representatives
Shawn McNulty, Building Official
Antia Richards, Sr. Planner
Debbie Carpenter, DCD Administrative Services, Recorder
Jennifer Harden, Permitting Chief

Members of the Public
Dan Beiter, Lee BIA
Phillip Ford, Exec. Vice President, BIA

Call to Order/Affidavit
Mr. Steve Gabor called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Debbie Carpenter, recording secretary, said the County Attorney's office advised that the Affidavit of Posting was sufficient as to form and content and the meeting could proceed.

Approval of Minutes
Mr. Bobby Lyons made a motion to approve the October 8, 2020 minutes. Mr. Steve Wojcechowskyj seconded. The motion was called and carried unanimously.

Revenue and Expenses
In Mr. Loveland's absence, Mr. Shawn McNulty reviewed the December's revenue and expense reports, pointing out that expenses for the month were $1,231,500, which brought the fiscal year-to-date expenses to $2,604,380. Revenue for the month came in at $767,700 for a year to date total of almost $2,571,700. Expenses outpaced revenue in December for a loss that month of $465,000. The running fund balance was $14,386,700. Mr. Gabor commented that the fund balance had not gone down as a result of December's fee reduction. Mr. McNulty said the December reports did not reflect the discount since many of the permits had not yet been picked up or fees paid, however Accela's reports indicated that over $600,000 had been discounted thus far over a 2 month period (December and January). Ms. Antia Richards reported that the capital expenditures approved by the Board for the lobby reconfiguration and technology upgrades had not come out of the fund balance yet and that those expenses will reduce the fund by approximately $2M. Additionally, based on current averages for revenues and expenses, the fee reduction should result in losses that will bring the fund balance down to $10M by the end of the fiscal year. There was a brief discussion about the increased permit activity and how the fee reduction could be offset by increased activity, but that would probably result in hiring more people which would then increase expenses. Mr. McNulty said this was being monitored closely.

Mr. Dan Beiter (BIA) asked about the lobby and if there was an estimate as to when it would re-open. Mr. McNulty was not able to provide an answer. He did say that he expected a press release would be going out soon notifying contractors that all submittals will be required electronically going forward. As a result, when the lobby does open, there should be less traffic.

Mr. Wojcechowskyj asked about the technology improvements and when those would be done. Mr. McNulty reported that new computers for permit funded positions had been installed over the past weekend so that all permitting staff now have laptops and docking stations which allows them to work anywhere within the building or at home if the need arises. This upgrade is not on yet on any of the reports. The rest of the technology upgrades are currently in the Procurement process. Committee members said it would be good to be able to take advantage of that technology to help improve the review process. Again there was no timeline for the software updates that Procurement was working on, but Mr. McNulty said improvements to realize Accela's potential were still going on in the background.

He reviewed the revenue report which showed a gain for October, but losses for November and December which was consistent with prior years. He noted that the permit volume for 2020's 4th quarter, for the permit types that have to go through plan review, was up 61% over 2019. He was not sure if code changes contributed to all of that volume but he anticipated a bump in the revenues as a result once those permits get issued.

Ms. Richards referred to the last page of the handout, which was a summary of what reductions have been proposed to reduce the fund balance and what has been done to date. A portion of the lobby reconfiguration, $156,190, has been expended, leaving a balance of $3,873,600 of the original $4,431,670 to be reduced. January should see some of the technology expenditures; the expenditures for the vehicles will probably come out in June or July.

Mr. Beiter asked Mr. McNulty if he might be able to estimate how many people/positions he was going to need in order to improve review times. Since the Committee does not meet again for two months, he was hoping to avoid a substantial delay by having the committee make a motion for approval now. Mr. McNulty was not prepared to provide an estimate at this time, but said he was actively working on it and that County Admin was aware of the need to address turnaround times.

There was a brief discussion about the fund balance report and trends in general There was some concern that with the current volume of activity the 25% fee reduction was not going to have the desired effect on the balance and Mr. McNulty was curious about the industry's projections for the year. He said some contractors were saying the numbers could go down, but not by much. Mr. Wojcechowskyj said his company was estimating a flat year, but others, looking at the market in general, anticipated this volume for the rest of the year.

Mr. McNulty reported that he had met with the fee study consultant about the final report just the day before. As discussed at the last meeting, the intention was to delve into the fee study over the next few meetings and get the Committee's input on what the fees should be going forward. Although it is not being done elsewhere that he knows of, Mr. Ford brought up the possibility of doing a flat fee and Mr. McNulty said that might be something worth discussing.

Adjournment

There was no further discussion and no new business. Mr. Gabor adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for April 8, 2021.