



BUILDING INDUSTRY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Community Development / Public Works Building
1500 Monroe Street
First Floor Conf. Room 1B

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2020
8:30 A.M.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Review of Affidavit of Posting
2. Approval of Minutes – February 13, 2020
3. Building Fund Presentation
4. Fee Study
5. Adjournment – Next Meeting Date: December 10, 2020

To view a copy of the agenda, go to www.leegov.com/dcd/calendar.

For more information, contact Debbie Carpenter, (239) 533-8345 or DCarpenter@leegov.com.

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MINUTES REPORT
BUILDING INDUSTRY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (BIOC)
THURSDAY, February 13, 2020

Committee Members Present

Bob Knight
Bobby Lyons
Matthew Johnson

Committee Members Absent

Steve Wojcechowskyj
Steve Gabor

Lee County Government Representatives

David Loveland, Director, DCD
Shawn McNulty, Building Official
Antia Richards, Planning Section
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. Bob Knight 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 10, 2019 minutes. Mr. Matthew Johnson seconded. Called and carried.

Revenue and Expense, and Fund Balance Reports

Ms. Antia Richards reviewed the Revenue and Expense reports for year-end which was September 30, 2019. Total expenses for September were \$794,820 which brought the expenses for the year to approximately \$9,233,500 and ended the year approximately \$1.2M under budget. Revenue for September was \$596,618. This was less than expenses which resulted in a loss of \$98,202 for the month. The total revenue for the year was \$10,125,194, approximately \$1.5M over the budget revenue projection of \$8.7M. The gain for the year was \$891,775. This brought the Running Fund Balance to just over \$13M.

Moving on to the reports for January 2020, expenses were up, coming in at \$1.1M. This was an increase over prior months, but not out of line with the previous January's trend. Expenses reflected the salaries and associated operating expenses for the 24 new positions (20 permitting related) added over the past several years to address service level concerns. January's revenue was \$943,744 but expenses were higher, causing a loss of \$157,721 for the month. A significant gain for October cushioned losses in November, December and January and the Fund Balance increased to \$13,643,935. Mr. Knight pointed out that significant increases for personnel and operating expenses for January happened this year and last. He asked staff for an explanation and staff agreed to review the figures and report back.

On-Going DCD Operations Reviews

Mr. David Loveland reminded the committee about the discussion at the last meeting with respect to a performance review of DCD's operations. He introduced Mr. Kevin Loucks, part of County Administration's Performance Review team. Mr. Loucks reviewed a PowerPoint slide, summarizing the scope of the on-going Performance review process, what has been done to date and the current status. As a result of informational meetings with managers and staff, 4 areas were identified for improvement: "Quality applications" (reducing the number of application resubmittals); Increasing electronic submittals/reducing paper in the plan review process; System Enhancements Change Control (looking at how one small change may affect the big picture); Data collection, reporting and sharing. Workshop sessions with staff included discussions on how to get quality applications; pre-application meetings, staff training, samples and templates, strong FAQs and intake checklists, are all important tools. FAQs for the Development Services team, permitting and zoning groups have been identified and vetted by each of those departments and work on an FAQ for Development Review will begin soon. The team will continue to investigate technology, what can be done to enhance what we do with electronic submittals and look for opportunities to take advantage of Accela and other systems.

Mr. Loveland referred to the second PowerPoint slide which outlined potential Building and Permitting Expenditures. The county hired a new ITG consultant last October and they are committed to understanding Accela. Accela may be able to help with some of the technological upgrades that come out of the Performance Review but that will require further investigation. The committee was concerned that after investing a substantial amount in Accela, more money for other technologies was going to be needed. Mr. Loveland said an ITG consultant was going to be evaluating any recommended upgrades as to what makes the most sense for what we do specifically.

He talked about the fee study which was also discussed at the last meeting. The Committee talked about cutting fees. The County was hesitant to do across the board cuts, asking for the opportunity to evaluate the actual cost of providing services. Initially staff tried to do an in-house comparison with other jurisdictions, but ultimately a more detailed evaluation of the costs was needed. Because the City of Fort Myers had just completed a fee study, the County hired the same consultant. The thought was that since much of the data required would be the same, this would save time and money.

Other potential fund expenditures could include a satellite permitting office (logistical/coordination issues, paper submittals versus preferred electronic), installing a Customer Check-in Management System for the lobby (Cape Coral has an excellent system), and the reconfiguration/safety updates to the first floor (going to be disruptive).

When asked about the timeframe for the fee study, Mr. Loveland said the consultant had just been hired, so it will probably be at least a couple months. Mr. Lyons asked where the money for the consultants was coming from and Mr. Loveland said it would likely come out of the fund. The technology consultant is a contractor, Mr. McNulty thought his contract was for 30 hours a week and probably had a term of about 6 months. The consultant will be encouraged to talk to the industry. The Committee was anxious to get the consultant's perspective of what was bought and asked that he be invited to a future BIOC meeting. Further discussion followed. Although the county did talk to other jurisdictions prior to, and since choosing Accela, the system is so customizable that it is hard to compare with others. Accela is working and is stable. The disappointment was the lack of support and expertise during setup and that the hardware issue, ultimately the need for new servers, was not brought up sooner. Discussed the cyber-attack briefly and that the protections in place did prevent further damage. The first floor computers are still not back on-line as ITG has not determined the best protection for computers with public access.

Mr. Knight reiterated that the technology consultant should be invited to an upcoming meeting. He went on to say that the Horizon Council has made application uniformity a priority. The goal is to make application submittals similar for all entities, or at least have the bulk of the application the same and then be directed to what's needed for a specific area. The Building Officials involved in the conversation were for it, but not sure how to accomplish it. The challenge is for all jurisdictions to agree to it. When looking at efficiency or streamlining, consistency is a key component.

Adjournment

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

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for April 9, 2020.

DRAFT