

**Official Minutes of  
MARION COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

February 7, 2022

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Marion County Board of County Commissioners met in a workshop session at 3:07 p.m. on Monday, February 7, 2022 at the Marion County Governmental Complex located in Ocala, Florida.

**INTRODUCTION OF WORKSHOP BY CHAIRMAN CARL ZALAK, III**

Vice-Chairman Curry advised that the workshop was scheduled this afternoon to discuss the Departmental Operational Plan.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our Country.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon roll call the following members were present: Vice-Chairman Craig Curry, District 1; Commissioner Kathy Bryant, District 2; Commissioner Jeff Gold, District 3; and Commissioner Michelle Stone, District 5. Chairman Zalak, District 4, was absent due to a prior commitment. Also present were Clerk Gregory C. Harrell, County Attorney Matthew G. Minter, and County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes.

**STAFF PRESENTATION**

**1. Program Overview - Mike McCain, Executive Director of Internal Services**

Executive Director Mike McCain, Internal Services, advised that all Marion County Departments have developed Business Plans beginning in 2010, followed by Strategic Plans beginning in 2014. These are comprehensive plans that contain several required elements such as definitions of the market, details of service processes, and comparisons of performance measures. Beginning in 2020 staff streamlined the plans to Operational Plans that focus on 3 areas: 1) current state (where the Department is today and what challenges the Department faces); 2) future state (what staff sees the Department looking like in the future); and 3) the implementation program (how to get there). He noted at today's workshop there will be presentations from Community Services and Public Safety Communications, but first the Clerk's Internal Audit Director will provide a brief presentation outlining the Department's Annual Audit Plan.

**2. Annual Internal Audit Plan Presentation - Sachiko Horikawa, Internal Audit Director**

Internal Audit Director Sachiko Horikawa presented a 4 page handout to follow along with the PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Horikawa provided a brief overview of the process utilized to develop the Internal Audit plan. She stated the process has 4 steps: 1) Audit Universe Determination; 2) Risk Assessment; 3) Available Resources Consideration; and 4) Risk-based Assurance Selection.

Ms. Horikawa advised that Audit Universe is any department's projects or programs under the Board's purview that Internal Audit has the authority to audit, noting Constitutional Officers are excluded except for the Clerk's Office. She stated Risk Assessment is a

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component that requires a lot of time in development. The County Budget was used as a baseline to identify each department's goals and performance measurements. Ms. Horikawa advised that using the Budget Department's Line Item Book, Internal Audit evaluated the fiscal impact of each Department on the overall budget. This year they reviewed operating revenues, Grants given to the County, operating expenditures and Grants given by the County. The External Interest component of Risk Assessment included interviews with Senior Management, input from external parties such as citizens, employees, external auditors, and the Clerks Finance Director and Budget Director. Ms. Horikawa stated the Department considered the number of years since the last audit, noting after review, each category was quantified and ranked from highest to lowest based on risk factor.

Commissioner Stone questioned what parties were included in determining the priority of risk. Ms. Horikawa advised that she selects the quantifiers, noting all items were pulled and ranked highest to lowest based on the budget. She stated she implements a numbering system for External Interest based on the number of parties expressing interest in a specific category.

In response to Commissioner Stone, Ms. Horikawa, advised that she spoke with both Assistant County Administrators (ACAs), both County Executive Directors, Finance Director, Budget Director, the Clerk, and anyone expressing interest or concerns.

Clerk Harrell stated the scoring system is used by the Internal Audit programs in other Counties, especially those designated as Inspector General. It objectively determines what needs to be looked at while attempting to remove any subjective influence. He advised that the result provided by the formula identifies topics for the Clerk and County Administration to discuss and determine whether adjustments are needed.

Ms. Horikawa commented on the available resources consideration portion of the process relating to the amount of time the Internal Audit Department can dedicate to risk-based audits. She stated there are other Department obligations such as carryover audits, pre-determined audits, training, and Municipal Service Taxing Units (MSTU) tabulations.

Ms. Horikawa advised that in the past Internal Audit reviewed every Agreement relating to economic development projects, but this year the approach has shifted to focusing on grantees that have requirements for Capital expenditures.

Ms. Horikawa addressed increases in staffing capacity and challenges relating to retention.

Ms. Horikawa provided a brief overview of the Internal Audit Calendar Year (CY) Annual Audit Plan.

Clerk Harrell stated there is a focus on transparency in not just what Internal Audit looks at, but why it is being reviewed.

In response to Commissioner Gold, Ms. Horikawa advised that she has reviewed the contract relating to Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR), noting Internal Audit will determine the criteria and how funds should be spent at a later time.

Commissioner Gold commented on the Driver and Vehicle Information Database (DAVID) audits performed by the State and questioned what extra actions would be performed by the Internal Audit Department. Ms. Horikawa stated the DAVID audit relates to system internal controls, noting the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (HSMV) is protective of data being accessed and they want verification that their policies and procedures are in place. She advised that there is a clear delineation relating to who can access the database and for what reason, and if accessed, was there justification.

Clerk Harrell stated there is not a duplication of efforts and the Internal Audit process

ensures there will not be issues with the external audit.  
Commissioner Bryant commented on the good work performed by Internal Audit.

### **3. Community Services - Cheryl Martin, Director**

Community Services Director Cheryl Martin presented a 32 page handout entitled, "Marion County Community Services 2022-2026 Operational Plan" and a 9 page handout entitled, "Community Services Operational Plan Workshop February 7, 2022" to follow along with the PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Martin commented on the Community Services Operational Plan, noting the Department has already implemented recommendations from the Clerk's Office. She stated the 4 key areas of focus for the next 5 years include: 1) professionalism; 2) structure; 3) accountability; and 4) transparency.

Ms. Martin provided an overview of the 4 key function areas relating to Community Services: Community Development; Housing; Homelessness; and Health and Human Services.

Ms. Martin commented on highlights relating to Community Development, noting the addition of 9 substance abuse recovery beds at Beacon Point, infrastructure installation in Silver Springs Shores, construction of the Community Center in Belleview, aid provided to Transitions Life Center for the developmentally disabled, construction of the Heart of Florida (HOF) pharmacy and assistance for 30 local microenterprises (businesses with 5 or less employees) to enable them to remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Martin advised that accomplishments relating to Housing included the re-engagement of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee due to House Bill (HB) 1339. She stated both Community Services and Growth Services applied for and were awarded a Department of Economic Development (DEO) grant to develop housing strategies for the County. Ms. Martin advised that the Department funded 42 affordable rental units within the past 3 years and created a new construction 0% loan program which addressed more than \$1,000,000.00 of State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) encumbered funding. In response to Commissioner Bryant, Ms. Martin advised that the funding of affordable rental units involves Community Services issuing a notice of funding availability, which developers can apply for, and then the application is reviewed to ensure it is financially feasible. Typically, the Department does not fund 100 percent (%) of the project (some form of a bank loan is involved), and then Community Services provides a match. She stated the rents must not exceed a predetermined amount for the duration of the deferred loan that Community Services keeps on file. Those are currently 15 year loans.

Ms. Martin stated the Department's partnership with United Way provided rental assistance for 440 households.

Ms. Martin advised that relating to the key area of homelessness, the Board approved assumption of the Continuum of Care (CoC).

CoC Manager, Nick Bennett, Community Services presented a 1 page handout relating to CoC and the organizations that were awarded funding through the Department.

She commented on the additional COVID-19 funding CoC received for high performance, noting it is understandable that Internal Audit has a focus on the Department.

Ms. Martin stated the Health and Human Resources component saw a savings of more than \$49,000.00 related to unclaimed bodies due to a new contract with Roberts Funeral Home. She advised that the Department processed 32 of 58 claims under the Health Care Responsibility Act and 58 Marion County residents have received assistance through the non-ad valorem program this past year.

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Ms. Martin expressed appreciation toward the Board for allowing her to reorganize the Department last year. She advised that Community Services has processed over 367 Legal Request Memorandums (LRMs) in the past 3 years, more than 144 contracts and \$48,000,000.00 plus, in deferred loans recorded through the Clerk's Office. Ms. Martin stated adding a Fiscal Manager was a positive recommendation from the Budget and Finance Departments.

She commented on the relationship with the Ocala/Marion County Joint Office on Homelessness, noting the CoC and homelessness components are unique and require the CoC Manager to work closely with the City of Ocala who manages the Homelessness Management Information System. Ms. Martin advised that there have been lessons learned relating to communication and timely reporting.

Ms. Martin provided a brief overview of various funding sources and how they can be used relating to the 4 key function areas.

Ms. Martin addressed program administration, noting the Community Services Department administers funding received by the County as an entitlement community, ensuring the documentation and reporting functions are performed within the proper time frames, while monitoring and performing Board facilitation.

Ms. Martin provided a brief overview of grant funding source changes, noting the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) is an entitlement Grant and HOME American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds are also being received and will likely be focused on homelessness. She stated she is working with ACA Angel Roussel and the consultant relating to other County ARPA funds the Board authorized for the Department to utilize.

Ms. Martin advised that Community Service's goals align with the Clerk's team and County Administration, noting a focus on Humbleness, Integrity, Commitment, Accountability, Respect and Discipline (HICARD). She stated enhanced internal education and training along with improved internal and external communication will elevate staff performance, while improved structure will allow the Department to boost efficiencies.

In response to Commissioner Stone, Ms. Martin stated Community Services along with Legal, in coordination with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Technical Assistance Advisor, is creating boilerplate contracts to ensure compliance with Federal regulations and County policy. Those contracts will be reviewed annually.

Commissioner Stone opined that Reversion Clauses be included.

Ms. Martin referred to an example of a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) in the Operational Plan, noting each position will be evaluated to determine how it reflects the main goals of the Department and the County. She commented on the importance of transparency relating to finances and community outreach and education.

Ms. Martin advised that a DEO grant was applied for by Kimberly's Center for CDBG-CV funds and she expects a status update in 4 to 6 weeks. She requested to add a Grant Writer if funding allows, noting the Department has been unable to apply for grants in the past due to a lack of staffing. Ms. Martin advised that a Compliance Monitor is also needed whether that is a full-time employee (FTE) position or gained through a partnership with another organization.

Commissioner Bryant out at 3:53 p.m.

County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes stated the Compliance Monitor position will ensure the goals of the grants are being met and those projects are being performed as intended. He advised that all grant funds are currently comingled in the General Fund, and while they are very well tracked, those funds will be moved so they become their own

fund.

Commissioner Stone stated her support for the separate fund and the audit oversight.

Commissioner Bryant returned at 3:56 p.m.

In response to Commissioner Stone, Ms. Martin advised that she and ACA Tracy Straub met with staff from the Budget and Finance Departments and conceptionally spoke of starting the move of these funds from the General Fund at the March 15, 2022 Board meeting.

#### **4. Public Safety Communications - Kyle Drummer, Director**

Public Safety Communications Director Kyle Drummer presented a 12 page handout entitled, "Public Safety Communications Five-Year Operations Plan" and an 85 page handout entitled, "Marion County Board of County Commissioners Workshop" to follow along with the PowerPoint presentation. He introduced Communications Manager Lisa Cahill and Radio Systems Specialist, Patrick Kirkowski.

Mr. Drummer advised that Public Safety Communications (PSC) is the primary public safety answering point (PSAP) for Marion County, and the oversight body for the radio system.

Mr. Drummer provided a brief overview of the history of the Department from 1985 through 2012 when the County and the Marion County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) consolidated operations within the Center. He stated staffing levels were critically low between 2011 and 2016 due to low morale and high attrition, noting the Department is currently fully staffed and has senior leaders from other Public Safety Agencies inquiring about applying for supervisory positions.

Mr. Drummer commented on challenges PSC has faced including changes in senior leadership and COVID-19 impacts. He advised of successes relating to increased staffing and the return of former experienced personnel, which contributed to achieving State mandated 9-1-1 metrics. Mr. Drummer stated PSC has completed multiple large scale projects including radio system encryption, center furnishings replacement, computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system upgrade, and implementation of Emergency Police Dispatch (EPD) protocol.

Mr. Drummer advised that from 2020 until now, PSC has had multiple Telecommunicator Emergency Response Team (TERT) deployments, successful reaccreditations, and a renewed Interlocal Agreement with the MCSO. Projects completed within that same timeframe include a backup PSAP/Disaster Recovery (DR) site, center bunkroom, radio system upgrade to Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS)/Ethernet from T1 lines, 9 State-mandated mutual aid compliance, and Phase 1 of the radio tower mediation.

Mr. Drummer shared a video created by staff showing a day in the life of a dispatcher.

In response to Commissioner Gold, Mr. Bouyounes advised the disparity between MCSO and County operations has been addressed as part of the Interlocal Agreement with the Sheriff.

Commissioner Gold questioned whether there were any complaints relating to the radio system in certain areas. Mr. Drummer stated it was noted that a couple of MCSO deputies were having radio issues, but the problem could not be replicated when it was investigated. He stated additional tower sites are needed to meet the future coverage goals in the County.

In response to Commissioner Gold, Mr. Drummer advised that the cost for 4 towers was \$6,500,000.00, which would bring the County to 95 Percent (%) portable coverage. He stated the radio tower is utilized not only by Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR) and

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MCSO, but by every radio user in the County.

Commissioner Gold questioned what was used during deployments in place of the old mobile command center. Mr. Drummer advised that a vehicle was borrowed from MCFR, and the Department used a Chevrolet Tahoe sport utility vehicle (SUV) that it owns, noting the team is usually invited to an Emergency Communications Center (ECC) where they dispatch from. The mobile command unit is utilized at times when there is a more local event.

In response to Commissioner Gold, Mr. Drummer stated the mobile command unit is still operational, and the Department is trying to outfit the unit with fully functioning CADs.

Commissioner Bryant commented on the lack of compatibility between the mobile command unit and CAD systems outside of the County.

Mr. Drummer advised that the command unit can establish a secure connection with County infrastructure, but the same is not true in other areas.

In response to Commissioner Bryant, Mr. Drummer advised that the TERT team generally provides relief to centers impacted by a disaster when they are deployed.

Commissioner Stone questioned whether any testing of the backup facility is performed. Mr. Drummer stated Information Technology (IT) Director Tom Northey and his team raised that concern. He confirmed that the backup works, but further testing is being undertaken relating to a hard disconnect. Mr. Drummer stated the site is currently licensed as a DR site, but the Department could consider making the site fully live. He advised that relating to COVID-19, the DR site could become a secondary dispatch location to be utilized when quarantined.

Mr. Drummer commented on growth and the associated increase in calls and staffing required to meet those demands. He advised that many calls result in multiple "touches" within the Communications Center.

Mr. Drummer commented on employee retention and the cost of training Emergency Telecommunicators (ETCs), noting it costs roughly \$15,000.00 in overall training and the Department typically requires ten recruits to get the one permanent telecommunicator.

Mr. Drummer stated PSC goals include: 1) a more stable agency; 2) improved interagency relationships; 3) continued assessment of services and processes; and 4) continued work on upgrading the radio system. He proposed a modest reorganization for the upcoming 5 year period, noting PSC needs 10 additional ETCs, additional Quality Assurance (QA) personnel, and additional Public Information Unit assistance.

Chairman Curry questioned the impact of carriers decommissioning their 3G networks. Mr. Drummer advised that the County is required to provide the means of access, but it is largely based on the equipment, noting he will consult with the 9-1-1 Coordinator Michelle Hirst relating to what is being done in other Counties. He stated there has not been wide-scale reports relating to individuals not being able to connect with 9-1-1.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION AND CLOSING COMMENTS**

Chairman Curry commented on the time and effort that goes into the various presentations and the one-on-ones that take place prior to the workshop.

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There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting thereupon adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

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Carl Zalak, III, Chairman

Attest:

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Gregory C. Harrell, Clerk

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