



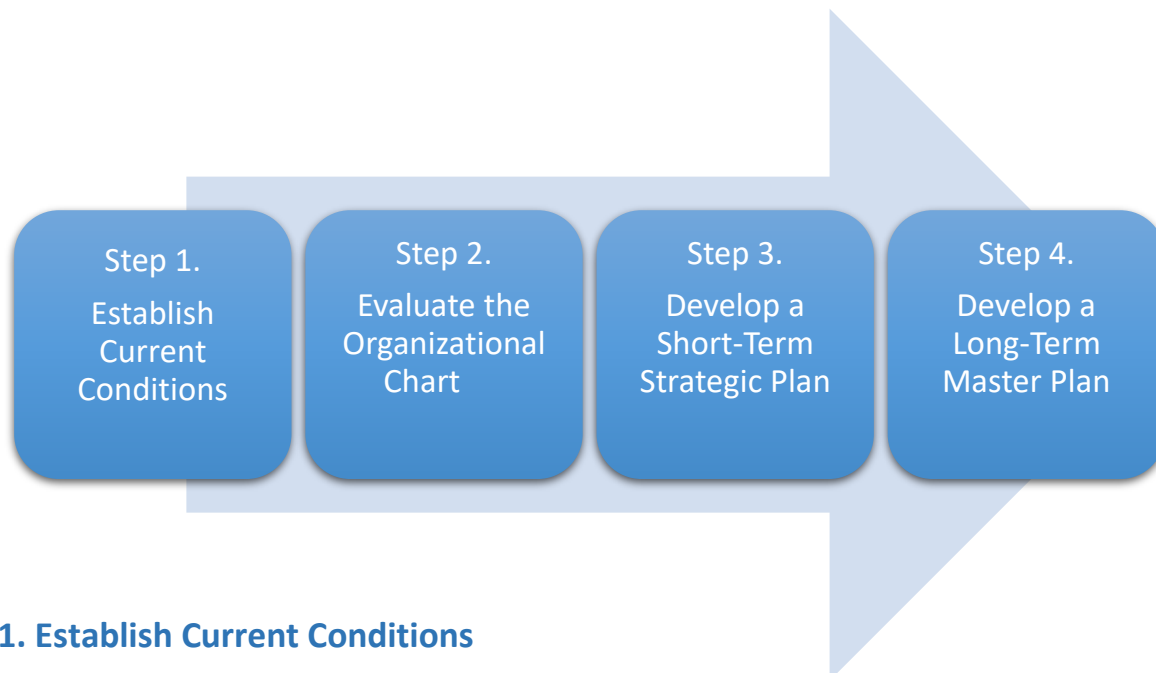
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To: Levy County Board of County Commissioners
From: Mary-Ellen L. Harper, County Manager
Date: September 12, 2024
Subject: Proposed County Manager Transition Plan

The following Proposed County Manager Transition Plan is offered for the consideration of the Board of County Commissioners.

Proposed County Manager Transition Plan



Step 1. Establish Current Conditions

I am in the process of scheduling meetings with all of our Board of County Commissioner (BoCC) departments. My goal is to complete these meetings by mid-October. The purpose of the meeting is for me to:

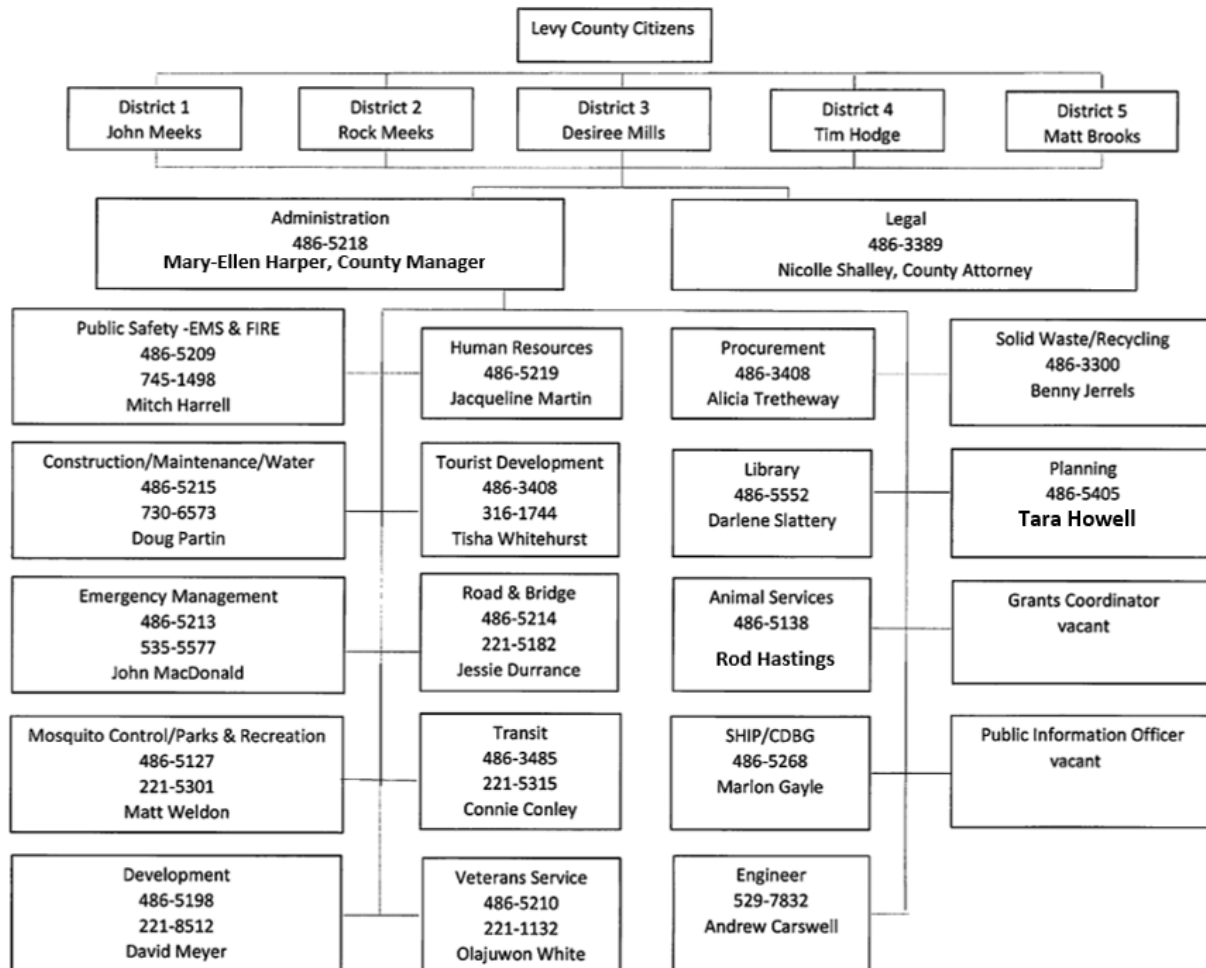
1. Tour each department's facilities.
2. Discuss what is working well in each department.
3. Discuss where there are opportunities for improvement in each department. Within those opportunities for improvement, I have asked each department head to be prepared to identify their immediate and anticipated future needs.

Step 2. Evaluate the Organizational Chart

The Levy County Public Information Strategic Plan, which the BoCC approved on March 19, 2024, identified the need to update the BoCC organizational structure and chain of command. The following narrative is a direct quote from that Strategic Plan.

An organizational structure is the method by which work should flow through the organization. The chain of command refers to the line of authority that exists within that organizational structure. When appropriately deployed, an effective organizational structure combined with a well-defined chain of command establishes accountability, lines of authority, and decision-making power. An effective chain of command ensures that every task, job position, and division has one person responsible for performance and establishes clear lines of communication throughout the organization. The organizational structure within the BoCC as of September 12, 2024, is illustrated below.

BoCC Organizational Chart



The BoCC's organizational structure has grown in recent years due to the increasing population within the County and the increased demand for services. While the organizational structure and resulting chain of command have changed several times in recent years, the structure is not entirely effective for the BoCC's current and anticipated future needs.

An effective organizational structure and chain of command do not happen by accident. The following five-step process can assist the BoCC in updating the system to best suit the needs of the County:

1. Leadership must first consider the County's goals; this is because the organizational structure must support its strategy.
2. Leadership should then determine the tasks required to reach the goals.
3. The development of divisions follows as leadership decides how to best group the tasks. It is important to note that grouping affects resource sharing and the ease with which people communicate and coordinate work.
4. After establishing divisions, leadership must assign authority for tasks and areas.
5. Once leadership assigns authority, leaders can effectively lay out the relationships between positions, creating a chain of command.

Span of Control

The span of control is the number of subordinates under a supervisor's direct control. In the current BoCC Organizational Structure, the County Manager has a span of control of 1 Manager to 19 direct reports.

The Human Capital Hub is a portal where Human Resources experts share articles, case studies, personal experiences, and leading practices. According to the Human Capital Hub, no optimal number can be applied to all organizations when evaluating the span of control. This is because the nature of work, the size of the organization, and the attention each subordinate requires all need to be considered. For this reason, it is the nature of the work being performed and the required attention to subordinates that should govern the assignment of personnel to a manager. It should be noted, however, that a suboptimal span of control can impact employee and organizational performance. As the number of people a manager supervises increases, the amount of time spent coaching subordinates usually decreases. This can lead to poor performance and less development for the employee. The optimum span of control allows the manager to nurture productive relationships with subordinates, as there is more communication between the manager and subordinates.

I propose discussing the organizational chart during the September 18, 2024, Management Team Meeting. I will then summarize the results of that meeting in writing and share them with the management team so they can solicit input from their staff members. I intend to revisit the organizational chart again during the October 16, 2024, Management Team Meeting to discuss the feedback the management team received from their staff members.

Following the two management team meetings, I will be well-positioned to propose recommendations for updating the BoCC's Organizational Chart after the two new commissioners take office in November.

Step 3. Develop a Short-Term Strategic Plan

Strategic planning supports the organization's mission and sets and prioritizes short-term internal goals. A strategic plan typically involves a three-to-five-year planning window. Community involvement in the process is critical, as the strategic plan should be stakeholder-oriented while accomplishing the following:

- The development of a mission statement carefully addresses the services currently provided and potentially provided in the future
- Development of a vision statement for the agency moving forward
- Establish the values of the members of the agency
- Identification of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges of the organization
- Determination of the community's service priorities
- Understanding the community's expectations of the agency
- Establishment of realistic goals and objectives for the future
- Identification of implementation tasks for each objective
- Definition of service outcomes in the form of measurable performance objectives and targets
- Identification of personnel in charge of each objective and associated work timelines

Mission Statement

A mission statement is an explanation of the organization's reason for existence. The mission statement supports the vision and communicates purpose and direction to employees, customers, and other stakeholders. The mission statement should answer the questions "What is our organization's purpose?" and "Why does our organization exist?"

According to the Lucas Group, there are three key areas where mission statements really help to transform the employee experience and ultimately drive productivity:

1. Clarity in organizational values helps employees prioritize better.

When the entire organization aligns with a clear set of written objectives visible to everyone, employees make the right decisions about allocating their time and effort.

A clearly articulated mission statement also helps employees to know what not to do because all potential activities can be evaluated based on whether they support the mission.

2. Mission statements help employees find meaning in their work.

A good mission statement shows employees how their work will improve the lives of their customers, their community, and even the world. An example is the clothing manufacturer Patagonia's mission statement: "Build the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis." Basic human nature is to want to be part of something bigger than oneself. When employees understand how their work contributes toward a larger goal, they find meaning in their work. This creates a sense of ownership, which leads to a more substantial commitment to the work and improved productivity.

3. A strong mission statement helps employees become ambassadors.

A great mission statement defines an organization's existence and what differentiates it from every other organization. When employees can articulate why the company is the best, they become more passionate about being part of the organization, making them effective brand ambassadors.

When done correctly, reevaluating an organization's mission statement will create buy-in. It will bring together a cross-section of community stakeholders to discuss the mission and potentially how it has or needs to change, which shows that the county values input from its members. Adopting an updated mission statement based on this input further reaffirms that the county values the input of our stakeholders.

I recommend that the BoCC solicit stakeholder input and establish a mission statement.

Vision Statement

A vision statement establishes the ideal image that the organization wishes to achieve. The vision statement should answer the questions "Where are we headed?" and "If we achieved all strategic goals, what would we look like ten years from now?"

I recommend that the BoCC solicit stakeholder input and establish a vision statement.

Organizational Values Statement

An organizational values statement includes the core principles that guide the organization and its culture. In a values-led organization, the values guide decision-making and establish a standard against which one can assess actions. The Organizational Values statement should answer the questions "What values should guide our organization?" and "What conduct should our employees uphold?"

I recommend the BoCC solicit stakeholder input and establish an organizational values statement.

Following the completion of Steps 1 and 2 of this plan, I believe that the BoCC will be ready to commence the Strategic Planning Process in early 2025. Ideally, This process would include surveys to solicit internal (staff) feedback and external (community members) input. A one-day Strategic Planning Workshop would then be planned to include the participation of a cross-section of both internal and external stakeholders. The results of this workshop would then become the foundation for our short-term Levy County BoCC Strategic Plan.

Step 4. Develop a Long-Term Master Plan

Master or long-range planning is preparation for the BoCC's future service delivery effectiveness based on future service delivery environment projections. This long-range master plan focuses on the big-picture perspective and distant future needs of the BoCC and our community. Organizations that engage in a long-range master planning process will be able to utilize this valuable information to answer the following three questions:

1. Where is the organization today?
2. Where will the organization need to be in the future?
3. How will this organization get there?

Master Plans typically include a 10-15-year planning period. The Strategic Plan will be the foundation for the Master Plan and provide a framework for developing the long-term Master Plan. I expect that this work could commence in 2025 with a goal of completing the first draft of the Master Plan in 2026.

At this time, I am requesting feedback from the BoCC on whether there is support to move forward with this four-step plan or if the BoCC has other priorities that should be considered.