

Response to Recommendations

Citizen Review Committee: Municipal Services

September 29, 2014

CRC Recommendation		Division Response/Action Taken
1.	City offices that deal with the general public on a daily basis need to be made handicap accessible.	The age, the historical nature, and funding restraints have made it challenging to remodel City Hall. We have established procedures to serve our citizens that can't access certain offices. The west side of the building is accessible and employees make arrangements to help those who can't get to some offices. If the Fire Department vacates City Hall arrangements could be made to make more office space handicap accessible.
2.	Additional remodeled rest room facilities in the City Hall building are needed.	The upstairs men's restroom needs remodeling but the cost will be approximately \$25,000. It is on the list when funding becomes available. Our other restrooms seem to be adequate and functioning. Painting and repair or replacement of fixtures are done as needed.
3.	The current organizational chart should be restructured to remove or reduce the Division Director levels of management. Restructuring the Division/Department management and compensation plan would improve information flow to the mayor and City Council, hold management accountable to voters, and reduce costs.	The current organizational structure of the City has and continues to serve Idaho Falls very well. Idaho Falls, historically, has proven to be one of the best managed and efficiently run cities in the State of Idaho. Changes to the organizational structure of the City would be the responsibility of the elected officials.
4.	A City-wide risk management program needs to be implemented with management incentives to control costs (workers compensation).	Four years ago the City established a Self-Funded Workers Compensation Program. The City has a functioning Risk Management Committee that meets at least quarterly to discuss open cases and new claims. We have implemented ongoing safety and training programs. Incentive is given to each department to reduce claims which could result in a lower cost allocation in their budgets for the cost of workers compensation premiums. This program has saved the City

		over one million dollars over the past four years.
5.	A City employee suggestion box and fraud hotline should be installed.	Municipal Services employees have always been encouraged to express concerns and suggestions that will improve our working environment and service to the public. We are looking at developing an electronic suggestion box and other ideas recommended by the committee.
6.	The City budget has not kept up with City and population growth. Additional tax revenue and other possible sources of income need to be made available.	The Mayor and Council are responsible for the approval of any increases to tax revenues and all other fees collected by the City. City employees make suggestions and recommendations for the elected officials to consider when making these decisions.
7.	Employees in sensitive positions should be required to take contiguous two week vacations with substitute employees while they are gone.	Current staffing levels make it very difficult for all sensitive positions to take two contiguous weeks off and have their position backfilled. We use other policies, procedures and internal auditing practices to protect against fraud.
8.	All City employees should be subject to the same employment policies and procedures without division or department director discretion. The policies and procedures need to be consolidated and kept in a single source for reference, such as on the City Intranet.	The City has established policies and procedures that govern most employee management. Discretion is also allowed when circumstances warrant. Municipal Services, in conjunction with other City Divisions, is currently working on a project to compile and update city policies and procedures and make them available on the City's website.
9.	The inter-department fund transfer and overhead cost allocation needs to be updated and based on a transparent, objective allocation of costs between departments.	The Controller's Office continually reviews inter-fund transfers and cost allocations to make sure they are fair, consistent, and cost effective. The committee's observations and suggestions are under review.
10.	The utility billing function should be moved to the utility department for oversight by Homeland Security requirements.	The utility billing function is managed by the Treasurer's Department within the Municipal Services Division. The City has had no problem meeting security issues relating to the utility billing process outlined in City, State or Federal Government Regulations. The current consolidation of most customer service programs and the receipt of payments, are centered at City Hall and the City Annex and provide a one-stop center for customers and citizens utilizing many city

		functions.
11.	The city-wide intranet needs to be implemented.	The Municipal Services Division is currently looking at the cost and feasibility of implementing a city-wide intranet.
12.	A Chief Information Officer needs to be assigned or hired.	The committee's recommendation is noted and under review.
13.	A work order system needs to be implemented to charge all City departments for IT services (hardware, software and labor).	Work order processes are used for some City functions. The current allocation of cost in the IT department is a more efficient and practical system at the current time.
14.	A provision for software replacement needs to be included in the MERF.	Municipal Services is currently looking at implementing the CRC's suggestion of establishing a replacement fund for the City's main software system.
15.	Property Management needs a central storage area for inventory and management of excess property.	This is on our Capital Improvement Plan to be implemented when funding becomes available.
16.	A written long term maintenance plan needs to be implemented for all the City buildings.	This year we will implement a long term maintenance plan and a deferred maintenance cost analysis for many of our buildings.
17.	Building Maintenance should charge other departments for labor as well as parts.	The current cost allocation system seems to be the most practical for Building Maintenance at this time. We will continue to monitor this system and consider the recommendations of the CRC.
18.	Additional staff is needed in Building Maintenance to keep up with necessary repairs.	The Mayor and Council have authorized the addition of one new employee in the Building Maintenance Department. This will help but more may be needed as recognized by the committee.
19.	The Civic Auditorium needs to be leased to an entity the can promote the use of the facility.	Various options have and will continue to be explored concerning the management of the auditorium. Additional information will be given to the City Council concerning the current use and long term capital needs of the auditorium.
20.	The utility billing, receipt, and collection should be moved to the utility department both physically and organizationally.	The current billing, receipt and collection of utility accounts (water, sewer, sanitation, and electric) under the direction of the City Treasurer fit well with our current centralized system used for most customer services. This structure has served the City and its citizens well and we recommend making no changes at this time.

21.	The City investment program needs to be under the oversight of the Finance Committee and be subject to the internal audit function. This should also include the selling of energy credits and power purchases (hedging).	Municipal Services has discussed with the Mayor the need to reorganize the City's Finance Committee and reinforce their responsibility to provide oversight for the City's investment program and other financial functions.
22.	The Controller's Office should be in a position to report real time on the financial condition of the City, and actually control the budget rather than record historical transactions.	This is a priority and requirement of the planned software upgrade project the City is currently considering.
23.	The internal control audit function needs to be expanded and share reporting under direction of the City attorney.	The recommendations of the committee have been noted and are under review.
24.	The City Clerk should be moved to a handicap accessible location	See number one.
25.	The City Clerk should have a public information help desk and phone line.	The City Clerk's office currently fulfills this function. We are looking at changing information on our website and in phone directories to make this more obvious.
26.	The City Clerk should have fire proof storage and additional storage for certain records.	We agree. We are in the process of storing as many of our records as we can electronically and backing them up offsite. Increased funding will be needed to secure a better place to store our permanent records.
27.	All City utility functions should be combined under one department: Electric, water, sewer and sanitation.	See number three.
28.	Human Resources should require basic computer skills or implement a City of Idaho Falls training program for new hires.	This recommendation will be forwarded to the Human Resources Division. Municipal Services does not hire anyone that does not have the basic skills needed to fulfil the responsibilities of the position we are hiring them for.
29.	The Golf Courses need to be allocated costs for overhead expense and water.	The committee's findings will be discussed with our elected officials, the Parks Department, and the Public Works Division.