

Mayor Castor's Advisory Teams
Development Services Advisory Team – Chair Julia Mandell
Thursday, August 27, 2019 at 10:00 A.M.
Tampa Police Department – Headquarters
411 Franklin Street – 5th Floor
Tampa, Florida 33602

Advisory Members present: Chair Julia Mandell, Lakshmi Shenoy, John Diaz, Mike Loomis, Charlie Rollins, Fred Hames, Andy Scaglione, Rhea Law, Carroll Ann Bennett, Chase Collier, Meredith Freeman, Roberto Torres, Joe Samnik, and Jennifer Motsinger.

Transition Team and staff present: Co-Chair Sonya Little, Co-Chair Harry Cohen, Chief of Staff John Bennett, City Attorney Gina Grimes, Assistant City Attorney II Kristin Mora, Assistant City Attorney I Jerrod Simpson, Deputy City Attorney Andrea Zelman, Director of Planning and Development Thom Snelling, Planning, Design & Development Coordinator Catherine Coyle, Professional Plans Review Supervisor Dave Jennings, Chief Construction Inspector Troy Chavez, Legislative Aide Annette Antinori Hall, and City Clerk Support Technician Karencia Ciagala.

Transition Lead Carole Post welcomed everyone and advised the team that she prepared a very rough draft of feedback and recommendations for the mayor based upon all the team's input that would be reviewed and discussed today. She also updated the group on more progress concerning the Accela system, including a new streamlined and user-friendly landing page with an emphasis on encouraging any member of the public to access it. She also introduced the idea of a customer care center for Development Services to enable easier access to more frequently used information and web pages.

Team Chair Julia Mandell, asked members to review the draft handout of the proposed recommendations for today's discussion.

Capacity/Resources

Thom Snelling provided an update on recruiting and filling vacant positions, including use of a professional recruiter for the CBO role.

Catherine Coyle, Dave Jennings, and Troy Chavez each provided a staffing update from their respective areas. **Chief Construction Inspector Troy Chavez** stated that they created four (4) lead inspector positions, and are working with HR to provide the applications every Friday, instead of waiting for the posting to close. Until the positions are filled, they have contracted (4) positions.

There are four (4) right-of-way inspectors for the city, and two are vacant. A request to add staff was submitted.

Director Snelling said he would update his staffing chart to reflect vacancies on 6/24 compared to next meeting in September.

Chief of Staff John Bennett said that the City of Tampa is experiencing what other jurisdictions are going through, we need to adapt over time, and having flexibility is important. Need to think outside of the box. What is going to work in the recent marketplace (to keep employees), and it is not just, about what wages we will pay them. **Transition Co-Chair Sonya Little** stated this should be an ongoing process, with evaluation occurring frequently to remain on target.

Chair Mandell added that creating a certification program in the city for private architects and engineers, authorizing these professionals to be equal to City of Tampa staff, and help speed up the process until new staff is hired.

Chief Inspector Chavez said that inspections can take three to five days, and an ideal scenario would be 35 inspections in a week. **Supervisor Jennings** said that there is a two-day review, but he needs to hire extra staff, as currently staff is being paid for overtime.

Focus on User Experience:
Process, Technology, and Communications

Ms. Post briefed the group on a series of improvements already underway, even though small, to help streamline. She stated that the City needs to promote more human interaction with clients. A hotline – although labor intensive – would benefit all users. Chief Bennett to take on and need to make sure we have some ability to follow through.

Work flows – there are dozens of things that are consistent. For the past month, **Coordinator Coyle** has been changing links/forms, and bringing everything slowly up-to-date.

Workshops – staff will be conducting the Accela training classes. They are also creating handbooks and improvements to Accela for easier public access and owner access rights. Some glitches in the system are being looked into and corrected. Some frustrating aspects of the Accela program are being looked at including an issue with Accela is the naming of “attachments” on the public side, and the same items being called “documents” on the employee/staff side. **Transition Lead Post** informed the team that programmers for Accela were on site yesterday working with staff to review a long list of requirements, improvements, and punch items from original implementation. There was now a structured process to implement technology improvements.

Processing

Chair Mandell asked about resubmittals causing frustration, and what could be added to the list to be reviewed to help staff? How do we push the process forward?

Currently there is no conditional approval to push through the system. Applicants need to know not to apply for whole package, or submit as separate to be approved one at a time to avoid resubmittals. **Supervisor Jennings** will look into the wording to clarify.

An example given was when a hotel made changes to their showers. In the past, the set of drawings would be submitted, and at the end, they would pay an increase in fees. Now you have to resubmit.

Chair Mandell asked staff to look at what issues are most frequently resulting in re-submittals and bring to the group for review. Staff will also look into how it could utilize a partial approval process. Need review of process for expedited approvals to expand.

The group discussed additional ideas to improve the client experience including adding client facilitators, having professionals representing clients, extended office hours, and alternative hours for special facilitators to help clients with understanding (not expediting).

Best Practices

Chief Inspector Chavez is talking with T & I for advanced tracking and some items on Accela that need to be activated. Inspectors currently give a two-hour window but do not typically contact applicant unless requested to.

Director Snelling stated some items staff is looking into and will bring back, include: video inspections, builders/developers applications, and what Pasco County does that is different, and providing a resubmittal issues list.

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, September 18, 2019 at 10:00 A.M.
Tampa Police Headquarters – 5th Floor
411 N. Franklin Street
Tampa, Florida 33602

Minutes prepared by City Clerk Support Technician Karencia Ciagala