

Anne Arundel County Government
Laura Neuman, County Executive

Commission on Excellence
Findings and Recommendations

February 4, 2014

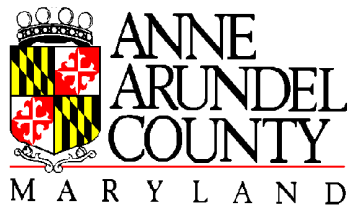


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Anne Arundel County Government
Commission on Excellence
Introduction

Shortly after taking office in February 2013, County Executive Laura Neuman established the Commission on Excellence to conduct a top-to-bottom review of Anne Arundel County government operations. Members of the Commission were provided with a full access, behind-the-scenes look into the workings of the 19 departments of the Anne Arundel County Government. As part of County Executive Neuman’s commitment to open and transparent government, the Commission represents an innovative approach to giving county residents a voice in how their government operates.

The Commission on Excellence was made up of 47 citizens from neighborhoods throughout Anne Arundel County, with a variety of professional backgrounds, skills, and experience. The members were organized into six teams, with each team assigned to review 3-4 county departments. The teams conducted a series of thorough interviews with the departments’ management and staff, collected and analyzed information about the departments’ programs and processes, and compared the departments with their peers in other Maryland counties, when applicable.

Each team submitted a written report of their findings, and presented their recommendations in person to the County Executive, Chief Administrative Officer, and each department head.

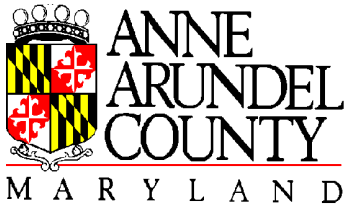
The reports submitted by each team identify a number of strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to improve efficiency across all areas of county government. They identify best practices, and recommend actions to increase productivity and lower costs. While many of the recommendations were specific to an individual department, a number of common themes were reflected in the Commission’s reports. Central themes include:

Technology – Whether it’s applying for a building permit, reserving a field for a youth sports league, or reporting a pothole in need of repair, the county’s current processes are often paper-based and time-intensive. Residents need to be able to interact with the county in ways that are more convenient and require less effort. Technology solutions will enable many of these processes to be brought online.

People – With many long-time employees nearing retirement, the county faces challenges in maintaining the skilled workforce needed to provide services to the community. While the county has traditionally relied heavily on internal training, alternative solutions are needed. The county should better leverage local resources such as Anne Arundel Community College to develop training and certification programs specifically for county government careers.

Processes – Processes which are duplicated between departments create unnecessary costs. Consolidating the county’s maintenance garage operations, centralizing the management of county office space, and partnering with other jurisdictions when purchasing large equipment (county vehicles, police cars, and fire trucks for example) offer opportunities for reducing the costs to taxpayers.

Following the release of the Commission on Excellence findings, Chief Administrative Officer Karen Cook will begin prioritizing the recommendations and developing an implementation schedule based on a phased-in approach. The Commission on Excellence team members have the option of remaining in an advisory capacity, and will receive periodic status updates on the progress of the implemented recommendations.



Countywide (All Departments)

Overview

The Commission on Excellence found that a number of the challenges faced by county government are not limited to a single department. In these instances, solutions were recommended for multiple departments, or for the county as a whole. These recommendations strive to make Anne Arundel County Government operate more cohesively as a single, unified organization; to more effectively train and develop the county's workforce; and to enable residents to interact with the county in ways that are more convenient and require less effort.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop a unified Strategic Plan with long term goals, objectives, and performance indicators for all county departments. |
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Personnel

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Implement cross-training programs and document succession plans for all positions.▪ Expand partnerships with Anne Arundel Community College and vocational technical schools to develop training and certification programs for county government careers. |
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Technology

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Update customer service/communication capabilities on all county department websites. |
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Office of Administrative Hearings

Team Leader: Allen A. Skogebo

*Team Members: Jessica Farrar, Steven Kling, Michael J. Leahy, Sharon New,
David M. Plott, Dennis J. Sysko*

Overview

The Office of Administrative Hearings has an experienced staff with excellent corporate knowledge. Workload issues were the main concern noted in the report, due to the volume of cases required to be heard by the county’s lone hearing officer. The Commission made several recommendations to reduce the number of hearings for routine matters for which there are no formal objections, and suggested creating a database of “substitute” hearing officers who could be called upon in the Hearing Officer’s absence, in order to prevent additional delays or backlogs. Improving public access to hearing records via the Department’s website was also recommended.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures

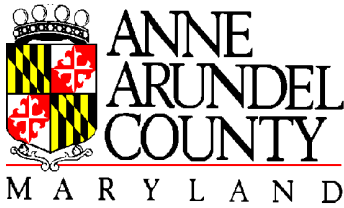
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Authorize a caseload study to determine the volume and types of requests that are routinely granted by Administrative Hearings.▪ Revise the County Code to define a category of routine, minor variance requests which, in the absence of a formal objection, would be automatically approved and would not require a hearing.▪ Alternatively, revise the County Code to authorize the Director of Planning and Zoning to grant minor variances after notice to surrounding property owners, if no objection received. |
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Personnel

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Create a database of qualified substitute Hearing Officers. |
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Technology

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Design a standard hardware and software package for document scanning, storage, and search/retrieval.▪ Create public, searchable internet access to hearing records. |
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Office of Law

Team Leader: Allen A. Skogebo

*Team Members: Jessica Farrar, Steven Kling, Michael J. Leahy, Sharon New,
David M. Plott, Dennis J. Sysko*

Overview

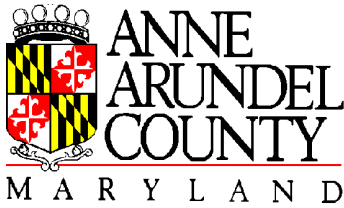
The Office of Law is a well-respected area of county government, with experienced staff and positive relationships with other departments and agencies. As with other departments, antiquated office technology is a primary concern. However, technology concerns are more pronounced due to the Office of Law's unique function – to defend the county's interests in court. When opposing counsel (often private sector law firms) are able to work more efficiently due to advantages in technology, it becomes a risk to the interests of Anne Arundel County and its residents. Updating the Office's case management and document search capabilities is a key first step in minimizing any technology advantages by opposing counsel. Another area of concern for the Office is losing legal subject matter experts due to retirement or resignation. Cross-training and mentoring junior attorneys, standard practice among private sector law firms, would help mitigate this risk. The report also identified several areas suitable for process improvement, such as reliance on the county's internal mail pick-up/delivery system and delays in reviewing legal contracts for large procurements or projects.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Separate mail pick-up and delivery processes from other county offices in order to prevent delays in time-sensitive mailings.▪ Have other departments advise the Office of Law in advance of any pending major procurements or projects, to prevent potential legal/contractual issues from causing undue delays.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Create legal mentoring process within the Department similar to those typically found in private law practices.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Upgrade current computer hardware and case management software in order to minimize advantages in technology capabilities by opposing counsel.▪ Design a standard hardware and software package for document scanning, storage, and search/retrieval.



Office of Personnel

Team Leader: Allen A. Skogebo

*Team Members: Jessica Farrar, Steven Kling, Michael J. Leahy, Sharon New,
David M. Plott, Dennis J. Sysko*

Overview

While its staff is functionally knowledgeable, the Office of Personnel relies too heavily on manpower-intensive, paper-based, manual processes which should be automated through better use of technology. Streamlining the hiring process is also a necessity. Other departments have indicated that they are not brought into the screening process soon enough, and are often sent applicants who do not have the necessary qualifications, particularly when the jobs are of a technical nature (common with Public Works and Information Technology). In other instances, qualified applicants are not sent to the departments until all applicants have been screened – during which time an applicant may have found other employment and is no longer interested in the position. These result in further delays in the hiring process that negatively impact project deadlines.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clearly define roles/responsibilities between Personnel and departments during the hiring process.Involve other departments earlier in the screening/hiring process, particularly for those positions requiring specialized technical skills (Public Works, Information Technology, etc.). Work with department personnel officers to “pre-qualify” applicants based on a set of criteria and fast-track them through to the interview process.Research “best practices” of outside Human Resources organizations, and establish metrics-based benchmarking and goal-setting.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Outsource leadership training and develop a certification process for Personnel management and staff.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Automate HRIS processes, replacing all manual paper forms for new/current employees with online versions.



Office of Budget

Team Leader: Eric Rosborg

*Team Members: Eric Edstrom, Michael Hagopian,
Vernon Murray, Jon Pilon, Douglas Smith*

Overview

The Budget Office is a highly effective, well-managed team of knowledgeable professionals, recognized by peer organizations as a standard-setter. This expertise also means that the greatest risk for disruption is staff turnover, and that succession planning is critical. Over-reliance on the Budget Office by department heads was also cited as a concern, which could be alleviated by requiring these stakeholders to take more ownership of their budgets and to become more involved in regular reviews of budget vs. actual figures. Other key recommendations include implementing a formal strategic planning process that ties budgeting to department goals and objectives over multiple years (rather than a single budget cycle), and a mechanism for rewarding departments for cost savings and/or avoidance.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Update the 2009 “Long Term Goals, Objectives, and Outcome Indicators” strategic planning document.▪ Require greater involvement of department heads in review of budget vs. actual results.▪ Link allocation of budget dollars to each department’s specific goals and objectives.▪ Create incentives for departments to come in under budget, or for submitting a lower budget than in the previous year.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Document responsibilities and succession plans for all positions.▪ Cross-train department personnel with counterparts in other departments to ensure standardization of all budgetary functions within the county.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ N/A



Office of Central Services

Team Leader: Eric Rosborg

*Team Members: Eric Edstrom, Michael Hagopian,
Vernon Murray, Jon Pilon, Douglas Smith*

Overview

The Office of Central Services delivers many of the essential services to a fully-functioning county government operation. Currently its greatest challenge is managing a growing backlog of facilities maintenance and the maintenance/replacement of fleet vehicles. At current funding levels, these backlogs cannot be reduced without new cost saving strategies. Long-term space management planning is also needed to ensure the county is adequately matching its square footage capacity with its requirements, and recovering costs from excess space. More immediate cost savings could be attained by eliminating redundancies between departments, such as garage and maintenance functions, and consolidating these under the Central Services umbrella.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consolidate the following operations under Fleet Maintenance: Public Works Landfill Garage, Public Works Utilities Garage, Public Works Highway Garage, Parks and Recreation Garage, and the Fire Department Garage.Seek partnerships with other jurisdictions (City of Annapolis, adjoining counties) for functions such as facilities maintenance and fleet purchases, where economies of scale can drive cost savings.Develop a long-term strategic plan for space management and vehicle utilization.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Restructure Fleet Management to centrally manage all mechanic staff assigned to county garages (see garage consolidation plan above).Review potential costs and benefits of outsourcing functions of the Risk Management, Safety, and Insurance Manager.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">N/A



Office of Finance

Team Leader: Eric Rosborg

*Team Members: Eric Edstrom, Michael Hagopian,
Vernon Murray, Jon Pilon, Douglas Smith*

Overview

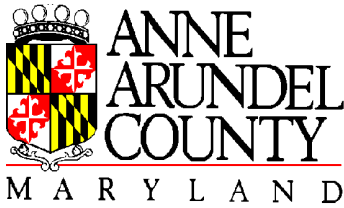
The Office of Finance is the “face” of county government to many residents and businesses, through the tax and utility billing process. The Office performs its core functions and processes well, as evidenced by its notable accomplishments (CAFR Award, AAA Bond Rating). The department’s large amounts of data entry and data processing present the greatest opportunity for automation and streamlining of current processes. While the department tracks and publishes a large number of performance measures, these tend to be measures of pure volume. Inclusion of “quality” metrics are recommended to better identify inefficient processes.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop performance metrics to measure quality as well as quantity (eg., accuracy and timeliness of work as opposed to pure volume-based metrics).▪ Establish a formal feedback mechanism to ensure the concerns of customers are heard and addressed.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Document training requirements and succession plans for all positions.▪ Cross-train department personnel with counterparts in other departments to ensure standardization of all financial functions within the county.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Upgrade existing software for MUNIS and MS Office applications.▪ Acquire new software for CAFR preparation.▪ Develop standardized ROI projection for future technology investments.



Department of Public Works

Team Leader: Arthur D. Ebersberger

Team Members: Barbara Baldwin, James Falcon, Nick Kyriacou, Douglas McGaughey, Erik Michelsen, Charles Steadman, Alex Williams

Overview

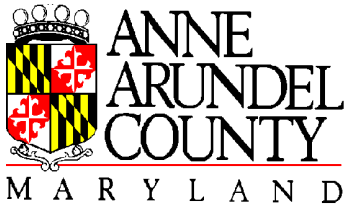
The Department of Public Works was found to be well run overall, with an excellent organizational structure. Outdated technology, particularly computer hardware, was a top concern as it prevents the Department from managing projects and communicating with the public as efficiently as possible. Hiring and procurement procedures are also key areas in need of improvement. DPW often requires highly specialized skillsets that Personnel or Central Services may not always be able to accurately evaluate. This hinders the Department’s ability to secure qualified employees and/or vendors within the deadlines set by a project’s timeline.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Have department staff “pre-qualify” vendors based on technical needs, in order to streamline the procurement process.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Have the department perform a “first cut” of job applicants for technical positions in which specific skills are required.▪ Work with the Anne Arundel Community College and the County’s vocational technical schools to develop training and/or certificate programs designed specifically for DPW careers.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Upgrade current computer hardware to permit the department to use software packages specifically designed for public works operations, including the ability to interface with private sector engineering firms.▪ Update the DPW website to allow residents to enter new issues (work requests or concerns), review the status of previously submitted issues, and check for work being performed in or near their neighborhoods.



Anne Arundel County Public Library

Team Leader: Arthur D. Ebersberger

Team Members: Barbara Baldwin, James Falcon, Nick Kyriacou, Douglas McGaughey, Erik Michelsen, Charles Steadman, Alex Williams

Overview

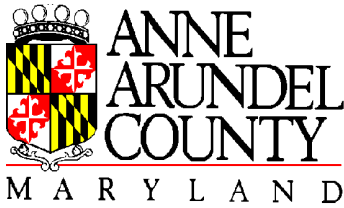
The Anne Arundel County Public Library (AACPL) is a multi-faceted resource which serves county residents by promoting early literacy and summer education efforts, supporting workforce enhancement programs, and providing community gathering spaces. In recent years AACPL has operated with a severely reduced budget, resulting in reduced staffing and operating schedules. A new strategic plan seeks to expand staffing and hours as efficiently as possible. While over half of county residents currently have an active library card, one of AACPL's greatest challenges is being able to offer its resources to school-aged children whose parents may not be library card holders or users. Expanded partnerships between the AACPL and Anne Arundel County Public Schools would help the AACPL expand its reach while also greatly enhancing the limited resources of the public schools.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Collaborate with the public school system and school libraries to help promote AACPL programs and resources. Allow students to sign up for a library card through their school libraries, and to reserve/return AACPL materials through their school libraries.Expand use of marketing partnerships with local businesses in order to cost effectively promote library programs.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create partnerships and cross-training between AACPL librarians and AACPS school librarians. Allow AACPS librarians to be called upon to help fill short-term, part-time staffing needs of AACPL libraries.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expand collection and use of performance metrics, and create a data-driven methodology for tailoring the services, programs, and materials offered in each library location to the specific communities served.Fully integrate the department with the county IT network.



Office of Information Technology

Team Leader: Arthur D. Ebersberger

Team Members: Barbara Baldwin, James Falcon, Nick Kyriacou, Douglas McGaughey, Erik Michelsen, Charles Steadman, Alex Williams

Overview

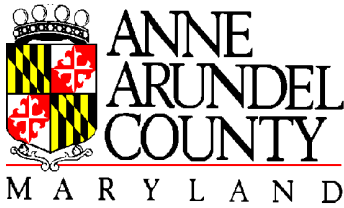
The Office of Information Technology is experiencing a transition, to a new focus on innovation and project management. OIT has an incredible amount of projects that need to be managed and prioritized. The Commission’s report praised the creation of the Office of Program Management, but recommended it be placed higher in the organizational chart rather than risk becoming a “silo” within the department. Overall OIT was found to perform well when responding to individual department requests, but the report suggested additional collaboration and communication with other departments is required when planning new projects. Hiring personnel with strong project management and current technical skills was also seen as a need.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Elevate the Office of Program Management to the Deputy level, encompassing all other CIO divisions.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Focus on hiring personnel with project management experience.▪ Develop cross-training for OIT personnel staffed at other departmental locations, to increase their knowledge of that department’s functions and IT needs.▪ Create internship program with Anne Arundel Community College for IT students.▪ Expand the department’s training program.▪ Expand flexibility of the department to use contract employees on a project by project basis.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Continue moving from physical to cloud-based servers.▪ Expand use of SharePoint for collaboration and development of projects with other departments.



Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation

Team Leader: Jay Winer

Team Members: Eric DeVito, Spurgeon Eismeier, Jr., Evan Gilligan, John Hiser, Roland Jeffers, Robert Lee, Timothy Martin, Tom Pilon, Perry Weed, Darlene Zepp

Overview

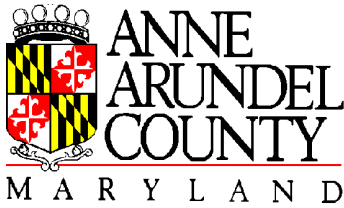
The Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation (AAEDC) is a public-private partnership responsible for promoting business growth in the county. It operates a variety of programs, however some of these programs are no longer in line with the county's current needs. Better evaluation methods are needed to ensure that the AAEDC's efforts are tied closely with the changing economic climate. Additionally, AAEDC maintains a database of existing county businesses, but it is largely incomplete. Expanding this database to include intelligence on all county businesses would greatly help in identifying new opportunities for growth. AAEDC also serves as the administrator for the state's VOLT program, and should seek to expand that role.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Shift focus towards business development and growth, and away from land use oversight.▪ Expand the scope of the VOLT program.▪ Institute a measurement system to determine the cost/benefit of existing programs, to identify when certain programs may no longer be relevant. In particular, farmers markets, farm equipment rental, and loan underwriting programs should be reassessed and possibly discontinued or transferred to more appropriate agencies.▪ Transfer the AAEDC's used tire program to DPW, eliminating redundancies between departments.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ N/A

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Expand database of existing county businesses.



Department of Inspections & Permits

Team Leader: Jay Winer

Team Members: Eric DeVito, Spurgeon Eismeier, Jr., Evan Gilligan, John Hiser, Roland Jeffers, Robert Lee, Timothy Martin, Tom Pilon, Perry Weed, Darlene Zepp

Overview

The Department of Inspections & Permits (I&P) is responsible for providing efficient permit processing, inspections, and code enforcement. The Department works closely with the Office of Planning and Zoning (OPZ) and the Department of Public Works (DPW), however the workflow between these departments often creates bottlenecks and delays in permit approvals. Allowing I&P to review plans prior to OPZ's approval would minimize revisions that extend turnaround time. Separating approval processes for small projects like single family homes from those of larger projects such as subdivisions or commercial sites would also reduce turnaround time.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Allow Department of Inspections & Permits to review plans prior to approval by the Office of Planning & Zoning.▪ Separate workflows for single family permits and subdivision permits, to improve turnaround time on less technically demanding projects.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Review job classification and salary disparities between similar functions within Inspections & Permits, Planning & Zoning, and Public Works.▪ Provide "customer service" training to inspectors; focus should be on seeking solutions when violations are found rather than on more heavy-handed enforcement.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Acquire software for online, integrated permit application, tracking, and approval.▪ Require digital submission of plans, and replace hard copy storage with electronic storage.▪ Install GPS equipment on vehicles used by inspectors.▪ Introduce online license renewals.



Office of Planning & Zoning

Team Leader: Jay Winer

Team Members: Eric DeVito, Spurgeon Eismeier, Jr., Evan Gilligan, John Hiser, Roland Jeffers, Robert Lee, Timothy Martin, Tom Pilon, Perry Weed, Darlene Zepp

Overview

The Office of Planning & Zoning (OPZ) is responsible for the planning and management of the physical character, development, and growth of the county. While it works closely with the Departments of Inspections & Permits (I&P) and Public Works (DPW), this coordination is often hindered by a lack of communication and clearly defined roles. Because I&P and DPW do not receive development plans until after OPZ has approved them, they often have to send plans back to OPZ when errors are detected, lengthening the overall process. Improved communication with applicants is also needed, informing them of the current status of their submitted plans at each stage of the process.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures

- Involve the Department of Inspections & Permits and the Department of Public Works earlier in the review and approval process.
- Implement a fast track process for smaller projects such as single family homes, if specific criteria are met.
- Authorize the department to enforce all sections of the Critical Area Code.

Personnel

- Restore position of Land Use Officer.
- Improve personnel balance between Planners and Engineers.

Technology

- Better use of email and website to communicate review process, meeting notes, and decisions with applicants.
- Regularly publish user-friendly reports of application and permit submissions, review times, and approvals.
- Acquire software to enable digital submission of plans and online tracking of a project's status.



Department of Aging and Disabilities

Team Leader: Reggie Broddie

*Team Members: Rudwan Abu-rumman, Thomas Angelis, Raymond Bussey,
Thomas Donlin, Todd Popham, Veronica Tovey, Linda Williams*

Overview

The Department of Aging and Disabilities provides numerous programs and services to the county's growing elderly population, including the operation of seven Senior Activity Centers. The Department's main challenge is increasing the utilization and participation in its programs while operating within its budget constraints. Leveraging partnerships with local businesses and finding additional revenue streams through fee-based programs can augment the Department's budget while also increasing the visibility of its services. Senior Center staffing is another key concern. At times there may only be a clerk or volunteer on duty, creating liability issues in the event of an emergency.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Expand county-wide marketing efforts through partnerships with local businesses.▪ Expand number of fee-based programs, competitively priced, to increase revenue and attract additional end users currently paying for similar programs elsewhere.▪ Move management responsibility for Adult Evaluation Review Services (AERS) from the Department of Health to the Department of Aging and Disabilities.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Add a Deputy Director position for the department, and an Assistant Director for each senior center.▪ Ensure each senior center has a permanent staff member on duty at all times.▪ Hire a Grants Manager, possibly on a contractual basis, paid via commission from grants obtained.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Upgrade phone and computer systems to better match workflow requirements.



Department of Health

Team Leader: Reggie Broddie

*Team Members: Rudwan Abu-rumman, Thomas Angelis, Raymond Bussey,
Thomas Donlin, Todd Popham, Veronica Tovey, Linda Williams*

Overview

The Department of Health oversees 47 public health programs and collaborates with a significant number of county departments and state agencies. While these programs are generally well-managed individually, there is not enough communication or coordination within the department as a whole, resulting in inefficiencies due to a lack of centralized administrative functions. The department also faces challenges retaining nursing staff. The department's compensation model has traditionally relied on providing in-house training to attract new hires, but salaries are not competitive with competing jurisdictions or the private sector. The result is that nursing staff frequently leave the department once their training is completed, at considerable cost to the county.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Standardize processes between bureaus – for example, applications for assistance from the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services.Centralize purchasing and procurement processes within the department.Increase employee awareness of department functions between areas, and align physical space for common bureau work areas.Coordinate process improvement on permit approvals with the Department of Inspections & Permits and the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Partner with Anne Arundel Community College to outsource the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Medical Technician training currently conducted in-house, and redirect savings to RN/LPN salaries.Provide uniforms for department employees who have regular public contact to properly identify them.Review needs for bilingual staff in targeted areas.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Perform a global IT needs assessment.Prioritize the transition to electronic record-keeping.Enable mobile access to records for field employees.Enable department to use existing Complaint Tracking System.

Department of Recreation and Parks

Team Leader: Reggie Broddie

*Team Members: Rudwan Abu-rumman, Thomas Angelis, Raymond Bussey,
Thomas Donlin, Todd Popham, Veronica Tovey, Linda Williams*

Overview

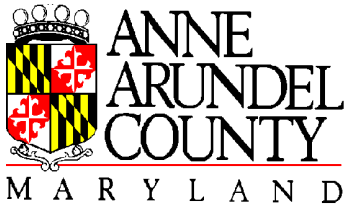
The Department of Recreation and Parks is an integral component in the county’s quality of life and economic well-being. It collaborates well with a variety of public, private, non-profit, and community organizations. The department’s greatest challenges are outdated and inadequate technology, and an inefficient hiring process. The department operates numerous remote facilities which are unable to connect via computer or phone with other locations. Engineering time for projects such as athletic field lighting could be significantly shortened by favoring standard installation packages over customized solutions. The department’s fee structures should also be reviewed to ensure consistency between activities, with rates set based on the cost of service delivery and the type of benefit provided (community vs. individual).

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review all rates to ensure that fee structures are consistent and in line with the cost of service delivery. Subsidies should be proportional to the benefit provided (community vs. individual). ▪ Seek accreditation by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies. ▪ Review General Engineering projects, and set preference for using standard vs. customized plans when installing equipment.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce the time and paperwork required by the hiring process. ▪ Replace manual time clocks with more automated timekeeping process. ▪ Issue uniforms (including safety shoes) to park personnel. ▪ Grant authority to Park Rangers to issue citations for certain infractions of park regulations. ▪ Add at least one additional Certified Playground Safety Inspector.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update phone systems in the child care headquarters and in the Quiet Waters Park maintenance shop. ▪ Update computer hardware throughout park system. ▪ Acquire updated software for handling scheduling, billing, and registration of county fields. ▪ Accept credit card payments at all park gate houses and registration sites.



Department of Social Services

Team Leader: Reggie Broddie

*Team Members: Rudwan Abu-rumman, Thomas Angelis, Raymond Bussey,
Thomas Donlin, Todd Popham, Veronica Tovey, Linda Williams*

Overview

The Department of Social Services administers a wide range of public assistance programs for low-income residents and families/children in crises. The major challenges faced by the department include outdated technology, redundant work processes, and high staff turnover. Differing requirements between the county and state, or even between county agencies, add to the department's paperwork burden. Some of the department's programs are highly dependent on donors, yet the department does not have a mechanism for accepting online donations. While the department does communicate well via social media (Facebook), its county website provides little information about the current programs and services offered.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Standardize processes between bureaus – for example, applications for assistance from the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services.Review inconsistencies between county vs. state policies/requirements to determine opportunities for alignment (reducing “red tape”).

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide cross-training to provide coverage for all functions in the event of staffing shortages.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enable online donations.Update county website to reflect information on current programs.Upgrade phone system to VOIP.Upgrade cell phones provided to personnel in the field.



Department of Detention Facilities

Team Leader: Patrick Jameson

*Team Members: Paul Gable, Jeffrey Gauges, Dennis Hoyle,
Albert Kirchner, Michael Linynsky, Mary Roberts*

Overview

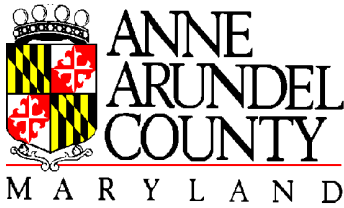
The Department of Detention Facilities was found to be well-served by the extensive corrections background and hands-on style of its top administrators. Staffing remains the largest concern for the Department. Inconsistent salary structures motivate new officers to take lateral transfers to the Police Department, where salaries are higher for the same rank and service tenure. One of the most critical positions for the Department, the Standards Compliance Officer, cannot accept a rank promotion without relinquishing the role – a risk for the Department as there is currently no back-up staff or succession plan in place for this position. Technology upgrades are needed for the video security recording system, and to remain compatible with the Maryland Electronic Courts system, which the state is currently upgrading. Despite these challenges, the Department has managed to operate efficiently and on the cutting edge of the field of corrections.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Create functions within the Department for gathering and compiling gang data within the inmate population.

Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Elevate the position of Standards Compliance Officer within the organizational framework, and develop cross-training and succession plans to ensure continuity in the event of the current occupant's retirement.▪ Undertake a compensation study of the Police Department, Department of Corrections, and Sheriff's Office to ensure salary ranges are consistent across comparable positions, and to address salary compression issues between pay grades.

Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Upgrade the video security recording system throughout the Department.▪ Work with the Office of Information Technology on crafting a comprehensive IT Plan for the department.



Fire Department

Team Leader: Patrick Jameson

*Team Members: Paul Gable, Jeffrey Gauges, Dennis Hoyle,
Albert Kirchner, Michael Linytsky, Mary Roberts*

Overview

Organizationally, the Fire Department was found to be top heavy, disconnected from the rest of county government, and averse to data-driven decision making. The Department is also inundated with a variety of non-binding, voluntary standards from the National Fire Protection Association and other non-governmental organizations, and does not have a clear sense of which standards should be employed, or to what extent. Overutilization of larger fire trucks (when ambulances or smaller vehicles would be more appropriate) and policies such as requiring all firefighters to qualify as paramedics were cited among several examples of cost inefficiencies. The report commended the Department on its interagency collaboration with the Office of Central Services in streamlining equipment maintenance and repair processes, and suggested several additional opportunities to work with other county agencies and other fire departments within the region.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures

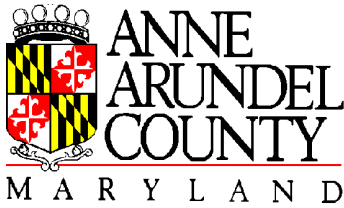
- Formally adopt (via legislation) the standards / protocols to be followed by the Department.
- Transfer fire code inspection functions to the Department of Planning and Zoning.
- Re-establish the Fire Advisory Board.
- Improve collaboration with other county fire departments to create economies of scale in training costs and equipment purchases. Improve collaboration with other departments within the county to streamline processes such as equipment maintenance and repair.

Personnel

- Reassign uniformed firefighters and officers to positions in the field. Staff administrative, non-emergency, and non-hazardous duty positions with civilian personnel.
- Fund the position of County Medical Director as a full-time, paid position.
- Partner with Anne Arundel Community College to develop Fire Science and Fire Administration programs which could replace the current recruit training program.
- Separate Paramedic and Firefighter functions to better align training requirements with positional needs.

Technology

- Combine the emergency dispatch and communications systems for the Fire and Police departments into one joint communications center.
- Update IT platforms to allow collection and measurement of key performance indicators.



Police Department

Team Leader: Patrick Jameson

*Team Members: Paul Gable, Jeffrey Gauges, Dennis Hoyle,
Albert Kirchner, Michael Linynsky, Mary Roberts*

Executive Summary

The Commission's report reiterated many of the findings of the Bealefeld Task Force. Having recently gone through a period of significant turmoil, the Department faces serious issues in staffing shortages, the age and condition of its vehicle fleet, and the condition of many of its facilities such as the Training Academy. A lack of technology planning has also plagued the department, most notably with the failed roll-out of a new 911 system. Addressing these issues will require expertise in organizational development, process management, and performance evaluation – not mainstream policing skills – and would benefit from outside assistance.

Key Recommendations

Policies/Procedures

- End practice of raiding the Central Garage Replacement Fund to balance the Department's budget.
- Coordinate with other county and state police agencies to create economies of scale when ordering vehicles and equipment.
- Seek partnerships with other county and state police agencies to address common needs (such as helicopter pilot training, or crime lab backlogs) which may be too cost prohibitive for an individual department to conduct adequately on its own.

Personnel

- Reassign uniformed officers to positions in the field. Staff administrative, non-emergency positions with civilian personnel.
- Undertake a compensation study of the Police Department, Department of Detention Facilities, and Sheriff's Office to ensure salary ranges are consistent across comparable positions, and to address salary compression issues between pay grades.

Technology

- Combine the emergency dispatch and communications systems for the Fire and Police departments into one joint communications center.
- Work with the Office of Information Technology on crafting a comprehensive IT Plan for the department.