

**CLERK OF THE BOARD RESPONSE TO PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</b>
1	Managers of the unit should develop a written procedures manual for their unit functions.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b>                      All divisions were in the process of reviewing and updating their division procedures when the performance audit commenced.</p>
2	The COB should meet with the BOS and CEO to re-evaluate the County's agenda process and procedures.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b>                      The Clerk of the Board (COB) collaborates with County departments, County Executive Office (CEO), County Counsel and the Board offices in developing agendas and follows County policies and procedures including the Board's Rules of Procedures, Board Directives, and regulatory requirements such as the Brown Act. In 2018, COB, CEO, OC Information Technology (OCIT) and department Agenda Coordinators evaluated current processes and procedures and created a set of detailed business requirements that were included in a competitive bid and evaluation process for a new agenda management system. The detailed requirements ensure all requirements defined for the County would be met and numerous work arounds and inefficiencies would be eliminated. The new agenda management system solution will meet the County's requirements which include all stages of the agenda process lifecycle. It is important to note that departments often create their own internal processes that may benefit their department but may not work for other departments. Departments have created work-arounds/shadow systems using SharePoint or shared drives, in addition to use of Microsoft Word and email, to enhance their internal workflow/collaboration and approval processes. COB has no control over what departments create for themselves; however, their work arounds were reviewed and considered when developing the business requirements for the new agenda management system.</p>
3	Agenda workload should be distributed according to agenda items.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b>                      The ability to have one point of contact (primary and secondary contacts) for departments ensures consistency in the processing of agenda items and allows departments to develop close working relationships with COB staff. The Board Services Manager has the ability to assign work to her staff at any time, as needed, in order to distribute the workload amongst her staff. Since the division currently has 2 vacant positions, the manager is reassigning workload amongst her staff in order to ensure workload is evenly distributed to staff. The workloads of all staff in the Board Services Division can fluctuate from meeting to meeting and may at times not be evenly distributed.</p>

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4	Review the full agenda process and develop new agenda policies and procedures that accommodate County users.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>The existing agenda management system is over 19 years old and suffers a combination of poor user experience and outdated functionality, both of which affects the efficiency of County business operations. In 2018, the COB and OCIT released a Request for Information (RFI) for an agenda management system to determine and better understand what agenda management products are available in the marketplace. Eight responses were received, a cost comparison was completed and solution demonstrations were conducted. Upon conclusion of the demonstrations, the Subject Matter Experts agreed that it would be in the best interest of the County to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an Agenda Management System. In 2018, the COB, CEO, OCIT and department Agenda Coordinators conducted detailed assessment of the agenda process and created a set of detailed business requirements for a new agenda management system. OCIT issued an RFP in December 2018. During the performance audit, OCIT was in the process of procuring a new agenda management system. The business requirements incorporated the ideas and requests from County users to further automate current manual processes in order to make the new system efficient. On May 5, 2020, the Board approved a contract with Prime Government Solutions, LLC for an agenda management system. The new system will provide a more robust and efficient cloud-based enterprise agenda management system.</p>
5	Dedicate a Board Services Specialist in the unit with the responsibility to upload and manage files for Assessment Appeals.	<p><b>Do Not Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>Due to three vacancies in the Assessment Appeals Division, the COB does not have the staffing to dedicate one full time staff with the responsibility of uploading and managing files for the Assessment Appeals Division. The Files Management Division manages the departments official records, responds to public records requests, and assists the public and County departments with research of records. The responsibility to manage files should remain assigned to staff within the Files Management Division. This would ensure files are processed in a consistent manner and stored properly by staff per statutory record requirements, industry best practices and the COB's records retention schedule.</p>
6	Designate a receptionist for the Clerk of the Board office.	<p><b>Do Not Concur with Recommendation at this time</b></p> <p>COB does not have the staffing, volume of telephone inquiries nor walk in visitors to warrant a full-time receptionist in all divisions of COB. In addition, to increase the visibility of visitors to our office, the public counter in the Files Management Division was remodeled in 2015/2016. The length of the counter was increased to allow staff to view visitors coming to our office and to move the counter further into the office space. Staff currently have the ability to readily acknowledge visitors to provide customer service for the department. The plans for the COB's new office at the County Administration North are being developed to incorporate this recommendation.</p>

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7	Place a computer kiosk in the COB reception area to allow customers to enter their own public records requests.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>COB has a public computer in the Files Management Division lobby and another in the Board Services Division lobby where the public can enter their public records requests via NextRequest. The system helps customers request records from the County of Orange and facilitates public access to public records under the California Public Records Act (CPRA). However, at this time, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the public computers are temporarily unavailable to the public.</p>
8	Utilize a professional files management service to implement a new electronic files management system that can integrate, organize, and manage all of the County's past, current, and new files, that could be easily accessible to County employees.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>Beginning in 2016, COB conducted a review of documents in the records storage area located in the basement of the Hall of Administration. The storage area was unorganized and records could not be easily located. A project was established to organize and create a scope of work for the scanning, indexing, and imaging of Board Meeting records. The intent of the project was to take a phased approach with the intent of moving to digital transformation to optimize records retention, storage and retrieval. The project was implemented prior to meeting with the performance auditor. To date, 612 boxes of agenda items from July 1987 through December 1997, 138 plans and specs approved by the Board and 425 rolls of 16mm microfilm have been scanned, indexed and imaged onto hard drives. All files have been moved to the Records Center along with an additional 876 boxes of agenda items from 1999 through 2012 that are already scanned, indexed and imaged in our agenda management system. Now, the basement storage contains Board agenda items from 1998 and 2013 through 2019. These agenda items do not require to be converted since they are already maintained in our agenda management system but are being prepared to be boxed and moved to the Records Center for retention. With the COVID-19 pandemic and budgetary constraints, the digitizing of documents has been put on hold; however, the images and index data has been provided on USB hard drives to staff. This allows staff to easily access documents upon request until documents are digitized and a new system can be easily accessed to all County employees.</p>
9	Allow a Board Service Specialist to manage files in each COB functional unit.	<p><b>Do Not Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>With five vacant positions in the department, we do not currently have the staffing for each division to have their own Board Services Specialist to manage files and records and do not have the budgetary funds to purchase high power scanners and licenses for multiple staff in each division. However, this recommendation will be kept in mind for future reference.</p>

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10	The COB should work with the BOS and CEO to develop a singular functional unit either within the COB or CEO with a manager to provide a full suite of administrative management services for the Board of Supervisors.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>The administrative functions as outlined in the performance audit report provides for a single Administrative Manager to provide a multitude of assignments that cross divisions and departments. COB will work with the Board and CEO to determine the feasibility of providing a full suite of administrative services for the Board. The plans for the COB's new office at the County Administration North are being developed to incorporate this recommendation providing budgetary resources are available.</p>
11	Provide proactive support to the BOS members and staff.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>COB will ensure regular communication is established with the Board Members and their staff for increased communication and support by COB.</p>
12	Instead of utilizing like-for-like technology, consider updating the County's policies and procedures when updating technology to be able to utilize newer capabilities and features of available technology.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>As stated in the response to Recommendation #2, COB, CEO, OCIT and department Agenda Coordinators reviewed current processes and procedures and created a set of detailed business requirements that were included in a competitive bid and evaluation process for a new agenda management system. The detailed requirements ensure all requirements defined for the County would be met and numerous work arounds and inefficiencies would be eliminated. The new agenda management system solution will meet the County's requirements which include all stages of the agenda process lifecycle, poor user experience and outdated functionality which affects the efficiency of County business operations. It will also address workarounds/shadow systems used by County Departments and enhance internal workflow/collaboration and approval processes. The system will also be configurable/customizable to accommodate all County departments' various business requirements.</p>
13	Establish consistent weekly meetings of the COB managers to address collective issues of the department.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>COB has established weekly meetings with managers using Microsoft Teams to evaluate the department's operations, identify needs for change, approve recommendations for actions, allocate resources to accomplish department goals, address shared management issues and strategies for managing the department and discuss matters impacting the department due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
14	Managers should have consistent regular meetings with their unit.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Clerk of the Board and Chief Deputy encourage managers to have regular meetings with their team members to reinforce the department's vision, values and mission, inform and update employees and to share successes, challenges and provide updates. Since staff are telecommuting due to the pandemic, the Clerk of the Board encourages managers conduct virtual meetings using Microsoft Teams.</p>
15	The COB should offer regular meetings with the BOS and their staff.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>COB will be more proactive in offering regular meetings to Board Members and their staff.</p>

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	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</b>
16	Delegate clerking of County Commissions to more of the COB staff.	<p><b>Partially Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>COB understands the need for staff to be cross trained for support to various commissions and also for succession planning. In the Assessment Appeals Division, the Lead Board Services Specialists primary responsibility is to clerk Assessment Appeal Hearings. The division does not have a Senior Board Services Specialist position; however, Board Services Specialists in the Intake Division have cross trained to learn and provide back-up support for hearings. In the Board Services Division, the Lead and Senior Board Services Specialists are assigned to provide clerking services for several County Boards, Commissions and Committee with one Board Services Specialist still pending training. Due to the five vacancies in the department, managers are working with each other to provide cross training amongst all divisions.</p>
17	The department should develop units as teams and provide cross-training opportunities.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Clerk of the Board and all managers encourage their staff to cross-train in other responsibilities within and/or not within their division. Over the past two years, many staff have expressed a desire to cross train and staff were provided the opportunity to do so and have established Performance Incentive Plan goals for cross training.</p>
18	Implement a career path for the Board Service Specialist classification for supervision and management in the County.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>In 2018, COB met with Human Resource Services (HRS) to discuss implementing a career path for the Board Services Specialist classification to include supervision and management for department succession planning. Due to budgetary constraints, the department was unable to create a new position within the department. In 2019, the department reclassified a vacant position in the Assessment Appeals Division and conducted a recruitment for an Administrative Manager I, resulting in a promotion within COB. This new position provides succession planning for the Assessment Appeals Division. COB continues to work with HRS to look at ways to provide staff the opportunity to grow their career in the department. HRS has also conducted training and development for all staff on completing resumes/applications and tailoring their work experience and training to the position for which they may want to apply in the County.</p>
19	OCIT should provide an in-house IT position in order to implement new technology in the department.	<p><b>Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>COB currently has a full time in-house OCIT shared services position whose responsibility is to provide support to COB and additional OCIT staff have also been trained to provide back-up support. The use of the shared services model will ensure new technology is made available to the department.</p>
20	Reorganize the department around core functions and responsibilities	<p><b>Partially Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>COB recognizes some of the divisions within the department have assumed new roles and responsibilities and names of the divisions could be updated. However, the recommendations of name changes do not reflect the responsibility or actual work performed by the units.</p>

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21	Change the Board Services unit name to Agenda and Commissions Services.	<p><b>Do Not Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>Although the division's primary duties are to prepare and publish agendas for the Board and other authorities, staff perform other duties including acting as the Filing Official/Filing Officer for Statement of Economic Interests Form 700, receiving and processing claims, summons and complaints against the County and providing reception support when requested to the Board and other County departments. They assist departments, entities and the public with research and retrieval of information, research and process public records requests.</p>
22	Change the Administrative/Files Management unit name to Administrative Services to fully manage the administrative functions for the BOS and the department.	<p><b>Do Not Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>The division currently provides administrative support services to the Board offices and COB in addition to files management responsibilities; as such, the recommended name change does not accurately reflect the primary duties of the division including providing copies of all records COB is required to maintain; assist other departments, entities and the public with research and retrieval of information; retrieve and certify documents for court; research and process all public records requests; conduct purchasing, contract monitoring and petty cash management; and provide financial management for the Board and COB.</p>
23	Human Resources for the BOS should be delegated to a confidential Human Resources Manager.	<p><b>Partially Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>HRS has been delegated to the Executive Secretary for the Clerk of the Board for over 20 years due to the related sensitive and confidential matters of the Clerk of the Board staff, the Board Members and their staff. Currently, the Executive Secretary processes human resources needs, personnel matters and payroll for the Clerk of the Board and the Board offices. A dedicated Human Resource/Payroll Manager would be ideal; however, current staffing levels and budgetary constraints do not allow for implementation of this recommendation at this time.</p>
24	Designate a Receptionist/Files Management position in each of the units.	<p><b>Do Not Concur with Recommendation</b></p> <p>COB does not have the staffing, volume of telephone inquiries nor walk in visitors to warrant a full-time receptionist/files management position in all divisions of COB; however, plans for the COB's new office at the County Administration North are being developed to incorporate this recommendation.</p>