

Performance Measurement ...Matters

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/dmb/perf_measure.htm

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE RELEASES FY 2007 BUDGET WITH CONTINUED EMPHASIS ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND PERFORMANCE

On February 27, 2006, County Executive Tony Griffin presented the FY 2007 Advertised Budget Plan. This budget continues to build upon initiatives over the past few years where the Board of Supervisors' strategic priorities, as well as the County core purpose and vision elements are tied to the resources needed to address them. The objective has been to clearly convey to the public and others the County's strategic priorities, in addition to providing comprehensive data that demonstrate the progress being made to achieve them.

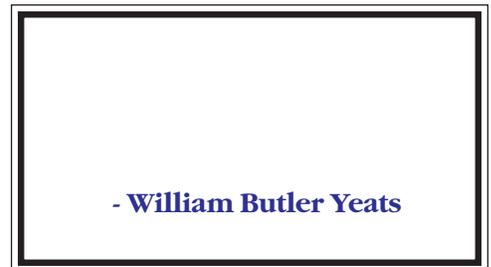
For those who do not eagerly anticipate the annual budget as much as the latest bestseller, taking a look at this critical County document can be very informative. In addition to the typical financial data found in budget documents, Fairfax County includes extensive performance data at the agency level where quantified objectives of what an agency intends to accomplish for the fiscal year are spelled out. These objectives are linked to the Family of Measures (output, efficiency, service quality and outcome) with three prior years of actuals, as well as estimates for the current and budget year included. Since these data tell **what** is happening, but not **why**, agencies also include a narrative explaining their performance measurement results. This helps the reader understand why the measures are important and what they mean to external customers (citizens), as well as internal customers (other County employees) as appropriate.

As noted in the previous issue of this newsletter, benchmarking data are included for each of the seven program areas in the General Fund (see Volume 1). For FY 2007, this type of information is now included for several non-General Fund agencies including the Department of Vehicle Services, Risk Management, and Solid Waste (Refuse Collection and Recycling) in Volume 2. While it

is helpful to know how an organization is doing one year to the next, it is even more useful to know how one is doing compared to others in order to learn best practices. Finally, at the countywide level, Key County Indicators that reflect progress made on the County's vision elements can be found under the Strategic Linkages section of the Overview Volume.

PM EVENTS FOR 2006

Now is the time to update your calendars for the following Performance Measurement-related events. Reminders will be sent via Fairfax County's NewsLink prior to each event, particularly for the annual training, as advance registration is required. Each year, the PM Team offers a four-class series in June. This timeframe was selected as it enables agency staff who have not previously had this training to obtain it just prior to when agencies typically report on their actual data, as well as review their measures for the upcoming budget and make any necessary adjustments. Please note that this is the only time this formal training will be provided.



The series is comprised of a **Basic PM Class**, which provides an introduction to Fairfax County's system, including the terminology and methodology. This class is a prerequisite for any of the other three classes. The second course, **Data Collection**, covers basic principles of data collection in order to ensure the integrity of performance information collected. The **Surveying** class is intended for those whose job responsibilities require them to obtain customer satisfaction data as part of their agencies' performance measures. Finally, the **Managing for Results** class is provided to enable staff to use their performance data to identify and close gaps in performance. Registration for each of these half-day classes will take place in May 2006. Stay tuned for an upcoming NewsLink announcement. Other more informal learning opportunities are available through the brownbag lunches shown on the calendar on the next page. The August Brownbag is typically a one-hour refresher on the County's PM system and database for those who previously attended training and/or used the system, but may need a quick just-in-time review.



PM EVENTS FOR 2006

EVENT	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
Brownbag Lunch - Public Service Recognition Week Guest Speaker: County Executive Tony Griffin	May 2, 2006 Noon - 1 p.m.	Room 232, Government Center (GC)
Basic PM Training	June 19, 2006 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.	CR 4-5, GC
Data Collection	June 19, 2006 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.	CR 4-5, GC
Surveying for Customer Satisfaction	June 20, 2006 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.	CR 4-5, GC
Managing For Results	June 20, 2006 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.	CR 4-5, GC
Brownbag Lunch - PM Refresher	August 10, 2006 Noon - 1 p.m.	Room 120C, GC

HELP WANTED – NEW PM TEAM MEMBERS

The Performance Measurement (PM) Team is a multi-agency group whose members meet monthly to discuss issues related to Fairfax County's PM effort, as well as plan activities and events that will further advance the principles of performance measurement, accountability and continuous improvement. Each year at this time, the team solicits interest for new members. The team is comprised of 16 members, several of whom will be cycling off this year. There will be 3-4 openings for County staff interested in participating. The minimum commitment is one year, with the option to extend participation. In the past, members have commented that it typically takes a year to get up to speed and become a fully contributing member. For this reason, most stay on for a second year or more. The following are the requirements and benefits of participating on the PM Team:

Minimum Qualifications

- Team player
- Commitment to making sure Fairfax County remains a high-performance organization
- Recommended for participation by the agency director
- Prior attendance at PM training is a big plus

Time Commitment

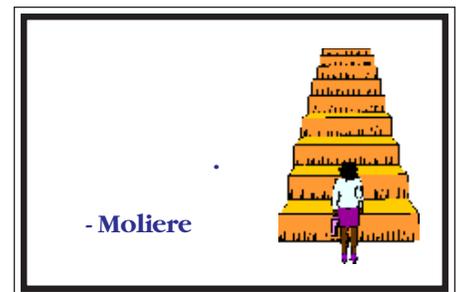
- Preparation for and attendance at regular meetings (second Tuesday of each month, approximately two hours)
- Attendance at PM brownbag lunches and other events
- Additional time as needed to support team functions

Term of Service

- One year (with the ability to extend pending the mutual agreement of the team, member and agency director)

Benefits

- Association with other professionals committed to measuring and improving performance
- Enhanced understanding of the County's PM program to share with their own agency
- Opportunity to influence the future direction of the effort



Performance Measurement Matters is published quarterly by the PM Team. Editors: Barbara Emerson and Bill Yake; Technical Support: Lynda Pham, Department of Management and Budget.

If this sounds like something you want to become involved in, please send a brief synopsis of your skills and how your participation will benefit you, your agency and the County. Include this information in a memo from your agency director indicating his/her approval. Forward this to Susan Datta, Director, Department of Management and Budget by **Friday, March 31, 2006**. Applicants will be notified shortly thereafter.