



Management Report – Phase II

Priority Actions for the Borough of Mantoloking
Aligning recommendations of the Management Report
with the Borough Strategic Plan

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Introduction

During 2019, the Borough of Mantoloking engaged Cotter Strategies, LLC to perform two distinct projects: Facilitation of a strategic plan and later, a review of existing municipal operations. In January of 2020, the Borough Council authorized a Phase II project, to align recommendations from the management report with the strategic plan and to identify priorities for council action. The project included meeting with each department head (Municipal Clerk; Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Police and Director of Public Works) to review and clarify the recommendations from the management report.

The strategic plan was reviewed by the Borough Council and modified to identify the persons responsible for specific elements and related timelines for completing tasks. For reference purposes, a copy of the strategic plan is included as an appendix this report.

In all, the management report included some 22 recommendations that are included below numerically for reference:

Municipal Clerk

1. Recommendation: Completion of the personnel policy manual with adoption by the governing body should be a priority.
2. Recommendation: Finalized job descriptions should be formally adopted by the governing body.
3. Recommendation: Prior to formal adoption of a performance evaluation system, appropriate training must be provided to employees in performance evaluation process.
4. Recommendation: The list of processes should be developed into a standard operating procedure format for each process and made available for staff reference.
5. Recommendation: Create an employee safety committee as part of the Borough's risk management plan.

Finance Department

6. Recommendation: Develop a multi-year capital improvement plan.
7. Recommendation: Develop a Purchasing Manual and provide appropriate training for all employees in its use.
8. Recommendations: Fully leverage Edmunds finance software by providing access to department heads to their respective budgets, purchase order system and consider portal for on-line access by vendors and local taxpayers.
9. Recommendations: Move sewer billing early in the year and limit the grace period for sewer bill payments to be consistent with property tax payments.
10. Recommendation: The governing body should fully evaluate CFO recommendation to hire a part-time, floater position to fill administrative employee vacancies during busy periods.

11. Recommendation: Consider a student intern position to assist with archiving and scanning of documents.
12. Recommendation: Consider expanding role of Finance/Tax Collector to include Deputy CFO/Tax Collector.

Police Department

13. Recommendation: Formalize succession plan for the Office of Emergency Management.
14. Recommendation: Funding should be authorized for the police department accreditation process.

Public Works Department

15. Recommendation: Completion of the Borough Hall procedures manual and call out list is an important program that should be completed and shared with key staff members.

Salary Comparison Study

16. Recommendation: Consider establishing a salary guide that identifies salary steps for each position.

Management Organization

17. Recommendation: The position of Borough Administrator should be added either on a part-time basis or as a combined role with the Municipal Clerk.
18. Recommendation: Create an orientation program for newly elected officials and should an administrator be appointed, consider an annual retreat for elected officials and the administrator.

Opportunities for Shared Services

19. Recommendation: Consider a shared services study regarding the delivery of local law enforcement operations.
20. Recommendation: Consider a shared services study regarding the delivery of public works.
21. Recommendation: Explore the benefits of a consolidation of fire protection services with the Borough of Bay Head.
22. Recommendation: Consider a comprehensive shared services study of regionalizing fire protection among the several area municipalities.

In discussions with department heads, it was learned that several of the recommendations are already underway. As such, those recommendations will not be identified for priority action by the governing body; however, there will be a notation that the efforts may require monitoring by the council. An additional recommendation regarding shared services for Human Resources was suggested and is

incorporated in the comments regarding the recommendation for the appointment of a Borough Administrator.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

While each of the recommendations are important, listed below are the 12 recommendations that should receive priority attention from the governing body. Where necessary, an explanation is provided as to the rationale for setting priority status. The recommendations, either underway, or of somewhat lesser urgency, are included in the next section as Other Recommendations.

Management Organization

Recommendation: The position of Borough Administrator should be added either on a part-time basis or as a combined role with the Municipal Clerk.

Comment: *Whether or not there will be a Borough Administrator is a threshold question that needs to be answered. Regardless of whether an administrator is appointed, efforts should be made to streamline and clarify the reporting structure (as outlined in the management report). Should an administrator not be appointed, steps should be taken to explore shared services for delivery of human resource management services for the Borough.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *Although the appointment of an administrator was not specifically identified in the Strategic Plan, the recommendation is consistent with the category "People" and the objective: "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #5: "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Recommendation: Create an orientation program for newly elected officials and should an administrator be appointed, consider an annual retreat for elected officials and the administrator.

Comment: *A formal orientation program for newly elected officials – as well as incumbent members of the governing body – is an excellent way assure members of the Borough council are well prepared for their role and to leverage the full potential of the governing body.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *This recommendation is consistent with the category "People" and the objective: "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #4: "Develop an orientation program for elected officials that incorporates the relevant portion of Title 40."*

Municipal Clerk

Recommendation: Completion of the personnel policy manual with adoption by the governing body should be a priority.

Comment: *As noted in the recommendation, completion and adoption of the Borough personnel policy should be a priority. Personnel policies are foundational to effective human resource management.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *This recommendation is consistent with the category; "People" and the objective; "Improve Human Resource Function", item #1 "Update Employee Manuals" and #5 "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Recommendation: Finalized job descriptions should be formally adopted by the governing body.

Comment: *Having current job descriptions is important for effective human resource management.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *This recommendation is consistent with the category; "People" and the objective; "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #2 "Update job descriptions & position classifications that marry up to strategic direction of the Borough" and #5 "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Recommendation: Create an employee safety committee as part of the Borough's risk management plan.

Comment: *An employee safety committee is a key component of a municipal risk management plan. The goal is to maintain a safe work environment with the outcome of reducing overall accidents and employee injuries. As a member of the Joint Insurance Fund (JIF), the Borough has access to the JIF risk manager for advice in setting up an employee safety committee. While this process is fairly simple and straightforward, the benefits can be significant.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *This recommendation is consistent with the category; "People" and the objective; "Improve Human Resource Function", and #5 "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Finance Department

Recommendation: Develop a multi-year capital improvement plan.

Comment: *A capital plan is a fundamental document for effective budgeting. A multi-year plan (current year and five-year forecast) allows for appropriately spaced expenses for major improvements and equipment acquisition and replacement.*

Recommendation: Develop a Purchasing Manual and provide appropriate training for all employees in its use.

Comment: *A purchasing manual provides guidance and a consistent, approved process for purchasing across all municipal departments and agencies. This document should be a companion to a revenue and cash procedures manual that also covers all municipal departments and agencies that emphasizes internal controls. The Borough Auditor is a valuable resource for reviewing these documents.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *These recommendations are consistent with the category; "People" and the objective; "Improve Human Resource Function", and #5 "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Recommendation: Fully leverage Edmunds finance software by providing access to department heads to their respective budgets, purchase order system and consider portal for on-line access by vendors and local taxpayers.

Comment: *The department heads require real-time budget information and access to the purchase order system. The portal feature of the finance software will streamline transactions with both taxpayers and vendors.*

Recommendation: Move sewer billing early in the year and limit the grace period for sewer bill payments to be consistent with property tax payments.

Comment: *Moving the sewer billing date should be done in conjunction with the new budget year.*

Recommendation: The governing body should fully evaluate CFO recommendation to hire a part-time, floater position to fill administrative employee vacancies during busy periods.

Comment: *This recommendation should be evaluated as part of the current year budget development.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *Each of the recommendations are consistent with the category "People" and the objective: "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #5: "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Opportunities for Shared Services

DPW

Recommendation: Consider a shared services study regarding the delivery of public works.

Comment: *Shared service initiatives are often controversial – particularly when they involve consolidation efforts that involve uniformed services. In Mantoloking, three separate departments have been recommended for consideration of sharing services. Among those agencies, the Department of Public Works should be evaluated first (along with the fire department, noted in the next recommendation.)*

This recommendation is based on the following: First, bolstering the depth of personnel resources in the DPW is needed now. Second, the state is offering funding for shared service initiatives of this type, mitigating any initial costs for the municipality. Finally, shared services initiatives involving public works tend not to be especially controversial and the process can provide important experience for decision makers when considering shared service models for other departments.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *This recommendation is consistent with the category "Independence" and the objective: "Ensure an Independent and Self-Sustaining Municipality" Item #3: "Evaluating Shared Services Opportunities for DPW Operations."*

Fire Department

Recommendation: Explore the benefits of a consolidation of fire protection services with the Borough of Bay Head.

Recommendation: Consider a comprehensive shared services study of regionalizing fire protection among the several area municipalities.

Comment: *These related recommendations are meant to address the critical staffing issues facing the local volunteer fire department. In a follow up conversation with the DPW Director (who also now serves as fire chief), he advised that the fire department is in the early stages of considering a regionalized approach to delivery of fire protection services. The Borough council should be directly involved in any shared services or regional efforts involving the fire department. As noted in the comments for the Department of Public Works, the state is currently providing funding for shared services of this type and, the need for improving the effectiveness of the volunteer fire department is critical.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *Each of the recommendations are consistent with the category "Independence" and the objective: "Ensure an Independent and Self-Sustaining Municipality", Item #5: "Evaluate Other Opportunities (construction, land-use, fire, etc.)"*

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

As noted earlier in this report, each of the following recommendations, while important, are not considered priorities now. However, circumstances and priorities can and do change. As such, it is important for the governing body to monitor each of the recommendations and associated progress that is made toward the identified outcome.

Municipal Clerk

Recommendation: Prior to formal adoption of a performance evaluation system, appropriate training must be provided to employees in performance evaluation process.

Comment: *The adoption of a performance evaluation system should be adopted along with the necessary training. However, the implementation of the system should follow the decision on appointment of a municipal administrator and any changes in reporting relationships of Borough staff members.*

Recommendation: The list of processes should be developed into a standard operating procedure format for each process and made available for staff reference.

Comment: *This is an on-going process that should be monitored for progress by the governing body.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *Each of the recommendations are consistent with the category "People" and the objective: "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #5: "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Finance Department

Recommendation: Consider expanding role of Finance/Tax Collector to include Deputy CFO/Tax Collector.

Comment: *This recommendation should be explored by the Finance Committee and the CFO to determine the level of efficiencies that would be gained. A target date for a decision should be prior to the 2021 budget.*

Recommendation: Consider a student intern position to assist with archiving and scanning of documents.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *The recommendation is consistent with the category "People" and the objective: "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #5: "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Police Department

Recommendation: Formalize succession plan for the Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

Comment: *The process of formalizing a succession plan for OEM is reported to be underway. Progress related to this recommendation should be monitored by the governing body.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *The recommendations are consistent with the category "People" and the objective: "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #5: "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Recommendation: Funding should be authorized for the police department accreditation process.

Comment: *Funding has been appropriated for the first phase of the accreditation process for the police department. The governing body should monitor progress of this phase of the accreditation process and take steps to appropriate funding for the Borough's police department to become fully accredited.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *The recommendations are consistent with the category "People" and the objective: "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #5: "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Recommendation: Consider a shared services study regarding the delivery of local law enforcement operations.

Comment: There are two factors suggesting that this recommendation not be a current priority. First, should the Borough proceed with the recommendation to explore DPW shared services, much will be learned through that process that can be beneficial for any law enforcement shared services effort. Second, the local police department is currently engaged in the accreditation process. As part of that effort, organizational strengths and weaknesses will be identified that will help to inform any shared services undertaking.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *The recommendation is consistent with the category "Independence" and the objective: "Ensure an Independent and Self-Sustaining Municipality", Item #4: "Evaluate shared services opportunities for police department operations."*

Public Works Department

Recommendation: Completion of the Borough Hall procedures manual and call out list is an important program that should be completed and shared with key staff members.

Comment: *The DPW director reports that the various issues related to the new Borough Hall have been addressed. Finalizing the procedures manual (in both hard copy and electronically for remote access) should be monitored by the governing body.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *The recommendations are consistent with the category "People" and the objective: "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #5: "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Salary Comparison Study

Recommendation: Consider establishing a salary guide that identifies salary steps for each position.

Comment: *A salary survey was completed and included in the Borough's management review report. A salary guide should now be developed by the finance committee working closely with the CFO with a target for approval and adoption prior to the 2021 budget.*

Alignment with Strategic Plan: *The recommendations are consistent with the category "People" and the objective: "Improve Human Resource Function", Item #5: "Adoption of Best Practices."*

Final Thoughts

As the various recommendations are considered, the strategic plan should be correspondingly updated with those items the governing body intends to implement. In that way there will be one document as a reference for on-going actions related to each recommendation.