

Financial Viability of the Government Target Issue Committee Recommended Changes

Leadership and Staff:

Lead Commissioner: Commissioner Mustian

Involved Commissioner: Commissioner Katz

Lead Staff: Anita Favors Thompson, Raoul Lavin, Rick Fernandez, Sam McCall, Gary Herndon, Jim English

Other Staff: Beckye Simpson, Richard LaCondre, Kevin Wailes, Mike Tadros, David Byrne, Reese Goad

Mission Statement:

The financial viability target issue committee strives to establish parameters for comprehensive budget review, review and approve strategic plan for electric and gas utilities, and conduct periodic reviews of debt financing and investment policies.

General Overview of Committee:

As the City continues to face significant financial challenges, the Financial Viability of the Government Target Issue Committee will continue to play a vital role in reviewing and making recommendations to the City Commission on actions that are necessary to ensure not only the continued financial viability of the organization, but also making recommendations on actions the city can take to stimulate the local economy. A number of goals have been identified for 2009 that are aimed at addressing both these issues as listed below.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES / REDEFINITION OF PRIORITIES

1. Focus on continued review of strategies to mitigate utility costs for our citizens, businesses and large customers is vital for ensuring economic vitality of the community. To this end the target issue committee will continue its focus on reviewing and making recommendations to the City Commission on strategic policies and plans for the city's utilities. A focus this year will concentrate on the following two areas:
 - Long Term Policy Approaches for Electric Generation
 - Long Term Gas Contracts
2. Focus on continued review of opportunities to stimulate local economy by ensuring that city funding for capital projects is released timely and that capital projects are fast tracked. The Committee will continue to evaluate policy changes and provide recommendations to the City Commission on changes that can be implemented to ensure that city funded capital projects move quickly through the process (procurement, legal, permitting, construction, etc.).

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3. Continued involvement on identifying policy decisions and priorities for City Commission approval regarding achieving a five-year balanced budget while ensuring the continued delivery of services to our residents will be a goal of the target issue committee.
4. As presented to the City Commission at the latest budget workshop on January 28, 2009 the city's deficiencies fund is currently significantly below the policy level established by the City Commission. The current city policy is to have, at a minimum, two months operating expenses for general government departments. One of the factors behind the recent downgrade by Fitch from a rating of AA to a AA- with a negative outlook is due to the deficiencies fund level. This action could impact the city's ability to borrow at lower interest rates in the future. Development of a plan to replenish this fund will be a goal of the target issue committee.
5. Continued periodic reviews of debt financing and investment policies.
6. Establishment of a financial subcommittee of city financial staff (Treasurer-Clerk's Office, Office of Budget & Policy, and Accounting Services) who would convene regularly to assist in reviewing issues mentioned above and make recommendations to the Financial Viability Target Issue Committee.

Environmental and Energy Resources Target Issue Committee Recommended Changes

Leadership and Staff:

Lead Commissioner- Debbie Lightsey

Involved Commissioner- Mayor Marks

Lead Staff- Rick Fernandez, Cynthia Barber, Jim English, John Buss

Other Staff- Mike Tadros, Jim Oskowis, Wayne Tedder,
David Byrne, Reese Goad, Kevin Wailes, Michelle Bono

Mission Statement: The Environmental and Energy Resources Target Issue Committee is to develop and recommend policies that further the City of Tallahassee's goal of being a leader in our stewardship and fiscally responsible for air, land, water and energy resources. Our efforts will be directed towards achieving this long-range goal through conservation and sustainability initiatives and effective management of City operations, including but not limited to water, sewer, stormwater, gas and electric utility operations.

General Overview of Committee:

The Environmental and Energy Resources Target Issue Committee concentrates on City operations and policies that impact the community's environmental and conservation goals. This includes evaluation of present operations and policies as well as exploring emerging technologies and issues. The Smart Metering Project is an example of applying emerging technology to current City operations to enhance the community's conservation opportunities. Similarly, the committee's activities in the areas of policy and ordinance development related to protection of water quality (e.g. AWT Project, Fertilizer Ordinance, Dog Waste Ordinance) play an important role in conserving what is arguably Tallahassee's most precious resource.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES / REDEFINITION OF PRIORITIES

Despite the economic challenges facing our community, staff feels the E&E Target Issue goals for 2009 need to be sustained. Each of the goals deals with either a topic critical to the efficient operations of our water utilities, or to a conservation goal supporting the City's Green Community objective. Both initiatives are important to sustaining and promoting our local economy.

Economic Development Target Issue Committee Recommended Changes

Leadership and Staff:

Lead Commissioner- Mayor John Marks

Involved Commissioner- Commissioner Mark Mustian

Lead Staff- Jay Townsend

Other Staff- Tom Lewis, Michael Parker, Rick McCraw, Raoul Lavin and Wayne Tedder

Mission Statement: The Economic Development Committee's mission is to create and expand economic opportunities and diversify the economy for the Tallahassee region by implementing programs and policies that encourage investment and development, create and sustain jobs, increase the tax base and improve the quality of life in the community.

General Overview of Committee: The Economic Development Target issue Committee focuses on city policies and actions that promote job growth and overall economic development in the community. The committee regularly seeks input from the EDC on appropriate actions to promote business recruitment, expansion and retention. The Committee also vets potential business recruitment candidates and provides input as a prelude to full commission review. The Committee promotes the use of a wide range of ED resources (CRA, CDBG, QTI) to achieve economic objectives.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES / REDEFINITION OF PRIORITIES

Given the impacts of the economic downturn in our community as seen in rising unemployment rates, lowering home values, increasing home foreclosures and diminishing disposable income for families, the City of Tallahassee must take progressive and bold steps in Economic Development. The Safety and Neighborhood Services staff recommends that the City move forward with efforts that improve the quality of life of all of its residents while ensuring for the continued health, safety and well being of all who visit or reside within the community. The focus for 2009 should be to not just maintain the "status quo" but to build on citizen confidence and appreciation of our City services through the following actions:

1. Focus city resources to develop Gaines Street and to recruit businesses that provide linkage between student lifestyles and downtown amenities – "pursue the urbanization of the universities"
2. Work to prepare the areas surrounding the airport for commercial development
3. Position the City to receive and effectively utilize economic development stimulus resources that could be distributed through both traditional and non-traditional funding sources (CDBG, EDA, COPS)
4. Work closely with local universities and EDC to focus on workforce development and retraining and business retention and expansion to ensure for a solid foundation for future business recruitment efforts
5. Comprehensively address Tallahassee quality of life and public safety concerns through the targeted allocation of City and partner resources in those areas most in need

Long Range Community Based Planning Target Issue Committee Recommended Changes

Leadership and Staff:

Lead Commissioner- Andrew Gillum

Involved Commissioner- Debbie Lightsey

Lead Staff- Tom Coe

Other Staff- Linda Hudson; Robert Herman; Gabriel Menendez; Michael Parker;
Ron Garrison; Carrie Blanchard; and Wayne Tedder

Mission Statement:

The Long Range Community Based Planning Committee's mission is to focus on areas that will enhance community standards and propose and implement effective solutions for managing growth and planning for future development of the community.

General Overview of Committee:

The Long Range Target Issue Committee has worked well over the last three years. This Committee has formed the policies developed to meet the State mandates from the 2005 Legislation (SB360). This Committee has successfully addressed many other issues, which will significantly shape our community in the future.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES / REDEFINITION OF PRIORITIES

Given the local and national economic challenges, the Committee would recommend the following challenges to the Target Issue Priorities:

1. At least for the next year, we should focus on topics/projects that provide an economic stimulus to our community and/or enhance the quality of life for our citizens. From a development standpoint this would include the "fast tracking" of projects through the procurement and permitting process. This would include looking at those regulations which most impact development and determine whether exemptions or variances should be granted.
2. Focus on areas, which offer the best prospects for encouraging greater densities and intensities such as the airport, Gaines Street and downtown, using planning to identify the infrastructure investment, which should be made at this time.
3. Focus on the goods and services that will encourage positive growth in our community. This would include: health care; parks & recreation; quality schools; infrastructure; employment opportunities, etc.
4. This group will have to focus even more on the monitoring process to ensure that good long range planning continues in the City while regulations are relaxed to stimulate the economy.

Health and Human Services Target Issue Committee Recommended Changes

Leadership and Staff:

Lead Commissioner- Commissioner Allan Katz

Involved Commissioner- Commissioner Andrew Gillum

Lead Staff- Jay Townsend

Other Staff- Tom Lewis, Michael Parker, Raoul Lavin, Thomas Jones, and Pat Holliday

Mission Statement:

(2008 Version) The Health and Human Services Committee's mission is to support the delivery of essential human services, including trauma intervention, to area residents in the interest of promoting the overall health and well being of the community. The Committee will also explore funding options to increase dollars for the Trauma Center, CHSP and Homeless Initiatives.

(Revised Version) The Health and Human Services Committee's mission is to support the delivery of essential human services to area residents in the interest of promoting the overall health and well being of the community.

General Overview of Committee: The Health and Human Services Target Committee concentrates on programs and policies that address the provision and delivery of human services. The Committee provides input on the allocation of resources to community agencies and is committed to developing long term funding strategies to meet the community's future human services needs. The Committee works with the CHSP partners and local service providers to develop policy and program recommendations.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES / REDEFINITION OF PRIORITIES

Emerging community health and wellness trends continue to stress the City's limited resources within the community. From obesity to aging, from infant mortality to access to public health and from homelessness to family displacement, community leaders are faced with significant issues. From a City-perspective, 2009 health and human services priorities should be contemplated within the context of two key questions, "Where do we focus our dollars to have the greatest impact on those with the greatest need?" and "To what extent should the City be involved in funding those needs?" With this in mind, the staff recommends the following focus:

1. Incorporate the priorities identified in the pending Community Needs Assessment into a community-wide strategic plan
2. Pursue a strategic application of health and human services priorities through the implementation of a program evaluation process that disperses funds to the "most effective" human services providers in an outcomes-based model
3. Continue to identify a long-term dedicated funding source for Health and Human Services activities