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June 17, 2005

Mr. Kurt Spitzer
Project Manager
719 East Park Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Subject: Second Progress Report

Dear Mr. Spitzer:

This is the second of our progress reports to be issued during the Fire/EMS Services Review and the Building/Zoning/Code Enforcement update for the Pinellas County Charter Commission. Each progress report will review project activities to date, issues that need resolution to maintain project integrity and timeliness, and where appropriate, plans for the next period.

Progress to Date – Overall

As noted in our first progress report, there were several adjustments to the proposed work scope for the Charter Commission Study. A final scope was approved by the Commission on May 23, 2005. The amended contract was approved by the County Commission's June–2005 meeting. At the May 23rd Charter Commission there was recognition that the several project scope modifications had delayed aspects of the study and that some scheduled delays were probable. However, the Charter Commission requested that we continue to move forward on a timely basis and bring key elements of the study to their attention at the earliest possible time.

Progress to Date – Fire/EMS Review

In our first progress report we noted that some research had begun and that the MGT team had met with numerous involved parties including representatives of the Pinellas County Fire Chief's Association, the Pinellas County Council of Firefighters, and the Pinellas County EMS and Fire Administration Department. However, we were careful not to initiate a full study effort until the May 23rd meeting's direction. Significant activity has taken place since that direction was provided.

Prior to the May 23rd meeting the Fire Chief's Association in conjunction with the Pinellas County Council of Firefighters submitted proposed study specifications in a document entitled "Suggested Study Parameters to the 2005 MGT Study on Fire/EMS Delivery." This submittal was followed by a Pinellas County document outlining what the County would like to include in the proposed study. At the Commission's request MGT submitted a revised proposal to address the issues set forth by both documents. This revised proposal was then reviewed by the



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Charter Commission's Project Manager, Mr. Kurt Spitzer, and the Charter Commission's Chairman, Mr. Alan Bomstein. As the proposed cost of this revised scope exceeded the amount authorized earlier by the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, we were requested to furnish a revised approach that would focus on the most critical elements and stay within the approved dollars. This revision was submitted and, subsequently, was approved by the Charter Commission at the May 23 meeting. A revised proposal incorporating the Charter Commission's direction was then prepared and submitted to the County as part of the contract amendment approval process.

The study scope approved by the Charter Commission focused on five elements addressed in both the Fire Chief's and County Administration suggestions. These elements are:

- Fire Protection and Suppression;
- Fire/EMS Training;
- Emergency Medical Services;
- Code Enforcement and Fire Prevention; and
- Specialized Response Teams.

There were four suggestions that were not included. However, the County Manager indicated that he would have his staff review these suggestions and provide information for inclusion as an appendix. These elements were:

- Community Relations/Public Information;
- Public Fire and Life Safety Education;
- Fire Investigation; and
- Water Supply for Fire Protection.

Also, two additional points were discussed. These were the "evaluate future traffic, roadway and transportation issues as they effect station location and response times."¹ The County Manager agreed to provide this information to the study team.

Also, a major issue for the Fire Chiefs was the equity of funding for fire response units in unincorporated districts. The specific language was:

Evaluate the current method and equity funding for fire response units operating in unincorporated fire districts. Study the fiscal effectiveness of funding unincorporated districts solely through ad valorem taxes and make recommendations for funding alternatives.²

After discussion, the County was asked to provide a report to the consultants outlining the current ad valorem rates, actual funding, issues, etc. The consultants are to provide comments to the report, if appropriate.

Since the last of May, extensive research activities have begun.

- Numerous meetings and interviews have been conducted. MGT representatives have met with the Fire Chief's Association, the Council of Firefighters President, the Chief Assistant County Administrator, County Fire and EMS Managers and staff, dispatch supervisors and staff in both 9-1-1

¹ Suggested Study Parameters for the 2005 MGT Study on Fire/EMS Delivery, page 1.

² Id.

and SunStar, visited staff at numerous fire stations, observed an actual rescue operation, and we will continue to visit and revisit as necessary.

- Our team has met with representatives of the County's EMS and Fire Administration Fire Coordinator's Office to examine the records available through the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. The information regarding the system's capabilities is under review and a data request is being prepared.
- We have begun interviews of Fire Chiefs throughout the County. As of the date of this report our staff has interviewed the Fire Chief or his representative at:
 - Palm Harbor
 - East Lake
 - Dunedin
 - Lealman
 - Safety Harbor
 - Oldsmar

The interview schedule will continue during the next several weeks. We will contact every Chief and seek their cooperation. We anticipate we may need to communicate with the Chiefs on a frequent basis.

- We requested the County's historical records on dependent Department staffing for fiscal years 2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, and the staffing budget requests for 2004-2005. These have been provided. We will need to contact the other cities and the Fire Districts for their information.
- We have requested financial data from County records for the same three fiscal years. This information is to be provided by late June.
- We are planning to issue a questionnaire soliciting information to each department/district regarding the data and issues to be addressed by the study. As part of our effort to encourage participation by the Fire Chief's Association we submitted a draft for their review. The Chief's had concerns regarding the questions and asked that the questions be specifically related to the study's specifications. A second draft version focused directly on the issues was submitted.

On June 13, 2005 Chief Angle of Palm Harbor, on behalf of the Pinellas County Fire Chief's Association, submitted an e-mail to MGT regarding the second draft questionnaire. He expressed reservations regarding the questionnaire. The letter stated that the Fire Chief's Association was going to "back out" and that each individual Fire Chief would speak for their respective department.

- We are beginning our research into other jurisdictions and their practices. As a first step we are contacting several Public Utility Models (PUMS). We will then also contact several cities/counties both in Florida and other states and seek their comments regarding current Fire/EMS services.

Progress to Date – Building/Zoning/Code Enforcement Update

Project activities are underway in the Building/Zoning/Code Enforcement Update. Our team has interviewed key County representatives including:

- the Assistant County Administrator for Development Review Services;
- the Assistant County Administrator for Building;
- the Chief County Assistant Administrator;
- the Director of the Building Department;
- the Director of Development Services; and
- the Zoning Manager.

Efforts are underway to review current operations at both the County and City levels. A survey has been prepared and is being transmitted this week to gather information such as services/functions, expenditures/revenue/budget and staffing. We are also reviewing the new technology the County is implementing for Building/Permitting inspections.

Corrective Actions

The only issue creating some difficulty is the questionnaire for the Fire departments. It is our recommendation that we proceed with the revised questionnaire and encourage each Fire Department to provide their best possible response.

Plans for Next Period

- Issue questionnaire for both study elements.
- Continue data extraction efforts to obtain activity volumes/staffing/equipment/financial records.
- Prepare initial draft of Chapter I – Pinellas County Fire/EMS Services Overview.
- Prepare draft of Pinellas County Building/Zoning/Permitting Update.
- Continue Fire Chief interviews.

We appreciate this opportunity to be of service to the Charter Commission and the citizens of Pinellas County. If you need additional information or clarification, please contact me at (850) 386-3191 ext. 213 or e-mail me at steve@mgtamer.com.

Sincerely,



Stephen F. Humphrey, Jr.
Senior Partner