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July 11, 2005

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

Subject: Third Progress Report on the Pinellas County Review Charter Commission's Fire/EMS and the Building/Zoning/Code Enforcement Update

Dear Mr. Spitzer:

This is the third of our progress reports documenting project activities and progress to date for the Pinellas County Charter Commission's Fire/EMS Review and the Building/Zoning/Code Enforcement Update. Each progress report discusses overall project status and any issues needing resolution to maintain project integrity and timeliness, and where appropriate, plans for the next period.

Progress to Date – Fire/EMS Review

The project team has focused on in-depth research during this period. These activities have included face-to-face interviews, issuance of questionnaires to each Fire Department/District, and interviews/on-line research with other fire and/or EMS systems. While overall progress has been satisfactory, some interviews remain. The questionnaires are coming in slowly (some of which due to Hurricane Dennis), and data extraction from the CAD system is still in the definition stage.

In our last report we noted that interviews of six Fire Chiefs have taken place. In this period we met with the Fire Chiefs of:

- Madeira Beach,
- Gulfport,
- St. Petersburg Beach,
- St. Petersburg,
- Tarpon Springs,
- Seminole,
- Suncoast,
- South Pasadena,
- Largo, and
- Pinellas Park

The Fire Chiefs interviewed during this period were very cooperative and provided many insights into their respective operations and the overall fire service structure in Pinellas County. Among the issues that the Chiefs expressed interest in were the Automatic Aid agreement, EMS funding equity, the capacity of large departments as

compared to smaller departments, interdepartmental training, the effectiveness of the dispatch system, and specialized team funding.

There are three remaining Fire Chief interviews, which we are seeking to complete in mid-July. These are:

- Clearwater,
- Treasure Island, and
- St. Petersburg Airport Authority.

Questionnaires have been e-mailed to each Chief. As we sent these questionnaires we discovered that several of our e-mail addresses were incorrect. Some time was lost as we sought to final correct e-mail addresses, and some questionnaires were hand-delivered. To date seven questionnaires have been returned, while several other Fire Departments have called to let us know their responses are near completion and will arrive soon.

Numerous interviews and discussions have focused on the data and information we need to acquire from the computer-aided dispatch system. During mid-July we will obtain volume activity in total by department/district and station. This information will be shared with each department district to determine if the information is essentially accurate or if there are issues of which we need to be aware regarding its meaning. Also, substantial financial data have been obtained from either county contract files or department/district records, which in turn will be shared with each fire department/district to ensure the data's accuracy. Volume activity and expenditures will then be included in the Report's Chapter One, "Overview of Pinellas County Fire Services."

Progress to Date – Building/Zoning/Code Enforcement Update

Our project team developed a survey questionnaire and has issued this research document to all municipalities in Pinellas County. Questions focused on budget levels, personnel levels, levels of services, and use of technology. To date eight of the surveys have been completed in a format for use in the update report. Initial work has begun in drafting the report. We anticipate a draft report toward the end of July or early August with the time schedule contingent upon the return of the surveys.

Corrective Actions

The response regarding the remaining interviews with the Fire Chiefs has been very good. Also, the return of the questionnaires is very reasonable as the delay in obtaining correct e-mail addresses resulted in some Fire Chiefs not receiving the questionnaire as timely as we wished.

Plans for the Next Period (July 11 – August 7, 2005)

- Complete Fire Chief Interviews
- Summarize questionnaires
- Complete Data Extraction
- Issue initial draft of Chapter 1, "Overview of Pinellas Fire Services"
- Issue Draft of Pinellas County Building/Zoning/Code Enforcement Update
- Prepare listing of Pinellas County Fire Services Issues

Mr. Kurt Spitzer
July 11, 2005
Page 3

Again, we appreciate this opportunity to be of service to the Pinellas County Charter Commission and the citizens of Pinellas County. If you need any 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