

Benjamin Cahoon
Mayor

Michael Siers
Mayor Pro Tem

Greg L. Sparks
Interim Town Manager



Town of Nags Head
Post Office Box 99
Nags Head, NC 27959
Telephone 252-441-5508
Fax 252-441-0776
www.nagsheadnc.gov

M. Renée Cahoon
Commissioner

J. Webb Fuller
Commissioner

Kevin Brinkley
Commissioner

To: Honorable Mayor and Board of Commissioners
From: Greg L. Sparks, Interim Town Manager
Date: July 23, 2020
Subject: Organizational Assessment and Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Commissioners requested the incoming Interim Town Manager to review the organizational structure with the goal of improving communication and accountability within the organization. This report represents an initial assessment of observations and analysis, with recommendations for accomplishing the Commission's objectives.

BACKGROUND

-Organizational Structure

An initial review of organization structure based on the chart posted on the town's website and in other documents indicates that the Town Manager directs all departmental activities through the Deputy Town Manager (Appendix A). However, the Deputy Town Manager was overseeing Planning and Development, Administrative Services, Public Works, Town Engineer, and Information Technology, while the Town Manager directly supervised the two public safety departments and the Human Resources Director. This was further complicated in that the Public Works Director typically reported directly to the Town Manager and coupled with the remote location of Public Works has led to both overlapping and insufficient oversight of the department from the Town Manager and Deputy Town Manager.

Following is a review of departmental organization charts and structure issues:

-Fire and Rescue Department

The Fire Chief has two direct reports-Deputy Fire Chief who oversees six Captains at the two stations and the Ocean Rescue Captain who manages four supervisors of Lifeguards; Office Manager. (Appendix B)

-Police Department

The Chief has amended the Organizational Chart to reflect two direct reports: Deputy Chief who oversees operations through the Lieutenant over four Patrol Sergeants, Investigations Sergeant, and Animal Control; Office Systems Manager who oversees an Office Assistant. (Appendix C)

-Planning and Development

The departmental organization chart shows the Planning Director as a direct report to the Deputy Town Manager, and with one direct report-Deputy Director of Planning who oversees 10 positions: Administrative Assistant, PT Event Coordinator, Principal Planner, Zoning Administrator, Permitting Coordinator, Code Enforcement, Environmental Planner, Engineering Technician, and Chief Building Official and Senior Building Official. The Director has indicated that it has not functionally operated in the manner as indicated by the chart. (Appendix D)

-Administrative Services

Organization chart reflects the Finance Officer as a direct report to the Deputy Town Manager and that the Finance Officer oversees the Deputy Finance Officer who supervises six positions: Tax Collection, Accounting Technician, Payroll/Benefits Specialist, Customer Service Representative/Cashier, Water Billing and Customer Service Coordinator, and a PT Office Assistant. (Appendix E)

-Public Works

The current organization chart shows the Director as having three direct reports: Office Manager, Fleet Maintenance Superintendent, and the Facilities/Sanitation Superintendent. In addition, the Water Superintendent is also a direct report but is not reflected in the organization chart. Additionally, another organization chart shows the reporting structure to the Deputy Town Manager and includes the unfunded Deputy Public Works Director, as well as the Sanitation Superintendent and Sanitation Supervisor positions that are unfunded with the Superintendent combined with Facilities Maintenance. (Appendix F)

-Other Positions

Information Technology-includes the Coordinator and contractual services under the direction of the Deputy Town Manager.

Administrative Assistant/Public Information Officer-under the direction of the Town Manager.

Town Engineer-under the direction of the Deputy Town Manager.

Human Resources Director-Under the direction of the Town Manager. With the recent changes in the HR position the Town Manager has previously recommended that this position be amended to a Human Resources Manager under the general direction of the Finance/Administrative Services Director.

The Interim Town Manager has re-initiated weekly staff meetings with department directors, a weekly check-in meeting with Town Manager staff-Deputy Town Manager, Town Clerk, Administrative Assistant/PIO, and Deputy Town Clerk, as well as monthly one on one meetings with department directors for the purpose of improving communication and addressing significant issues and coordination of town services. One of the themes that has emerged both from the Commission

perspective and departmental level is the need for improved communication and the building of trust up and down the organization. Of concern is the perspective from Public Works that staffing issues are not given enough priority from management or the Board. With the upcoming retirement of the Public Works Director, timing is key for addressing several issues that impact the department.

The town has conducted strategic planning sessions in the past that included the Town Manager and Deputy Town Manager. However, department directors were not generally included in all aspects of the sessions. Department directors and the board have both noted that communication between the board and staff could be improved. Staff has questions about the board's priorities and the board would like more information from departments that demonstrate an effective approach to providing public services.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Departmental organization structures need to be evaluated for optimal reporting, accountability, and efficiency.
2. The group of "Other Positions" should be evaluated in terms of reporting requirements to the Town Manager and Deputy Town Manager.
3. All departments except Public Works have Deputy Director positions that are responsible for managing a significant number of staff.
4. The current Personnel Policy indicates that changes to job descriptions and the Position Classification Plan require Board approval. As a result, minor changes to job descriptions and the pay plan tend to be delayed due to the extra steps involved in making changes.
5. Communication can be enhanced between staff and the commission through strategic visioning and regular written and oral communication from the management team, and ongoing agenda review meetings between the Town Manager and Commission.
6. Public Works has an immediate need for additional supervisory staffing due to the previously approved combination of the Facilities and Sanitation Superintendent positions and not filling a vacated Sanitation Supervisor position.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Refine organizational oversight responsibilities between the Town Manager and Deputy Town Manager. The Deputy Town Manager to be responsible for management oversight of Public Works, Planning and Development, and Information Technology. The Town Manager will directly oversee the Deputy Town Manager, Police, Fire/Rescue, Administrative Services, and Town Clerk.
2. Capital project planning and engineering functions should be coordinated to a higher degree with Public Works. The Deputy Town Manager and Town Engineer should establish weekly meetings with the Public Works Director and Superintendents to address capital project planning and on-going maintenance of public facilities. The Town Engineer would continue to be responsible for specific project engineering as well as managing outside engineering contracts.
3. The Administrative Assistant/PIO to be placed under the supervision of the Town Clerk.
4. The Human Resources Director to be re-classified as a Human Resources Manager at one salary grade lower (from a 16 to 15), and to be incorporated into the Administrative Services Department as a direct report to the Finance/Administrative Services Director.

5. Amend the Public Works organization chart to reflect the inclusion of the Water Division.
6. Public Works should re-institute the vacated Sanitation Supervisor position.
7. Amend the Personnel Policy to allow the Town Manager to approve changes to job descriptions and pay classification plan, if the changes are cost neutral or result in a decrease. Any changes that result in an increase in compensation or to a higher grade in the pay plan would continue to require Commission approval.
8. Schedule a strategic visioning session in the Fall of 2020 that has the active participation of all department directors with the Board of Commissioners.
9. Departmental staffing, use, and responsibilities of deputy director positions and general staffing issues should be reviewed for potential changes prior to the next fiscal year budget process.
10. Approve a revised organization chart. (Appendix G)

Appendices A-G