

Clerk's Office Process Analysis
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Overview:

The general work habits and customer-service attitude of the employees of the clerk's office are excellent. Complex overlapping systems and work flow contribute to the overall work load. There is general agreement that improved work processes can streamline processes in the Clerk's Office

Over the years, several process modifications have been made by the Clerk and office personnel for the sake of improving process flow. More improvements at a faster rate are required to maximize employee utilization and eliminate non-value added activities.

Current Trends:

The current revenue, as tracked through MUNIS is approximately \$25,000 per month for 2009.

As illustrated in the attached graph, since 2003, relative average monthly volumes of births (76 per month), marriages (55 per month), and partnerships (1.5 per month) have remained consistent. Deaths have increased to 101 per month (11%). Notaries have fallen to 62 per month (25%). Assumed names have fallen to 62 per month (42%).

Concealed Weapons permits (CCW) have skyrocketed since 2008 from 17 per month to 90 per month in 2009 (429%).

Recommendations:

Marginal improvement in customer service by adding additional staff to the Clerk's office would be undetectable to the public. Other than a slight increase in traffic at the counter after a monthly gun board meeting (to issue permits,) wait time for the public is virtually non-existent. The only path to improve perceived customer service is through process redesign.

The recommended process for system redesign starts from the prioritized goals and objectives for the office. The Clerk's Office processes should be redesigned with the function to be achieved in mind. Designing from this perspective will eliminate many of the non-value added tasks that are currently the standard practice in the Clerk's office. The current processes used in the office were developed organically. These processes have grown up over time, like a neglected garden, to the point that productive work is strangled. Systems of various vintages have been layered without questioning their purpose.

Delivering excellent customer service should remain a goal. It needs to be defined objectively based upon outcome and functional objective. In today's environment of reduced service personnel, zero wait time is no longer an expectation of the public for

any service (grocery check-out, service desk, bank, etc.). A customer would be more likely to prefer a brief wait than be required to make two trips to the Clerk's Office during normal business hours in order to receive and process one application or form.

Counter traffic could be reduced further by implementing self-service options. These could include printed sheets of frequently asked questions (FAQ's) with every form or application. Utilizing the existing Bay County website could also eliminate counter traffic by enabling the public to download forms and applications. Clerk's office personnel could reduce call-in interruptions by installing a phone message that delivers an option for the public to receive consistent instructions on how to complete forms or receive answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ's).

Throughout the Clerk's Office, there are many situations of "belts AND suspenders." Many records and non-essential documentation are kept in redundant forms by ledger, by paper and electronically, with back-up. This extra paper is boxed and stored.

Self-inflected bottlenecks could be prevented by processing transactions in a single piece flow.

As the Concealed Weapons (CCW) permit process is currently complex and at its current rate could exceed 1,500 issued in 2010, it became the primary focus of process redesign.

The attached Lead Time Reduction diagram for the CCW process starts from a function-based objective and splits out value-added and non-value added steps in the current process. Each non-value added step is an opportunity to streamline the process. Detailed recommendations and options for each step are listed.

In summary, opportunities for improvement of the CCW process include:

- Eliminate redundant and non-value added tasks.
- Use technology and IT software to eliminate menial tasks. Assure training and discipline to follow proper standard methods.
- Use the phone system to transmit specific information
- Use the county web page to distribute paper forms in pdf format.
- Use the county website to distribute information and define credentials needed to complete common transactions

Other opportunities exist to categorize the types of court records to give in-office storage priority to records that are likely to be accessed. This can reduce manpower required for the physical shifting of paper records between storage sites.

Future opportunities also include the use of credit cards to complete transactions on line.

In summary, steam-lining the processes in the Clerk's Office to reduce non-value added and redundant activities and implementing some of the recommendations above can be expected to result in less expenditure of effort and resources.

