

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE: August 9, 2022

TO: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairperson, County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Stuart Carron, Director, Facilities Management Divisions, DAS

SUBJECT: From the Director of the Facility Management Division, Department of Administrative Services, an Informational Report on the Current Staffing Situation in Architecture and Engineering Services, and the Impact on the County Capital Program

FILE TYPE: Informational Report

REQUEST

This Informational Report provides an update on the current staffing within the Architecture, Engineering and Environmental Services area of DAS-FMD, it's impact on the County capital program, and strategies to address the situation.

POLICY

Chapter 56 of Milwaukee County Code of Ordinances states

Policy. Uniformity of bid documents, contracts and procedures for construction of public works projects and centralization in one (1) office of related activities is essential to efficient management of public construction programs.

Chapter 44 of Milwaukee County Code of Ordinances designates the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) as the authority for administering such (non-transportation) public works contracts. The Architecture, Engineering and Environmental Services (AE&ES) section of the Facility Management Division (FMD) of DAS is the long-standing responsible organization within Milwaukee County for public works projects within the County capital program. AE&ES has well-established procedures for administering projects within compliance of all Federal, State, and County contracting and procurement codes.

OVERVIEW

The AE&ES section of DAS-FMD is currently experiencing a staffing shortage due to retirements of key personnel over the past several years, combined with a difficult hiring market. Retirements have and will sap the organization of long-standing incumbents:

In the last 3 years:

- Director of AE&ES 31 years
- Principal Civil Engineer 30 years
- Principal Environmental Engineer 21 years
- Senior Architect 6 years
- Principal Airport Engineer 31 years
- Senior Civil Engineer 33 years
- Senior Electrical Engineer 11 years
- Specifications Writer 20 years
- Administrative Support 31 years
- Records Manager 21 years

Within the next 1-4 years, we anticipate the possible retirement of up to 12 additional valued team members. When we experience 21 retirements out of an organization of 41 positions within 7 years, loss of both capacity and institutional knowledge become key issues.

Within the County capital program, the AE&ES section of DAS-FMD is responsible for managing over 200 active capital projects with value exceeding \$200M. At the same time, we have a generational influx of additional capital funds to be managed: the County has allotted \$116M of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for capital projects, and we anticipate dozens of projects will be assigned to AE&ES to administer.

The Facilities Management Division has been working to address this situation since last year. We have taken the following approach to manage our current and anticipated work load:

1. Working with the County Executive's office and leaders of County departments, we developed a 12-step project prioritization scheme, and assigned priority ratings to all active capital projects. We then allocated our resources against all high priority projects and placed some lower priority projects on 'hold'. (At this time we have only 22 projects on hold.) We are communicating monthly with our customer departments on project status updates and will release projects from hold status as resources become available.
2. For ARPA-funded capital projects, we have contracted with an external consultant to set up and operate a Program Management Office, work with customer departments to assist in project execution, and provide additional project

management resources to assign to projects as needed. We are also adding ARPA-funded internal resources (new positions) to assist with the workload and provide a talent pipeline to fill future vacancies.

3. For the first time in over 20 years, we are working through a major reorganization of AE&ES with all our team members to increase our efficiency, productivity, and customer focus. Our specific goals include:
 - a. Improve performance of all aspects of project delivery
 - b. Create paths for career succession
 - c. Deliver superior Customer Service
 - d. Provide workload balance

This reorganization will result in new roles and responsibilities within the organization and will create new career opportunities at the same time. This effort began last December, and our first position actions will appear in the September Board cycle.

In DAS-FMD, we take our role in executing the County capital program very seriously – it is the mission of AE&ES. The current staffing and capital program situation is unprecedented and urgent, and we are actively working to address it. We need to grow our talent base for current extraordinary workload plus future expected openings. Our strategy is in place and we are addressing not just the current situation, but the future of the organization and the overall success of the County's capital program.

FISCAL EFFECT

None, report is informational only.

TERMS

None, report is informational only.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Project prioritization considered alignment with County Vision and strategy. All active projects continue to maintain the County targeted business enterprise (TBE) program goals.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITEES

Stuart Carron, Director, Facilities Management

Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services

PREPARED BY

Stuart Carron, Director, Facilities Management

APPROVED BY

Aaron Hertzberg

Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services

ATTACHMENTS

None

cc: David Crowley, County Executive
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Mgr, Office of the County Clerk
Scott Manske, Comptroller
Pam Bryant, Comptroller Office
Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services
Joe Lamers, Fiscal & Budget Director, DAS
Vince Masterson, Fiscal & Strategic Asset Coordinator, DAS