JUNE 2, 2022

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

FY23 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Contents

Background

As part of the City Council's FY23 Budget Hearing, the Office of the Comptroller compiled this supplementary report on agency operations, performance measures, and successes. The performance measures in this report were included to demonstrate the Office's commitment to performance tracking, but they have not been reviewed by BBMR or OPI. In 2023, the Office of the Comptroller will work with BBMR and all of the relevant departments to include the performance measures described below in the FY24 Budget book.

Executive Direction and Control

Mission
Executive Direction and Control (Central Office) provides oversight of the Department of Audits, the Department of Real Estate, the Department of Telecommunications, and the Municipal Post Office. This office is responsible for carrying out the administrative functions and operations for the Board of Estimates (BOE) including weekly preparation of the BOE agenda, contractor bid openings, and the relevant record keeping. The Central Office also contains policy, communications, HR, fiscal services and IT staff.

Accomplishments
- **No more paper.** In March 2021, the Board of Estimates established a requirement for all Board of Estimates submissions to be submitted electronically. Previously, agencies would have to submit paper copies of their requests, back up documents, and approvals. In conjunction, the BOE approved a change to the Administrative Manual that removed the mandate of multiple printed copies of the entire agenda.
- **Audit callbacks.** In October 2021, the BOE confirmed a new policy requiring City agencies to update the Board of Estimates on their Biennial Audit Findings. All Biennial Audit reports are presented to the BOE, but before 2021, there was no process for follow up. Audit reports include detailed recommendations to management and provide agencies time to respond with plans for improvement. It is now standard practice to give agencies an opportunity to report out to the Board on progress addressing challenges and implementing changes.
- **Rules & Regulations.** As part of the continued efforts to make the Board of Estimates more transparent and accessible, Comptroller Henry proposed major changes to Board operations. Formal regulations were approved by the Board of Estimates at the end of 2021. These are the first procedural rules and regulations ever adopted by the Board and outline the Board's meeting schedule, procedures for the item deferral process, and requirements for special meetings. The rules and regulations also adopted a new process for protests allowing members of the public to submit statements of opposition to Board items instead of following the highly regulated procedures for protests regarding contract awards or bidding.
- **Public Information.** In FY22, the Central Office fulfilled 100% of public inquiries and Maryland Public Information Act requests within 30 days. These included City agencies looking for previously approved contracts, reporters looking for more information on Board transactions, and questions from the public on City spending. Recently this office launched a public database of all Board of Estimates transactions to support a even more open and accessible reviewing system.

Looking forward
Moving from a process to a portal. To take government transparency to the next level, our office is bringing on a consultant to develop a web-based submission portal to manage Board of Estimates submissions, reviewing agency signatures and endorsements, automate production of the Board agenda, manage post approval signatures and create a permanent digital archive of all approve Board transactions. Our goal is to provide our City partners and the public greater access and information for a more informed and efficient reviewing process.

Digitization. As part of the automation process, the Comptroller's Central Office will work with an external vendor to digitize the BOE's paper-based archives from 2010-2021. Once scanned, these files will become a searchable part of our centrally accessible approved transaction database open to agency partners and the public.

Analysis. The Board of Estimates transitioned from collecting paper documents to collecting computerized data on City transactions in 2021. This information supports thorough transaction and policy review. In FY23, we will be sharing more analysis of contracts, extra work orders, and City spending.

Looking Closer: Board of Estimates

Press Release from May 26, 2022

Release: Comptroller Henry Unveils New Board of Estimates Database

Baltimore, MD - Comptroller Bill Henry has announced the debut of a fully searchable database of Baltimore City Board of Estimates (BOE) transactions. This new database will provide both transparency and easy access to searchable information for the BOE, Comptroller's Office, internal agency customers and the public.

The BOE docket database can be found at https://comptroller.baltimorecity.gov/boe/summaries.

"The Comptroller's Office manages the day-to-day operations of the Board of Estimates, so we know just how difficult it is to follow the breadth of city spending," **Comptroller Henry** said. "This database will enhance the oversight capabilities of both the public and members of the Board in making data-driven informed decisions."

Upon launch, the new database will feature all Board of Estimates transactions dating back to January 2021. It contains dozens of searchable categories including meeting dates, agencies, contracts, settlement agreements and real estate acquisitions. This data can also be used for:
- Reviewing grants distributed to non-profits.
- Tracking construction project spending from initial award through completion.
- Establishing trends in vendor usage.

A complete docket history including voting details will be added to the database within 10 days following BOE meetings.

Following today's launch, the docket database will be continuously refined to clarify inconsistencies in terminology and classification. Members of the public are encouraged to reach out to the Comptroller's Office with questions about specific details.

The new BOE database is another step in fulfilling the Comptroller's pledge to make city spending transparent and accessible to the public.

"I've wanted this since day one in office," **Comptroller Henry** said. "The database will help constituents follow the spending of public money and understand how to better direct inquiries and concerns." More technological upgrades are in the works. The Comptroller's Office will be asking for BOE approval on two software solutions that will 1) scan all record documents dating to 2010 and 2) create a portal to manage the BOE submissions process.

"This is all long overdue," **Comptroller Henry** said. "We should be scrutinizing data, not handcrafting 200-page agendas."

User Guide
To find the database, go to the Comptroller's website > Board of Estimates > BOE Database or go directly to https://comptroller.baltimorecity.gov/boe/summaries.

The tool can be used on your mobile device or desktop. For the best experience, use this on a desktop and click on the "View Larger Version" in the lower right-hand corner of the table.

There are five different tables that connect to the main BOE table:

1. Board of Estimates: Main table with individual BOE transactions.
   1. This table has multiple views on the left side including: All BOE items (grid), BOE Agendas by Meeting Date (grid), BOE Meetings by Date (Kanban), Extra Work Orders by Agency and Contract # (grid), BOE Items by Agency (Kanban), DPW BOE Items (grid), Procurement BOE Items (grid), DOT BOE Items (grid), DHCD BOE Items (grid) and Categorical Breakdown (grid).
2. Vendors: Table with each entity in the "Supplier/Contractor/Bidder/Developer/Org Partner" column, with its relevant transactions(s), and the approximate total expenditures recorded.
3. Contract numbers: Unique identifiers for each contract, with its relevant transactions(s), relevant vendors, and the approximate total expenditures recorded for that contract.
4. Project numbers: Unique identifier for each project, with its relevant transactions(s), relevant vendors, relevant task numbers for that project, and the approximate total project expenditures.
5. Data dictionary: agency acronyms defined, submission categories defined, transaction details (columns on the Board of Estimates table).

Related:
The Comptroller's Office just made it a lot easier to track government spending | Technical.ly

Department of Audits

Mission

To provide objective and independent value-added services and oversight with the continuous goal of improving audit quality, techniques and processes to assist the City Government to be more efficient, effective, transparent and accountable.

Type	Measure	Actual FY21	FY22 through April	Target
Effectiveness	Average # of days for pre-audits review time[1]	n/a[2]	n/a	10 days
Outcome	% of recommendations agreed to by management	100%	100%	100%
Output	# of audits issued each year on time[3]	n/a	n/a	100%

Accomplishments

Financial Audit Policy. With advice from the City Solicitor and the Biennial Audits Oversight Committee, the Department of Audits (DOA) stopped performing the biennial financial audit for each agency. This gives the auditors more time to focus on thorough performance audits or special projects. Financial audits were duplicative of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and Single Audit.

Collaboration. DOA has coordinated with subject matter experts (SMEs) such as Office of Inspector General when certain allegations are received and there are high risks for these allegations. This is ongoing and standard practice.

At-risk focus. All calendar year (CY) 2021 performance audits were performed by using a risk-based approach. Audits looked at programs, processes, or services that posed risks to City finances, operations, or service outcomes.

Key Performance Indicators

- 3 management requests (evaluation of risks and controls for their programs) completed.
- 3 ongoing audits and agreed-upon procedures
- Established performance audit procedures in accordance with the *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the Unite States
- Continued improving the Pre-audits process

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[1] This measure does not apply to review of capital contracts.
[2] This number was not previously tracked but will be for FY23.
[3] This is part of the Biennial Audits Oversight Commission, but will be added in next year's budget book.

Looking Forward

Hiring. We look forward to bringing more auditors on to assist with risk-based audits, special projects and audit management. Our goal is to fill 4 vacant positions to bring our team to full capacity.

Training. To diversify our staff expertise, DOA will provide training opportunities for staff to develop skillsets in process analysis and assessments, data analysis, and IT functions.

Closer look: Department of Audits

Press Release from February 9, 2022

Release: Audit Finds DPW Has Persistent Billing and Collections Issues

Baltimore, MD - City Auditor Josh Pasch presented the Biennial Performance Audit for the Department of Public Works (DPW) at the February 9th Board of Estimates meeting.

The Department of Audits assessed whether DPW has adequately addressed water billing risks, as well as followed up on recommendations that were included as part of the previous performance audit reports. The audit covered fiscal years 2019 and 2020. This is the initial phase of a comprehensive water billing review. Auditing water billing practices is a formidable task and requires more time than the biennial audit process allowed.

Auditors interviewed key individuals in DPW and the Baltimore City Information Technology department, reviewed policies and procedures concerning the water billing process and evaluated DPW's risk assessment capabilities.

Among the audit findings concerning water billing it was noted that:

- The City does not take proactive measures to increase water revenue collections.
- There are no processes in place to collect delinquent accounts.
- DPW could not show how much they billed customers during this fiscal period.
- They were able to demonstrate DPW collected $177 million (2019) and $212 million (2020) in billings.

The City Auditor recommended DPW collect its data more accurately and share those statistics with City leadership to consider ways to maximize revenue collection.

The Department of Audits also reviewed DPW's information technology, water meter shop and customer service support division and offered performance recommendations for each sector. A full audit report is available online.

Comptroller Bill Henry explained, "We need accurate information from DPW in order to eliminate mistakes in the billing process, collect revenue on time and target egregiously delinquent accounts. While we're trying not to charge more than our lower-income residents can afford, it's important that we actually collect what we're due from those who can."

Henry continued, "We cannot properly run our City if there isn't a clear understanding of WHO oversees collecting revenue and HOW it is done. It's especially important to have this information moving forward as we implement the Water Accountability and Equity Act."

This is the fourth of seven performance audits that are part of the 2021 Biennial Audit plan approved by the Biennial Audits Commission. A full audit schedule is listed at https://comptroller.baltimorecity.gov/audits.

Background
The Department of Audits (DOA) is the city's independent auditor, providing various audit attestation engagements and assurance services with the overall goal of improving government accountability.

The DOA, pursuant to Article V § 11, performs biennial audits of agencies. In 2021, this includes the Department of Finance, the Department of Public Works, the Baltimore City Fire Department, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of General Services, the Baltimore Development Corporation, Baltimore City Information Technology, and the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services.

Related:

Audit finds city does not have system in place for collecting overdue water bills | WYPR

Audit - Baltimore doesn't know how much water customers were charged and wasn't collecting overdue bills | Baltimore Sun

Department of Real Estate

Mission

The mission of the Department of Real Estate (DORE) is to improve the quality of life in Baltimore City by providing an outstanding level of service, excellence, expertise and transparency in real estate transactions such as acquisition, disposition, leasing and licensing.

DORE accomplishes this by:

- creating a supportive, results-driven work environment;
- fostering a culture of interagency collaboration and professionalism;
- investing in technology to automate workflows for greater efficiency and productivity;
- proactively promoting our services to customers, partners and other stakeholders.

Type	Measure	Actual FY21	FY22 through April	Target
Output	# of Tax Sale Certificates sold	112	118	130
Efficiency	Lease and Lease Related Actions	78	63	N/A

Accomplishments

Real Estate Review. DORE led a review of all City real estate processes with Department of Planning, Department of General Services, Department of Housing & Community Development, Department of Transportation and the Mayor's office. The review mapped the processes and workflows of the six main real estate functions: database management, property acquisition, disposition, leasing/licensing, property management and appraisal/valuation. The goal was to eliminate redundant or duplicate processes and align DORE's outcomes in service of a shared community development vision for the City. Many of the recommendations are underway with a report is set to be released to the public in 2022.

Software Automation. To increase efficiencies and property sales, DORE, in coordination with DHCD, purchased a software tool known as Slate. The tool will modernize the agency's home-built system and improve property-related workflow capabilities within City government. Workflow migration for property disposition will be complete in 2022.

Key Performance Indicators

- Sales of Tax Sale Certificates resulted in $836,256.25 revenue in FY22.
- Small Cell Applications have generated 143,225 in revenue in FY22 from 155 applications.

Looking Forward

Increase Awareness. In FY23, DORE will increase awareness of the Vendor's Lien Program for Tax Sale Certificates. The purpose of the Vendor's Lien Program is to eliminate blight and return the property to the tax roll. This is accomplished through a negotiated reduction in municipal liens on certain properties with tax sale certificates. Tax sale certificate sales generate revenue for the general fund and support neighborhood development.

Leasing. Along with property sales, DORE will move all leasing functions from a paper-based process to an automated workflow in Slate.

Closer look: Department of Real Estate

Press Release from January 24, 2022

Department of Real Estate Seeking Proposals for City Property

Baltimore, MD - Comptroller Bill Henry and Real Estate Officer Andy Frank today announced a new request for proposals (RFP) for a historic property at 2001 Park Avenue.

The 15,194-square foot stone mansion sits on 1.835 acres in Baltimore's Reservoir Hill neighborhood. Over the decades the property has been known as the Birckhead Estate, the Bond House, Mount Royal, Norse Hill Home and the Norwegian Seaman's Merchants Home. The oldest structure in Reservoir Hill, the building is located in the Mount Royal Terrace Historic District and is designated a Baltimore City Landmark.

The RFP is directed by the Office of the Comptroller through the Department of Real Estate (DoRE), on behalf of the Mayor and City Council. The Reservoir Hill community also played an active part through the RFP process and will participate in the developer selection process.

"We've worked with the Reservoir Hill community to ensure their ideas and concerns have been heard," Frank said. "The neighborhood must be the first to benefit from any potential redevelopment."

Built in 1792 by Dr. Solomon Birckhead, the mansion served as a private residence until 1922 when ownership transferred to the Baltimore Monthly Meeting of Friends who used it as a home for aged members. In 1957 the Norwegian government purchased and renamed the property to the Norse Hill Home, also known as the Norwegian Seamen's Merchants Home, to house sailors. The City eventually took ownership and refitted the property for various uses including a Pratt library reading room, mayor's station and multi-purpose neighborhood center.

Because of the mansion's prominence and historic significance, development will need to meet Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) and the Urban Design Architectural Review Committee (UDARP) guidelines, the Mount Royal Terrace Historic District review, and requirements related to properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"The Birckhead Estate should be a heart of activity for Reservoir Hill residents," District 7 Councilman James Torrence said. "My office will continue to work with the community and other city leaders to make sure this project lives up to its potential."

The mansion will be offered in as-is condition. A pre-bid proposal conference open house will be held for potential buyers to ask questions of members of the community, representatives and city staff. More can be found on the Department of Real Estate's website: https://comptroller.baltimorecity.gov/opportunities

"We are thrilled that this beautiful building will get another chance," Comptroller Henry said. "With the right vision and oversight, this property can become a major resource for the Reservoir Hill neighborhood and for all city residents."

Proposals are due by April 8th. Full details are available on our website.

About the Department of Real Estate

The Department of Real Estate (DoRE), under the Office of the Comptroller, is mandated by City Charter with responsibility for the acquisition and disposition of real estate in Baltimore City. DoRE manages real estate assets and is responsible for the disposition of real property owned by the City; leasing City-owned property to agencies and other parties; acquisition of real estate for the City; and reviewing real estate-related transactions and development proposals for City-owned real property.

The Department maintains the repository of unsold tax certificates after the annual tax sale, as well as a public inventory of all City-owned property and associated leases.

Related:

This vacant 18th century mansion in Baltimore has had 'nine lives.' Its next act is anyone's guess | Baltimore Sun

Five Minute Histories: The Norwegian Seaman's Home | Baltimore Heritage

Department of Telecommunications

Mission

The mission of the Department of Telecommunications is to support Baltimore City with modern, efficient, and innovative telephone service and products.

Type	Measure	Actual FY21	FY22 through April	Target
Effectiveness	% of Tigerpaw tickets resolved in 10 business	70%	75%	905
Efficiency	# of customer service interviews	N/A	9	31
Efficiency	$ saved from business service review	$267,000.00	$767,719.49	$850,000

Accomplishments

Automation. The Department of Telecommunications implemented a new online ticketing system to replace a manual request system. This allows Agency telephone coordinators to track tickets in real time and simplifies service work for Telecommunications.

Collaboration. Telecom manages the Baltimore Telephone Users Group (BTUG) for the City of Baltimore. The workgroup expanded this year to broaden the reach and knowledge of telephone users to include fiscal officers and other financial positions.

Initiate Device Audit. The Department of Telecommunications audited approximately 5,000 wireless accounts for voice, message, and data activity for the first quarter of FY22. If a device is inactive and abandoned, the service is discontinued resulting in cost savings for each agency. This is the beginning of a new annual audit policy.

Key Performance Indicators

- Audited and disconnected 622 unused phone lines which resulted in $267,000 in annual savings.
- De-installed legacy equipment in over 100 locations.
- Reduced enterprise Voice Over IP (VoIP) rates by 12% or $600,000.

Looking Forward

Next Generation 911. In collaboration with Emergency Management and BCIT, Telecom will replace the legacy 911 system. This modernization will result in 402 service lines – costing $50,250/month - to be disconnected.

Cost savings. The Department of Telecommunication will pay off the City's VoIP equipment debt in FY22. Once completed, it will net $430,000 in savings.

Customer service review. Telecom will implement a customer service review across agencies in 2022. The goal is to enhance the Telecom customer experience, review incident reports, review billing questions, and assess training measures.

Closer Look: Department of Telecommunications

Press Release from November 18, 2021

The Department of Telecommunications is leading an internal review to eliminate unused legacy telephone lines

Baltimore, MD - The Department of Telecommunications is performing an internal review, identifying unused City telephone lines and circuits for potential removal and upgrades. Telecoms' goal is to replace these 'ghost' lines with new technology while also saving millions in external payments.

In addition, the team is finalizing the conversion of the City's phone system from Centrex to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).

Already in fiscal year 2021 Telecom has identified and disconnected over 622 unused ghost landlines, circuits, fax and elevators lines. As a result of the telephone systems review and ongoing upgrades of legacy systems to VoIP, Telecom has saved the City $2.4 million by reducing monthly payments to third-party vendors in telephone costs from over $300,000 a month to less than $85,000.

Through fiscal year 2022 Telecom hopes to shave another $50,000 off the city's monthly telecommunication costs through the review and upgrade process.

"For over 30 years, Verizon managed the phone lines in the City but was not able to provide us with an accurate data on where lines were actually installed," Director of Telecommunications Simon Etta said. "With the conversion to VoIP in the City, we now have the flexibility to terminate these lines, update our internal records and stop paying for those we do not need."

The review team – composed entirely of Department of Telecommunications employees - consults with agencies and with third-party resources to identify unused phone lines and other outdated tools. Site visits are often necessary in order to locate and tag physical hardware, after which Telecom offers recommendations and upgrade options. Agencies then work with Telecom to implement those recommendations.

"This is a physical process," Etta said. "We're making onsite visits to every single City office - often empty - trying to find these ghost lines. It's what is necessary to make our systems safe and up to date."

Among its current partners, Telecoms is working with the Baltimore Police Department and has identified 100s of unused legacy lines and circuits at various locations. When complete the unused lines will be disconnected with additional savings passed on to the BPD.

Reducing ghost lines is part of the department's three-pronged review strategy. As a security measure, concurrently Telecom is also identifying and replacing outdated mobile phones, and working to eliminate extraneous phone numbers.

"The Department of Telecommunications is providing a great example of how inhouse expertise can be more efficient and effective than outsourcing," Comptroller Bill Henry said. "Our team is working hard to make sure that our agencies can access up-to-date technology."

Background

Overseen by of the Comptroller's Office, the Department of Telecommunications provides telephone services to all city agencies. Services include managing Voice over Internet Protocol, or VoIP phone service, supplying mobile phones, providing technical support for various city call centers, and providing for the billing of these services with external vendors. Telecom installs and maintains all telecommunications equipment in the various Baltimore City call centers such as 311, Department of Public Works (DPW) and Revenue Collection.

Related:

Baltimore City's telecommunications department is replacing 'ghost' phone lines as it makes tech upgrades | Technical.ly Baltimore

How I Got Here: Simon Etta's path from the private sector to Baltimore telecommunications director | Technical.ly Baltimore

Municipal Post Office

Mission

The mission of the Municipal Post Office (MPO) is to handle all mail for the City of Baltimore as a full-service mail house. MPO processes incoming and outgoing US mail, including parcels, packages, and interdepartmental mail for Baltimore City agencies and related locations that house City services.

Type	Measure	Actual FY21	FY22 through April	Target
Efficiency	$ saved from Certified Mailing Solutions*	$448,972.80	$386,457.60	$136,076
Effectiveness	% Of mailroom equipment efficiency	75%	80%	100%

*Two of the largest certified agencies, DOT Towing and DCHD Code Enforcement both have unique billing systems which prevents them from moving forward currently.

Accomplishments

New Technology. The Municipal Post Office invested in a new mailing machine to handle the City's high mail volume. The new machine can automatically seal, weigh, measure, meter and stack large mail runs in minutes – saving valuable staff time.

Modernization. The MPO is implementing a new project: Certified Mailing Solutions. It lowers mailing costs for agencies and automates tracking.

Key Performance Indicators

- On average, MPO handles over 356,000 pieces of metered mail each month.
- On average, MPO inserts 350,000 pieces of vital City information into envelopes each month i.e. notice on the new JFX speed cameras will be sent in the same envelope of every water bill.
- 89 agency customers in FY21.

Looking Forward

MPO Informed Delivery. MPO will be creating an implementation plan for users to digitally preview mail and packages before they arrive.

Collaboration. Charmaine Callahan, Director of the Municipal Post Office, serves on the Executive Board of the Greater Baltimore Postal Customer Council, a postal-sponsored organization that promotes business partnership between the mailers of Baltimore and the Baltimore U.S. Postal Service.

New Machinery. The MPO is in the process of installing all new mailing equipment, which is expected to increase equipment efficiency.