

FY-2024 – 2nd Quarter Report

Public Works Division/Shannon Stone

Public Works currently includes the following areas/departments:

Public Works Operations – Administration, Automotive/Fleet Management, Facilities, Wells/Septic & Plumbing, Utilities, Custodial, Groundskeeping/Parks, Indian Preference

Community Development Area – Engineering, Zoning, GIS/Planning, Tribal Transportation

Introduction Note:

In March 2024, the Division of Public Works management team went through a TOPS facilitated Strategic Planning process. During the process we established five strategic directions we wanted to move in for the future. These are outlined at the end of this report. Each strategic direction has been assigned to a team to further develop and plan. The teams will start acting on the new directions beginning in the fourth fiscal quarter of the year (July – September). We will continue reporting on the current goals until the first fiscal quarter FY25. The new strategic directions can be seen at the end of this report.

Outcome/Goal # 1

Develop operational workforce plans within each department and area of Public Works. The plans will address critical issues including staffing requirements, employee retention and development, and succession planning.

Retention of existing employees and recruitment of new employees has been a challenge for DPW leadership, especially the positions of custodians and groundskeepers. Several managers and essential positions are becoming critical as they approach retirement in most of the Public Works departments. Additional tools will become available with the development of Global Human Resources (GHR) over the next 1 to 5 years.

MEASUREMENT:

1. Skill and knowledge requirements identified for each position.
2. Position Descriptions are current, identifying competencies and scope of the position.
3. Career paths are identified and communicated to the employees.
4. Training is identified for position development and advancement in three areas:
 - i. Mandatory Training required by position, policy, or law.
 - ii. Continuing Education for employees to stay current in their area of expertise.
 - iii. Developmental Training including education and developmental tasks.

5. Training programs are provided that include identifying the competencies required for each position and a mechanism to evaluate progress of employees learning them.
6. Succession planning is in place identifying pools of interested employees in the event a strategic or essential position is vacated. Succession Planning will provide opportunities to potential candidates to gain knowledge and skills transfer from experienced employees to prepare them advancement into these positions.
7. Supervisors are engaged with employees through recognition and retention planning.
8. Staffing Plans are developed to identify staff levels and staff level requirements.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS RELATED TO THE OUTCOME/GOAL:

In the second quarter, Public Works has started meeting with Human Resources to have open discussions about the overall strategy for Public Works workforce. Areas of key concern include, Groundskeeping, Facilities, and Utilities departments.

Utilities department anticipate near complete turnover in the next couple years due to retirements. We have replaced our previous lab coordinator, added two wastewater operators to train and get certified, and filled a septic truck driver position this fiscal year. We plan to hire a water quality technician this year as well. The next challenge is to work at is creating a position for the current Utilities Department Manager to train a new Department manager for up to two years if needed.

Groundskeeping department seems to lose staff as quickly as we hire new staff. There has been a mix reasons we are losing staff in this area. Retirements, loss of qualifications, and market competitiveness have all been at play here. Our strategy is to reassess all the positions in the department. Then redefine and redesign the positions and career paths within the department. The Groundskeeping Manager, Suzanna Jordan, recently moved from interim to regular status. This solidified her position and opened an assistant manager position. We also lost a supervisor this quarter due to personal reasons. Each of these positions have been getting their position descriptions updated to support these efforts.

Facilities is also undergoing significant reorganization by moving the Custodial Department into the Facilities area. Facilities Director Craig Clausen, also transitioned from interim to regular status in his role. This opens the Custodial Manager position to be filled soon. This job is changing to add the management of the organizations waste and coordinating special efforts such as providing dumpsters for the community after flooding, or during clean out in the Nation's governmental facilities. The Custodial department has also struggled to fill all positions. They are short only two positions and anticipate filling them in April.

In the many areas of Public Works, we are expecting to incorporate a model of apprenticeship to increase the attractiveness, and retention of people these positions. This has been another effort Public Works has been advocating for and are supportive of Human Resources in this effort to the benefit of our young people.

EXPECTATIONS/FUTURE PLANS REGARDING THE OUTCOME/GOAL:

- Continue working with HR to learn and utilize software applications to develop employees.
 - Complete permanent reassignments for management staff that are interim once they meet the minimum requirements of the position (completed).
 - Rewrite position descriptions. In each area there are positions that are changing due to technology and the labor market. We also have under skilled staff that were retained from passed reorganizations but were not retrained to be optimized for their current positions. As a result, their position descriptions were also scaled back but do not meet the needs of the organization. These need to be corrected (Ongoing).
 - Plans and initiatives have been delayed due to shortage of staff and not having available time to dedicate for training, delays in implementing new systems to plan and track training, and the need to repost jobs that do not have applicants (Ongoing).
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Outcome/Goal # 2

Create efficiencies, optimize the use of limited resources, enhance capabilities, and improve Customer Service by evaluating current processes. The focus is on utilizing technology, increasing collaboration, and creating new streamlined process flows to achieve this goal.

MEASUREMENT:

1. Evaluate DPW processes to streamline them for efficiencies.
 - a. Develop and communicate an online Land use review process that can be used by all reviewers and create the various reports needed by Land Management, Development, Housing and the Land Commission. (in progress)
 - b. Evaluate technology and software to reduce technology deficit. (in progress)
 - c. Integrate DPW systems into the main Enterprise Resource Processes (ERP). (To be evaluated)
2. Expand the access and use of GIS data.
 - a. Identify the long-term staffing needs of this area based on what data needs to be updated and maintained.
 - b. Utilize GIS to create the layers of information that will be useful to the varied users of the system. (ongoing)
3. Identify and incorporate other technologies.
 - a. Incorporation of data intelligence from services such as Pacer.ai to assist with strategic planning of infrastructure and business.
 - b. Modernize water utility technologies.
4. GPS systems installed in Oneida Nation vehicles.
 - a. Automotive department is installing GPS on vehicles that support the technology to help maintain accurate vehicle inventories, provide data for maintaining vehicles, and creating efficient routes to reduce gas consumption and carbon emissions. (ongoing)
5. Enhance communication.
 - a. Find opportunities to reach out to the Oneida community.

- b. Develop informative packets for services to the community.
- c. Provide opportunities for the community to give feedback to DPW.
- d. Work to build internal cooperation and transparency to the organization.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS RELATED TO THE OUTCOME/GOAL:

Public Works has recently completed developing strategic directions. The second strategic direction is updating and expanding technology. A team of managers have been assigned to pick up this task at the start of fiscal quarter number four. Prior to then, the team will be working on an action plan.

The Administration Department has also been working to update SOPs to bring them current and help streamline processes. One area in particular has been the Automotive department. The process to purchase vehicles is long and complex. Supply chain issues are still impacting the availability of cars and trucks making it difficult to fulfill requests for new vehicles. Auto dealers are trying to meet demand, but the Nation's processes take time. Occasionally, the vendor cannot hold a vehicle long enough for the Nation to get through these processes. Working with Risk Management, the Nation's CFO, Purchasing, the Law Office, and Licensing we are exploring ways to streamline the processes. CFO, Ralinda R. Ninham-Lamberies, has already made several beneficial suggestions that will make purchasing vehicles faster.

Another area of improvement Public Works has been participating in is the Land Use Review process. This process requires the participation of the Division of Public Works, the Law Office, and the Environmental, Health, Safety, Land & Agriculture Division. When the Nation receives, or purchases land within the reservation boundaries, the land needs to be evaluated and processed for use. The process is complicated and not well understood often resulting in contention and blaming. General Manager, Mark Powless, asked attorney Krystal John to facilitate the redevelopment of this process. The purpose was to create a process that is easy to understand and assigns clear responsibility for the required actions. While we are only part way through the process, Krystal's efforts have brought clarity.

Outcome/Goal # 3

Energy Management is another area we are working on. We are working to create a long-range vision and plan for the Nation's energy management.

MEASUREMENT:

1. Complete a review of past plans and accomplishments.
2. Update the most recent plan to current.
3. Open discussions on seven generation energy plan.
4. Develop plan and timeline.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS RELATED TO THE OUTCOME/GOAL:

We have had a couple meetings of the Energy Team in the second quarter. The focus of the team has been about mid to long range planning. The team has been stuck with a lot of effort focused on the

Health Center microgrid. There have been a few discussions about what direction should the Nation take with energy beyond what we are already doing. In the next quarter, I am anticipating we will have a facilitated discussion including a review of past and present accomplishments and goals to refocus our long range options.

EXPECTATIONS/FUTURE PLANS REGARDING THE OUTCOME/GOAL:

1. Develop a goal statement for energy management in 2045.
2. Work with Community Development to determine the future energy needs.
3. Work with Retail, and Gaming to determine strategies for incorporating electric vehicles.
4. Share information with the community and get their thoughts.
5. Work with Engineering, Facilities, and division leaders as we plan construction of campuses and other structures.
6. Coordinate with boards, committees, and commissions on infrastructure development.

2025-2030 Division of Public Works Strategic Plan

The DPW 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan was developed in March of 2024. Work for this plan will begin in the fourth quarter of FY2024 (July – September). The plan consists of five Strategic Directions (broad goals) that are moved forward by executing accomplishments planned out annually. Listed below you will see each strategic direction, a general summary of what it entails, and the success indicators and the first-year accomplishments pertaining to the Strategic Direction.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1: LOBBYING FOR RESTRUCTURING SYSTEMS TO EMPOWER END-USERS

Summary: The Oneida Nation’s systems, built on a lack of trust, are taxing overall productivity of the Division and organization. The Division will lobby for change to empower end-users to do their jobs quickly and efficiently.

Success Indicators: Processes will be streamlined as non-value-added processes or components are eliminated, a sense of partnership will prevail with the rest of the organization, and end-users will be trusted within the processes they are responsible for.

First-Year Accomplishments: Communicate the DPW Strategic Plan to all teams, “Clean your own kitchen” (meaning get your own work correct first), analyze current processes, document specific examples of why change is needed).

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2: UPDATING & EXPANDING TECHNOLOGY

Summary: The organization’s technology solutions are both underutilized and outdated. DPW will implement new solutions to unify the work in the Division and embrace new solutions for the whole organization (HR, Finance, etc.)

Success Indicators: Technology will be current, systems will be connected/ data shared, technology will align with functional need, and DPW will hire or a DTS resource will be assigned to DPW to assist with technology needs.

First-Year Accomplishments: Validate current software use and needs, prioritize software needs and share with DTS, schedule collaboration with DTS, update software/tech per schedule.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3: ANALYZING, ENGAGING, AND COMMUNICATING DIVISION BRAND IDENTITY

DPW, internally and externally with other business units, seeks better communication, clarification of purpose and mutual understanding of brand and identity.

Success Indicators: Establish a clear understanding (internally and externally) of DPW functions, PR person in place, and improved relationships with areas in the organization.

First-Year Accomplishments: Inventory and communicate DPW Services, faster completion of services, have a PR person standardizing area information, and decrease negative feedback and improve positive feedback.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4: ESTABLISHING A WORKFORCE PLAN AND DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES

The Division needs a better developed workforce, including leadership skills, equipment training, and apprenticeships.

Success Indicators: Status reports done and communicated, certifications obtained, and successful project completion.

First-Year Accomplishments: Catalyze a unified training plan for the division, increase each department budget and identify trainings/certifications, complete monitors change out in DPW training room to offer onsite trainings, and more people in apprenticeships.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #5: IMPROVING & ENHANCING OUR WORK CULTURE & VALUES

DPW seeks to improve and revitalize our work culture, starting with the mission and vision, addressing ethics, and ensuring clear expectations.

Success Indicators: Less or reduced complaints, clear expectations lead to improved employee engagement, everyone will know the vision, mission, and values, employees will be healthier (ergonomics), we will be able to do more with less, and there will be ownership (“not my job” to “it is my job”).

First-Year Accomplishments: Communicate the benefits of taking ownership, define ownership (vision, mission, etc.) and define or explain expectations (the “why” and importance) – value added.