

**Taking Parallel Paths to a Sustainable and Energy Efficient Community**

A Case Study for Performance Excellence

Manatee County, Florida

Population 318,361

Ed Hunzeker, Manatee County Administrator

Application Consideration for Innovation Award

Application Consideration for Rapid Fire Session

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Case Study Synopsis

Alliance For Innovation Forum

April 2014

Taking Parallel Paths to a Sustainable and Energy Efficient Community

Manatee County Property Management Energy Team (PMET) began their efforts in 2009 as it became clear financial conditions were quickly shrinking due to the economic downturn. PMET concentrated its efforts on utility expense and discovered more than $11,000,000 million dollars was incurred annually for electrical power. PMET wanted to learn how, why and where utility expense could be trimmed and how operations could become far more sustainable. The agreed upon approach was to begin with an audit of utility expense, eliminate waste, choose facilities for sustainable energy renovations and apply for any available federal grant funding.

PMET conducted a County wide inventory audit on energy consuming products such as refrigerators, printers, fax machines, lighting and air conditioning systems. The audit depicted significant energy waste and tremendous opportunities for savings. Under the desk refrigerators were removed, trash collection and recycling services were restructured, out dated lighting systems were upgraded, occupancy light sensors were installed, stand alone printers were removed, upgraded recycling programs and air conditioning software control systems were reprogrammed. These initial steps immediately reflected a positive utility expense savings of more than $500,000 dollars within one year.

Over the next four years PMET developed a new community model supporting a more sustainable and energy efficient governmental operation. Part of this process involved applying for federal energy grant funding, Silver Certification from the Florida Green Building Coalition and taking a lead role in Manatee County’s Green Team Initiative. The blended results of receiving federal grants and implementing a greener footprint PMET had the ability and drive to simultaneously manage several energy sustainable projects that would elevate County government buildings to operate more efficiently.

The first County building to undertake a more energy efficient operation was the 100 year old Historic Courthouse in 2010. The building is a secured facility serving the public, housing full time County employees and judicial staff. This project involved the removal of two 1960’s era Trane chillers, cooling towers, replacement of 30 year old fan coil units and all associated piping. Performing all of these renovations produced logistical challenges because the Courthouse had to maintain full operational status and remain open to the public the entire length of the project. This entailed moving staff, work stations, office equipment, security screening areas, construction equipment all prior to opening the building every day. Additional challenges involved the administration of grant monies awarded by adhering to the Davis-Bacon Act’s payroll and employee interviewing processing requirements. The project was very successful resulting in a modernly efficient mechanical system controlling temperature and humidity accurately. By these successful efforts the Historical Courthouse is eligible for an Energy Star facility.

It is with enormous pride and dedication PMET pursues every avenue available in an ongoing effort to reduce utility costs and other energy related expenses for the betterment of the community. Building a sustainable energy governmental organization is the overriding objective. This year Manatee County will contract for over $26,000,000 million dollars in performance based energy services. Future energy savings will also create a sustainability fund that will be used to continue to reduce our energy expenses.

These innovative energy sustainable initiatives could not have been undertaken or realized without the support, understanding, and respect of the Board of County Commissioners, administrative leadership team and fellow County employees. Through all of these collaborative efforts the first salary increase in over five years was awarded and the County is also on the verge of being awarded Gold Certification from the Florida Green Building Coalition.

In closing Manatee County’s Property Management Energy Team will take tremendous pride in presenting their experiences, challenges, and successes. And, we are very excited at the prospect to participate in the April 2014 Alliance for Innovation forum.