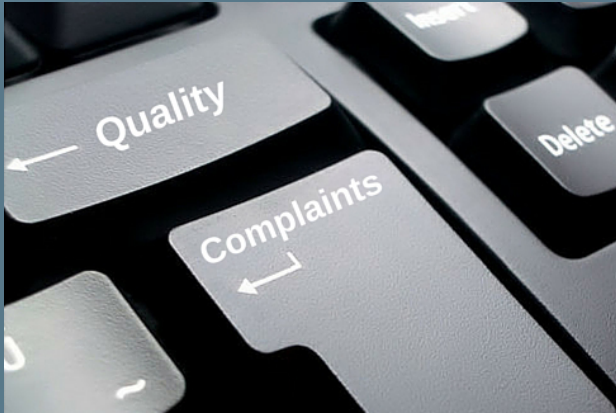


BIRDIE Team Report

VOP 311 Complaint Management

March 22, 2016



Executive Summary

Opportunity Being Evaluated

This BIRDIE team evaluated how Village staff handle complaints from our residents and businesses. Using the following feedback from our recent NC Awards for Excellence site visit, we conducted this BIRDIE to address an opportunity for performance improvement to increase customer satisfaction and engagement:

“VOP is in the early stages of developing and deploying a systematic approach to handling complaints and concerns...Some complaints are documented and others are not... Also, most departments handle complaints in differing manners and thus there is very little aggregation and organizational use of complaint data. Unless complaints are aggregated and analyzed for root causes, service problems may repeat leading to additional customer dissatisfaction and distrust of the organization. In addition, additional costs associated with complaint recovery (e.g. rework costs) may increase causing an undue financial burden on the organization.”

- Milestone 3 Performance Excellence Feedback Report

The BIRDIE team’s evaluation and recommendation supports the Village’s strategic goal to **“Professionally Manage a High Performing Organization.”**

Overview of the Process and Data Used to Determine Recommendations

Following our systematic BIRDIE process, the team conducted a thorough review of how Village staff currently handle customer complaints, researched best practices, and gathered relevant data to identify potential solutions. Key data the BIRDIE team evaluated to develop the recommendations in this report included:

- Process maps of how each department currently handles complaints,
- Technology currently being used in the organization to record/track customer complaints and other technology solutions that are available for complaint management,
- Research of best practices in complaint management, and
- Estimates of the number of complaints the Village receives based on a review of: 1) historical complaint levels in Code Enforcement and the Police Department; 2) a two-week log for Village Hall and Public Services complaints, and 3) historical complaints received through the website Help Desk.

Final BIRDIE Team Recommendations

After evaluating alternative solutions, the BIRDIE team recommends the Village take the following actions to improve our process for handling customer complaints:

1. Develop a standard Complaint Management Policy and Procedure,
2. Develop a Complaint Management System to track complaints using a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool called “Public Stuff”, and
3. Change the automated attendant message on the main telephone line to Village Hall to include Code Enforcement concerns.

Evaluation Process

Description of the BIRDIE Process and Team Members

The evaluation of the Village’s complaint management process began with the formation of a BIRDIE team. BIRDIE is the Village’s systematic six-step process to evaluate and improve key organizational projects and processes that have a considerable ongoing staffing and financial impact.

The BIRDIE team used for this evaluation included the following members:

- Natalie Dean, Assistant Village Manager
- Claire Berggren, Council Member
- Jason Whitaker, IT
- Barbara Thompson, IT
- Jill Lazusky, Administration
- Jamie Reed, Planning
- Tricia Batchelor, Public Services
- Dave White, Parks & Recreation
- Angel Smith, Planning

BIRDIE

B Bring the opportunity forward

I Investigate the opportunity

R Review potential solutions

D Determine the solution

I Implement the solution

E Evaluate the solution



Five Whys Analysis

Once the opportunity for complaint management improvement was identified, the BIRDIE team conducted a “Five Whys” analysis to determine the root cause of the issue. This analysis revealed that the root causes of the problem were primarily:

1. No consistent complaint methodology is used across the Village, and
2. There is no centralized system to track and monitor complaint data.

What the Data Told Us

The BIRDIE team gathered data in four key areas:

1. **Process maps** of how each department currently handles complaints,
2. **Technology** currently being used in the organization to record/track customer complaints and other technology solutions that are available for complaint management,
3. Research of **best practices** in complaint management, and
4. Estimates of the **number of complaints** the Village receives.

Process Maps

The BIRDIE team members created process maps for each of the 14 departments to gain an understanding of how the Village is currently handling customer complaints. These indicated that only 3 departments (Code Enforcement, the Police Department, and Public Services) have standard complaint management procedures in place. However, these departments do not routinely analyze complaint data for trends and root cause analysis to prevent future complaints.

Technology

Currently, some departments utilize technology to record complaints that include: 1) the Help Desk and Feedback form on the Village website, 2) Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system in the Police Department, 3) Excel spreadsheets in Code Enforcement, and 4) Email. The BIRDIE team then researched and identified other technology solutions available to utilize for complaint management.

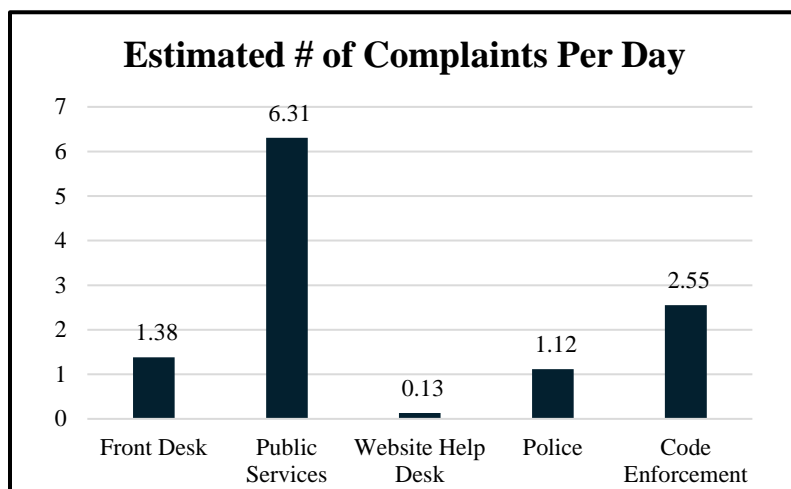
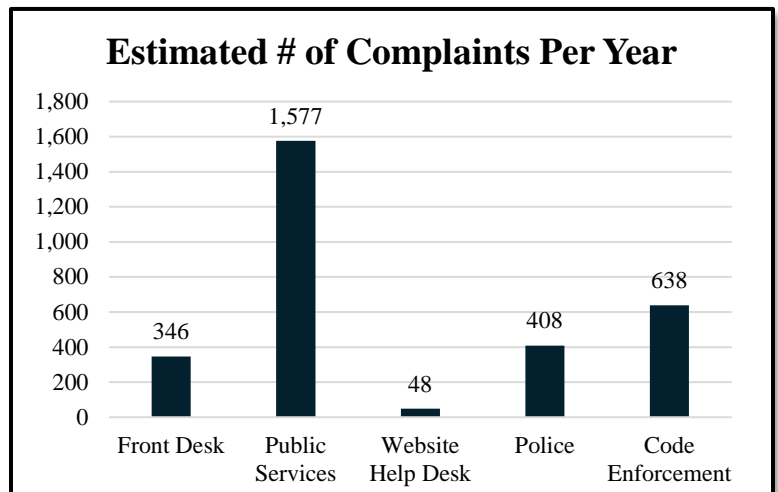
Best Practices in Complaint Management

The BIRDIE team's research on best practices in complaint management identified the following best practices that the team believed should be included in its final recommendations:

1. Have a good definition of a complaint,
2. Have written policies/procedures/forms/etc.,
3. Ensure staff handling complaints are trained, adequately informed, and empowered,
4. Report complaint data periodically to stakeholders (management, NAC, etc.) and evaluate for root causes, and
5. Obtain post complaint customer feedback (i.e. point of service survey) to determine the effectiveness of the complaint management process.

Estimated Number of Complaints

To estimate the number of complaints received by Village staff, the BIRDIE team reviewed the data available for Code Enforcement complaints, complaints received by the Police Department, and complaints received through the Village website Help Desk. In addition, Public Services staff and Customer Service Representatives at Village Hall logged complaints for 13 business days to estimate the number of complaints received. The estimates shown in the charts indicate the *minimum* number of complaints the Village receives because other Village staff often receive complaints directly, which are not currently captured in these estimates.



Solutions Evaluated and Perspectives Considered

The BIRDIE team identified and evaluated four (4) key solutions:

1. Develop a standard complaint management procedure,
2. Utilize a common technology across the organization to track complaints,
3. Use separate systems to track complaints based on the department, and
4. Centralize the complaint management process.

The process requirements the BIRDIE team identified that should be met when the Village develops a complaint management process include:

- A timely staff response to the complaint,
- Satisfactory resolution to the complaint,
- Alternative ways for customers to voice complaints (in person, telephone, electronic, etc.),
- Allow for human interaction and minimize voicemail/email response, when possible,
- Route complaints to appropriate staff as quickly as possible,
- Categorize complaints so they can be segmented and analyzed for root cause analysis,
- Make it easy to document and record complaints, so it is not time consuming,
- Continue to use the RELATE model (**R**ecognize concern, **E**mpathize, **L**isten, **A**pologize, **T**hank the customer, **E**xplain)
- Minimize duplication of entry when possible (ex: have a lookup feature), and
- Handle and resolve complaints as close to the first point of contact as possible.

The team identified the advantages, disadvantages, and ways to mitigate the disadvantages for each of the four solutions from a variety of perspectives, as shown below.

The BIRDIE team agreed that a **standard complaint management procedure** would be beneficial to our customers, staff, management, and the public at large. The lack of a systematic complaint management procedure was identified during the “Five Whys” analysis as a key reason why the Village does not evaluate complaint data for root cause analysis to prevent future complaints. In addition, written policies, procedures, and forms were identified as a key process requirement.

The BIRDIE team evaluated four **technology solutions**: GovTrack, SharePoint, Mobile 311, and Public Stuff.

GovTrack is a service desk system that is provided by the Village’s new website provider, Vision Internet. SharePoint is used by employees today for internal service desk work order systems



(Fleet Maintenance, IT, and Buildings and Grounds) and Help Desk tickets generated from the website. Mobile 311 is used by the Public Services department to manage a portion of their operations, but not to handle complaints. In addition, as a result of the Code Enforcement BIRDIE team recommendations, the Village’s Code Enforcement Officer implemented Mobile 311 for a short period of time before abandoning it due to reporting barriers. The final technology solution evaluated was a CRM software, Public Stuff.

The following matrix identifies the conclusions drawn from the evaluation of the four technology solutions:

Technology Solution	Ease of Use (Customer Perspective)	Ease of Use (Employee Perspective)	Incremental Cost (Financial Perspective)	Data Reporting (Management Perspective)	Other Pros/Cons
Gov Track	+ Website interface is clear, informative, and easy to use	+	+ Included in website development and already built so would require less staff resources to set up	+ Limited ability to customize reporting options	
SharePoint	+ Website interface is clear, informative, and easy to use	+ Employees are using now and are familiar with it	- Requires the purchase of SharePoint add on (Nintex forms) and more IT staff time to develop the website interface and integration	+ Can segregate complaint data, but requires additional IT staff time	Will require significantly more IT resources to setup and maintain, with no mapping capabilities built in
Mobile 311	- Limited ability to customize and add information	- Workflow tracking and managing complaints is cumbersome on the back end	- To use Village-wide would require additional licensing and financial investment	-- Limited ability to customize reporting options	
Public Stuff	+ Website interface is simple, clear, informative, and easy to use; Public Stuff partners with new website provider now	++ Dashboards for employee monitoring and tracking are very user-friendly	- Requires an annual license fee	++ Very extensive, easy to segment & map by neighborhood, automatic customizable email notifications, can easily set & report response deadlines by type	++ Could replace current mobile app and serve to increase community engagement

Two solutions evaluated, but not recommended included *centralizing the complaint management process* and *using separate systems* in each department. Overall, the BIRDIE team thought the disadvantages of these solutions outweighed the advantages.

Detailed Recommendations

After evaluating alternative solutions from a variety of perspectives, the BIRDIE team recommends the Village take the following actions to improve our process for handling customer complaints:

1. **Develop a standard Complaint Management Policy and Procedure,**
2. **Develop a Complaint Management System to track complaints using a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool, Public Stuff, and**
3. **Change the automated attendant message on the main telephone line to Village Hall.**

Description of Recommendations

Complaint Management Procedure and Policy

This recommendation entails using the Village's Work Process Management System to develop a Complaint Management Policy and Procedure. This policy is required to be approved by the Village's Policy Committee and will:

- Identify the process employees should follow when they receive a complaint,
- Incorporate expected response times for different types of complaints to determine employee effectiveness at resolving customer complaints,
- Incorporate the RELATE model of service recovery, and
- Describe the process management will use to systematically segment and analyze complaint data to evaluate employee effectiveness at resolving complaints, determine root causes of complaints, and prevent future complaints.



Public Stuff CRM Tool

This recommendation involves acquiring a third-party software, Public Stuff, to accumulate complaint data. The software is a mobile application with a seamless website integration that can aggregate complaint data with pre-determined response times for each type of complaint. It is a geographically based program that would also allow the Village to easily report complaint data by neighborhoods or any other segment desired by staff, such as a certain road, etc. Implementing the software would involve assigning staff in the system to address certain complaint types and establishing automatic email notifications for staff and the complainant. Finally, staff would develop customized reports that are filtered to include needed information and these reports can be set up to be automatically distributed to the employees that need access to the information. This tool can also be used to process external and internal service requests in the future. Finally, because it is a mobile app the Village could also use it to more effectively communicate and engage residents by including additional Village information, which is in support of two other FY 2017 Initiative Action Plans.

Automated Attendant Message on Village Hall Telephone

While considering the potential solution of consolidating complaint management into a central location, the BIRDIE team evaluated how phone calls are routed. As a result, the team recommends changing the automated attendant greeting for Village Hall to include an option for

“Code Enforcement Concerns” and “Request for Service.” By adding these options and removing the “Trash and Recycling” option, the BIRDIE team believes phone calls can be routed more efficiently and the Customer Service Representatives at Village Hall can help respond to any Public Services complaints that are routed to them.

Overview of Financial and Staffing Impact

Financial Impact

The only BIRDIE team recommendation that has an incremental direct financial cost is the acquisition of the third party software, Public Stuff, which costs \$6,000 in annual maintenance. This amount is already funded in the FY 2016 budget.

Staffing Impact

While the BIRDIE team’s recommendations do not include any additional staff resources, the implementation of a Complaint Management Policy and Procedure will require additional staff time to document and routinely evaluate complaints received. In addition, it will require IT and Administration staff resources to create and maintain the recommended software.

Benefits of Recommendations

There are numerous benefits to the solutions recommended by the VOP 311 BIRDIE team. Our recommendations:

- Provide the workforce with clearer expectations of performance when handling complaints,
- Reinforce our customer-focused culture,
- Reduce future operating costs when Village processes and services improve to eliminate future complaints, and
- Increase customer loyalty and engagement due to better customer service and easier ways to communicate complaints and concerns.

Implementation Plan

The BIRDIE Team’s recommended implementation plan to aggregate and analyze complaints for root causes is as follows:

May 2016 - Develop and obtain approval of the Complaint Management Policy and Procedures

June 2016 – Train staff and launch Public Stuff software

Because funding for these recommendations has already been approved in the FY 2016 budget by the Village Council and the recommended policy is an Administrative Policy that the Council has delegated authority to the Village Manager, there is no Council action needed.

The BIRDIE Team, however, believes it is important to report on the work we completed in order to improve this process and to meet Council’s strategic goal to ***“Professionally Manage a High Performing Organization.”***