

**SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Request for approval of three new Lead Inspector positions: one Electrical and two Building.

DEPARTMENT: Planning & Development **DIVISION:** Building & Fire Inspection

AUTHORIZED BY: Dan Matthys  **CONTACT:** Tom Helle  **EXT.** 7338

Agenda Date 6-14-05 **Regular** **Consent** **Work Session** **Briefing**
Public Hearing – 1:30 **Public Hearing – 7:00**

MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Approve three new Lead Inspector positions: one electrical and two building, and authorize the Chairman to execute the attached Budget Amendment Request to provide funding for the new inspector positions.


BACKGROUND:

On March 1, 2002, Seminole County began enforcing the Florida Building Code. The new code required up to an additional 14 inspections (8 Building, 3 Electrical, and 3 Gas) per single-family home.

Because it was a new type of inspection for Seminole County, staff requested, and the Board approved a Gas Inspector in February 2002. Staff's approach to conducting the additional Building and Electrical inspections was to absorb the work with existing staff. Initially, staff was able to accomplish this task, but as the number of permits continues to increase, so has the number of inspections.

Inspections per Day

Currently, there are 11 Building and 4 Electrical Inspectors averaging over 20 inspections each per day. The industry standard for an inspector's workload is 10 inspections per day (Source: I.S.O. Building Code effectiveness Grading Schedule, Section 305; I.S.O. analyses are responsible in part for setting insurance rates for Seminole County Homeowners).

Reviewed by:	_____
Co Atty:	_____
DFS:	_____
Other:	_____
DCM:	_____
CM:	
File No.	<u>rpdb01</u>

The table below outlines the number of Building and Electrical inspections on a monthly and daily basis performed by the Building Division. This table, based on 20 working days per month, clearly depicts a steady increase (28.6%) in annual inspections over the past two fiscal years.

Increase in Building & Electrical Inspections			
Year	Inspections	Monthly Average	Daily Average
<i>FY '00-'01</i>	<i>44,065 yr.</i>	<i>3,672</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>FY '01-'02</i>	<i>43,906 yr.</i>	<i>3,658</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>FY '02-'03</i>	<i>52,641 yr.</i>	<i>4,387</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>FY '03-'04</i>	<i>55,609 yr.</i>	<i>4,634</i>	<i>16</i>
Monthly			
Oct '04	n/a	4,843	16
Nov '04	n/a	5,406	18
Dec '04	n/a	5,743	19
Jan '05	n/a	5,780	19
Feb '05	n/a	6,506	22
Mar '05	n/a	7,526	25
Apr. '05	n/a	7,183	24
<i>FY '04-'05 (projected)*</i>	<i>73,692 yr.</i>	<i>6,141</i>	<i>20</i>

* Projected figures reflect conservative estimates based on the average of the first seven months, multiplied by 12.

There are currently 15 total Electrical and Building Inspectors. To maintain the industry standard of 10 inspections per inspector a day would require a staff of 30. However, Staff's experience has shown that quality inspections can be maintained at an average of 12-16 inspections per day, which is why, in part, staff is only requesting three inspector positions. Even with the addition of the requested staff, inspections per day will still average around 17 based on current demands. Should the market experience a slowdown, staff believes the requested three additional inspectors will allow the Division to reach the targeted 12-16 inspections per day while continuing to maintain quality inspections.

Increase in Permits

In addition to the number of inspections, the annual number of permits has continued to increase (43.9%) over the past two fiscal years and the first part of this year, as reflected in the table below. This table is also based on 20 working days a month. This steady increase is a contributing factor to the increased number of daily inspections being performed by current staff.

Increase in Permits issued			
Year	No. of Permits	Monthly Average	Daily Average
<i>FY '00-'01</i>	<i>12,787 yr.</i>	<i>1,066</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>FY '01-'02</i>	<i>13,219 yr.</i>	<i>1,102</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>FY '02-'03</i>	<i>15,134 yr.</i>	<i>1,261</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>FY '03-'04</i>	<i>16,384 yr.</i>	<i>1,365</i>	<i>68</i>
Monthly			
Oct. '04		2,088	104
Nov. '04		2,272	114
Dec. '04		2,173	109
Jan. '05		2,481	124
Feb. '05		2,146	107
Mar. '05		2,364	118
Apr. '05		2,229	111
<i>FY '04-'05 (projected)*</i>	<i>27,000 yr.</i>	<i>2,250</i>	<i>112</i>

* Projected figures reflect conservative estimates based on the average of the first seven months, multiplied by 12.

Although the hurricanes contributed to this amount, it is only a fraction of the regular work performed, as evidenced by the continual increase in the number of inspections.

Furthermore, Staff had been anticipating a slowdown in the number of permits issued over the last few years, particularly since the available inventory of land is limited; however, this slowdown has yet to occur. In fact, the number of permits issued continues to rise with each year breaking the record held by the previous year. Although this high activity should level-off at some point, the permit activity is projected to remain strong for several years based on growth projections.

The 2003 Seminole County Socioeconomic Data Projection Report projects 43,420 new housing units to be constructed over the next 15 years. The average dwelling requires 17 building and electrical inspections to be performed during construction. These projections do not include commercial development, additions, swimming pools, renovations and repair projects which would significantly increase the number of inspections.

Customer Service

The established benchmark for performing inspections is within 24 hours of the request being made. With the current number of inspectors, staff is no longer able to meet this benchmark. In recent weeks, inspections are being rolled over to later days; for example, 219 inspections were rolled over on May 24, 2005. With the rollovers, inspectors have been assigned, on average, 46 inspections each per day during the end of May.

Changing the benchmark of next-day inspections will only result in delaying the customer's inspection and will not relieve the exponential increase in the number of inspections.

Overtime

The increasing number of inspections has drastically affected the overtime budget allotments. In fiscal year 03/04, the overtime budget for the division was \$85,000.00. As inspection numbers increased, the need to increase the budget line by an additional 43% was evident bringing the total overtime expenditures to \$121,455.00 at the end of the fiscal year. Presently, at just eight months into the 04/05 budget, \$95,302.86 has been expended for overtime pay. The current overtime expenditures do not include any after-hour inspection fees. The Overtime budget was increased from the budgeted \$85,000.00 to \$155,000 during the mid-year budget process in anticipation of the overtime work being performed. The requested new positions are anticipated to reduce the overtime expenditures of the Division by up to 40%.

Development Fund

Funding for the three requested positions will come from the Development Review Fund (104 fund). This fund was established in 1987 to be both self supporting and to provide for accountability of the development review/permitting revenues. For this reason, staff has apprised the Home Builders Association of Metro Orlando (HBA), and the Development Advisory Board (DAB) of this request. It is estimated that the 104 fund can absorb these positions over the next several years without the need to adjust building fees. The following table depicts the beginning fund balance in the 104 Fund for the past 5 years.

Year	Beginning Fund Balance
FY '01/'02	\$ 3,200,000
FY '02/'03	\$ 4,000,000
FY '03/'04	\$ 3,213,760
FY '04/'05	\$ 3,371,324
FY '05/'06 (projected)	\$ 3,000,000

Staff has received support from both the HBA and the DAB, as indicated in the attached letters. In addition, staff acknowledges that if approved, these positions will need to be flexible with the demands of the industry and, in the event of a slowdown in the market; the positions may need to be eliminated.

Options

Staff has explored the many options regarding the increasing demand of inspections, including reducing the level-of-service of next day inspections (rollover inspections) expected by our customers, contracting temporary assistance from an inspection service agency and the requested option of 3 additional inspectors. The following table depicts the fiscal impacts of the options:

Workload Solution Options		
Option	Annual Impact	Recurring Impact
Rollover Inspections	Impact to customers	Impact to customers
Contract Inspectors (3 @ \$560/day ea.)	\$ 436,800	\$ 436,800
Requested 3 Inspectors	\$ 122,416	\$ 75,000

Rollover of Inspections

Rollover of inspections can provide interim relief; however for there to be a long-term benefit, the number of inspections per day would need to slow down and remain at manageable levels. If not, inspections would continue to be pushed back where it could take longer than a month before the inspection is performed. The customers of Seminole County rely on the “next-day” inspections when scheduling subcontractors, construction crews and further inspections. Rollover inspections could cause a delay in the overall construction process and could ultimately affect the future tenants and homeowners. This option would only serve as a short-term solution to the workload and would assume a market slowdown in the near future.

Contract Inspectors

Staff has explored and identified companies that contract inspection services. Under this option, the contract could be terminated, should the work slow down. This option is a costly option (approximately \$560 per day, per inspector) and Staff does not believe that the workload would slow down rapidly enough for the County’s return on investment.

Requested Positions

Staff believes that approval of the requested three positions would serve as the best balance of fiscal responsibility and service to the citizens and customers of Seminole County.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board approve three new Lead Inspector positions: one electrical and two building, and authorize the Chairman to execute the attached Budget Amendment Request to provide funding for the new inspector positions.

Attachments:

- 1) Budget Amendment Request
- 2) Letter of support from the HBA, dated 4-11-05
- 3) Letter of support from the DAB, dated 4-08-05



Home Builders Are Community Builders

Post-it® Fax Note	7671	Date	4/12	# of pages	1
To	Larry Goldman		From	Bill Silliman	
Co./Dept.			Co.	President	
Phone #			Phone #	HBA	
Fax #	665-7407		Fax #		

April 11, 2005

The Honorable Carlton Henley
Chairman, Seminole County Commission
Seminole County Services Building
1101 E. First Street
Sanford, FL 32771

Dear Chairman Henley:

As you likely know, the County's Building Department plays a vital role in the homebuilding industry via the inspection process and enforcing the Florida Building Code. As a result, homebuilders have a special interest to make sure that the department is appropriately staffed to ensure the smooth functioning of the inspections process.

It is my understanding that the workloads for inspectors has increased considerably and that it is not unusual for inspectors to be assigned 28 - 30 inspections for a single day. I believe this kind of workload is unsustainable and will likely impair performance and service.

For these reasons, the Home Builders Association of Metro Orlando strongly advocates that the County hire the needed additional Inspectors- two Lead Inspectors and one Electrical Inspector- to avoid future problems. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

William Silliman
President



Mr. J. Kevin Grace, County Manager
Seminole County
1101 East First Street
Sanford, FL 32771

8 April 2005

Dear Mr. Grace:

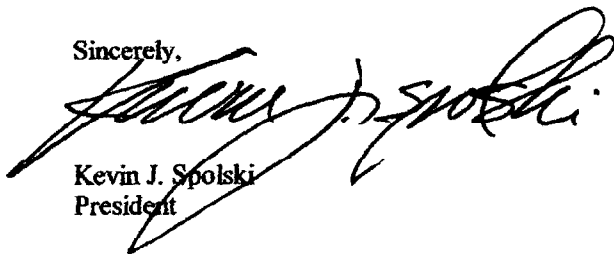
As a member of the Seminole County Development Advisory Board (DAB), I have been asked by the board members to provide you with the DAB's recommendation as it relates to staffing requirements of the Building Division.

At the monthly DAB meeting held on Thursday, April 7, 2005, Seminole County staff requested the board members evaluate the Building Division's request to hire three (3) new Building Inspectors. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the current status and intended purpose of the 104 Fund, as well as the Building Division's expenditures for overtime payroll related to the inspection load being handled by the current inspection staff.

Following review and discussion of the issue, the DAB board members unanimously agreed that there is a significant need for the three (3) additional Building Inspectors being requested at this time. The board members recommend these positions be filled as soon as possible to better serve the interests of the citizens of Seminole County and to reduce the overtime expenditures being incurred by the Building Division.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Kevin J. Spolski
President

cc: Seminole County Commission Chairman Carlton Henley
Seminole County Commissioner Randy Morris
Seminole County Commissioner Dick VanDerWeide
Seminole County Commissioner Brenda Carey
Seminole County Commissioner Bob Dallari
Mrs. Sally A. Sherman, Deputy County Manager
Mr. Don Fisher, Deputy County Manager

Spolski Construction, Inc. • 1425 E. Airport Blvd. • Sanford, FL 32773
Phone: 407.322.8424 • Fax: 407.322.8436

2005-R-

BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUEST

TO: Seminole County Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Department of Fiscal Services
SUBJECT: **Budget Amendment Resolution**
Department: **Planning & Development**
Fund(s): Development Review Fund (10400)

DFS Recommendation	
Deborah Smith	2/25/05
Analyst	Date
Budget Mgr	Date
Director	Date

PURPOSE: On March 1, 2002, Seminole County began enforcing the Florida Building Code. The new code required an additional 11 inspections (8 Building, and 3 Electrical) be conducted that were not previously required. Since FY 00/01, the number of annual Building and Electrical inspections performed by the Building Division has increased by more than 50%. In addition, the number of permits has continued to increase annually and it has become increasingly difficult to insure inspections are completed in a timely manner and the standard level of customer service the County has established is maintained. This transfer provides funding for one new lead electrical inspector position and two new lead building inspector positions for five months and associated supplies, equipment, and three vehicles. The FY 05/06 budget for these positions and their associated costs will be approximately \$174,000.

ACTION: Approval and authorization for the Chairman to execute Budget Amendment Resolution.

In accordance with Section 129.06(2), Florida Statutes, it is recommended that the following accounts in the County budget be adjusted by the amounts set forth herein for the purpose described.

Sources:

Account Number	Project #	Account Title	Amount
10400.999904.599998	N/A	Reserves for Contingencies	\$152,416
Total Sources			\$152,416

Uses:

Account Number	Project #	Account Title	Amount
10400.110404.510120	N/A	Regular Salaries	\$40,000
10400.110404.510210	N/A	Social Security Matching	3,153
10400.110404.510220	N/A	Retirement Contribution	3,445
10400.110404.510230	N/A	Health and Life Insurance	7,162
10400.110404.510240	N/A	Worker's Compensation	9,544
10400.110404.530400	N/A	Travel and Per Diem	758
10400.110404.530440	N/A	Rentals and Leases	6,600
10400.110404.530510	N/A	Office Supplies	300
10400.110404.530520	N/A	Operating Supplies	4,884
10400.110404.530540	N/A	Books, Publications, Subs	1,075
10400.110404.560641	00010451	Operating Supplies-Equipment	15,495
10400.110404.560642	00010452	Capital Equipment	60,000
Total Uses			\$ 152,416

BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION

This Resolution, 2004-R-_____ approving the above requested budget amendment, was adopted at the regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Seminole County, Florida _____ as reflected in the minutes of said meeting.

Attest:

Maryanne Morse, Clerk to the
Board of County Commissioners
Date: _____

By: _____
Carlton Henley
Chairman
Date: _____

Entered by County Finance Department

Date: _____