

Press Release

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Microfilm Department Savings Hits Record

2009 Outsourced Departmental Savings \$234,375;
Since Inception in '04 Cumulative Savings Realizes \$1,078,774
Government Officials Can Save Money “Thinking Outside the Box”

For Further Information Contact:

Frank Suponcic (440)-350-2508 or (440)-449-6800

Email – fsuponcic@lakecountyohio.gov or fsuponcic@skodaminotti.com

[Painesville, OH] – Budget cuts are the norm these days. What is unusual is an elected official that voluntarily cuts one’s budget. In 2001, County Recorder Frank Suponcic didn’t need a directive from County Commissioners to cut costs and in turn save taxpayer dollars. He took it upon himself to propose an alternative to microfilming county records.

The 2009 Microfilming Department report has been prepared and distributed. The report reveals a material cost savings for Lake County. Material as in one-year savings of \$234,375 to be exact.

“Nothing makes me smile more, than to continue to deliver on the promise of directly reducing the operating costs of county government, and save Lake County taxpayers money that had been carelessly thrown away,” added Suponcic.

Suponcic plans to advise the Microfilming Board that the 2009 savings associated with outsourcing the one-time County operated department was the highest since the new plan was fully implemented in 2004.

“I am elated at the ridiculously high fiscal savings. This is proof to everyone that with a little creativity, governmental officials everywhere can save budget dollars with the implementation of measures never before considered. All governmental officials must collectively explore ways to deliver traditional services in a more cost effective manner. Service hasn’t been compromised. No one has noticed a reduction of quality. And at the end of the day the operating costs have been cut by 85%.”

2009 Microfilming Department actual operating costs under Suponic’s reorganization plan came in at only \$15,341. Under the antiquated way of handling microfilming, the Microfilming Department would have had an annual budget of approximately \$275,000.

Prior outsourced annual savings realized by year follow:

2004 - \$126,694

2005 - \$166,282

2006 - \$182,383

2007 - \$197,316

2008 - \$161,024

2009 - \$234,375

In 2003, the Lake County Microfilming Board, based on Suponic’s analysis, research, and recommendation, decided to phase out the county operated Microfilming Department in lieu of using outside contractors. At that time the Microfilming Board advertised for competitive public bids on all of Suponic’s microfilming work.

Inception to date actual savings since the complete departmental elimination at 12/31/03 now totals \$1,078,774 in six years. Actual savings realized have exceeded initial efficiency estimates.

“Some knew that this was going to be a home run of an idea, but I don’t think anyone involved with the outsourcing concept would have imagined that the savings in six years would exceed \$1,000,000. We’re saving considerably more money than we initially projected back in 2003. It’s hard not to be absolutely thrilled about that!”

“What is not considered in this analysis is the material amount of taxpayer savings that was “lost” in elected officials not having implemented such a unique concept sooner. That could be another million of our tax dollars that was misspent.”

The aggregate savings the decision has yielded have greatly exceeded Suponcic’s expectations. In 2003, he projected the annual savings over six years to approximate \$125,000 or \$742,581. Those initial estimates were exceeded one year early with an additional savings of almost an additional \$100,000.

“One vision, one decision, almost \$1.1M of Lake County taxpayer savings. That’s my kind of government. What was projected to cost \$275,000, we are now delivering at about 15% of that.”

As reported Commissioners are directing elected officials and department heads to cut salaries and operating budgets in lieu of the decline in the County’s overall financial position specifically declining revenues.

Suponcic added “It’d have been easy to continue “government as usual” and keep the County’s Microfilming Department as it had been operating (and literally wasting County resources). As a Board, we didn’t need a County Commissioner directive telling us to find a more cost effective way to deliver microfilming services. We went out and did it on our own. Some were initially skeptical of the concept. It took some hard work, a few meetings and analytical planning, but in the end it paid off. And boy did it. Why more non-traditional alternatives and cost effective operational analyses, such as this, either are not performed or don’t get implemented at all levels of government is mind boggling.”

“Times have changed. Our budgetary conditions have changed. As elected officials at all levels of government, we cannot continue to provide services in the antiquated manner that they have been traditionally delivered. Sacrifices likely have to be made. Collectively as elected officials it is our responsibility to deliver government more cost effectively. Some understand this concept and unfortunately some do not.”

Someone asked Suponcic recently, “If you had to create government from scratch today, would you replace it with the exact model that currently exists?” “Of course not because government is not efficient,” Suponcic responded. “Exhibit 1; let’s examine how the Microfilming Department had been operating prior to 2001 versus how it is operating today. We need more action (like this) and less talk and political posturing.”

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