

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF COOK COUNTY**  
**REPORT OF THE STUDY GROUP**  
**ON COOK COUNTY GOVERNMENT'S**  
**STAR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**  
**March 10, 2015**

This Report is composed of the following Sections:

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and the following Appendices:

- Appendix 1** – Overview of the Study Group's Activities
- Appendix 2** – Detailed Description of the STAR Process
- Appendix 3** – Review of 2014 Fourth Quarter STAR Reports of the Other Elected Officials
- Appendix 4** – Suggestions for Improving Cook County's Performance Management (STAR) Web Site
- Appendix 5** – Proposed League Position

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In February 2011, the Cook County Board passed an ordinance creating a performance management system that was to be tied into the budget process. Known as STAR (Set Targets, Achieve Results), the goals, measures, targets and results of the measures of the five (5) Areas of County Government and of the individual departments within each Area began to be published quarterly in the fall of 2011. The League of Women Voters of Cook County ("the League") initiated a study of STAR in the spring of 2013. This Report and the Appendices are the products of that study.

Main observations of the Study:

- I. The concepts behind the STAR Performance Management System are sound and the STAR process, as described to the League, could have a positive impact on the functioning of and services provided by Cook County government.
- II. STAR is very much a work in progress.

Based on these observations, the Study Group has the following recommendations:

- I. All Elected Officials should work together in setting goals in order to improve the workings of County government.
- II. Each Elected Official should embrace STAR (or another performance management system) as a vehicle for improving the functioning of the departments reporting to that Official by setting goals and establishing measures and targets to meet those goals.
- III. All County departments should continue to work on improving the quality of their goals and measures, setting targets for those measures that will encourage better results, and providing the data for the measures

- IV. Consideration should be given as to whether there should be County-wide goals, measures, and targets.
- V. The Administration should consider seeking the Commissioners' assistance and discussing how they can be partners in STAR and utilize the information in their policy, budgetary, and oversight roles.
- VI. The STAR Web site needs to become more user-friendly so the public can see whether Cook County government is achieving established goals.
- VII. The information about STAR in the Executive Budget, both in the "Resident's Guide" and in the detailed descriptions of departments, should be consistent with the STAR Reports.
- VIII. The League should continue to periodically review the STAR Reports and observe whether it appears that the Cook County Board is utilizing STAR information.

## **INTRODUCTION**

On February 1, 2011, two months after President Toni Preckwinkle took office, the Cook County Board, at the prompting of the President, passed an ordinance creating a performance management system that was to be tied into the budget process.<sup>1</sup> By utilizing outside consultants working *pro bono*, the new **STAR (Set Targets, Achieve Results)** performance management system was quickly up and running with the first report published in the fall of 2011 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of fiscal year 2011 (June 1 – August 31, 2011).

In the spring of 2013, with STAR approaching two years of operation, the League of Women Voters of Cook County ("the League") decided that it would be a good time to study STAR. An invitation to join a Study Group was sent to all members of the 15 local leagues within Cook County. Seventeen members from 9 different leagues have participated in this Study Group to varying degrees over the past two years.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See the Cook County Code of Ordinances, Part I (General Ordinances), Chapter 2 (Administration), Article X (Performance Based Management and Budgeting), Sections 2-930 to 2-937. On February 10, 2015, this portion of the Ordinances was amended, just as this Report was being finalized. It appears that some of the concerns raised in this Report may be addressed by this amendment. However, this Report does not attempt to analyze the amendment. See Item 15-0703, Substitute Ordinance Amendment, for the Finance Committee Meeting of February 10, 2015 that was approved by both the Committee and then the Board on February 10.

<sup>2</sup> The Study Group members (with their leagues in parenthesis) are: Cathleen Burrell (Glenview), Theresa Cameron (Evanston), Linda Christianson (LaGrange Area), Julianne Dieterich (Evanston), Diane Edmundson (Park Ridge), Jan Goldberg (LaGrange Area), Betty Hayford (Evanston), Karin Hribar (Arlington Heights), Peggy Kell (Oak Park & River Forest), Susan Kern (Palatine Area), Kelly Kleiman (Chicago), Amy Little (Oak Park & River Forest), Priscilla Mims (Chicago) who chaired, Nancy Mitzen (Palatine Area), Eleanor Prince (Winnetka, Northbrook, Kenilworth), Jura Scharf (Palos Orland), and Cynthia Schilsky (LaGrange Area). An "Overview of the Study Group's Activities" may be found in Appendix 1.

## OVERVIEW OF THE STAR PROCESS <sup>3</sup>

Currently, all functions of Cook County government under the President and all the Other Elected Officials,<sup>4</sup> except for those departments and personnel reporting to the Chief Judge,<sup>5</sup> are participating in STAR to varying degrees.

### Areas

Cook County government, for purposes of the budget and STAR, is divided into **5 Areas**:

- Finance & Administration
- Economic Development
- Healthcare
- Property & Taxation, and
- Public Safety <sup>6</sup>

The STAR process described to the League calls for the Elected Officials and department heads overseeing the departments within each of these Areas to come together and set

**Goals** (what the Area is trying to achieve),  
**Measures** for activities necessary to reach the goals, and  
**Targets** of achievement for those Measures.

Initially, the Area Goals, Measures and Targets, along with the actual results for those Measures, were reported quarterly and compared to the Targets in the “**STAR Reports**” that appeared on Cook County’s Web site and which could be downloaded in a “pdf” format. However, after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Report for 2013 (through May 31, 2013), the “**Performance Management**” Web site<sup>7</sup> was redone, and no information about the Area Goals, Measures, and Targets, except for the Finance & Administration Area,<sup>8</sup> has been available to the public.

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<sup>3</sup> A more detailed outline of the STAR Process, as it was described to the League Study Group by the Chief Performance Officer of the County, can be found in Appendix 2.

<sup>4</sup> These “Other Elected Officials” are the Assessor, the Board of Review, the Clerk of the Circuit Court, the County Clerk, the Recorder of Deeds, the Sheriff, the State’s Attorney, and the Treasurer. The references in this Interim Report to “other Electeds” or “the Electeds” do not refer to the Board of Commissioners or the President.

<sup>5</sup> The Chief Judge, Timothy Evans, said at the League’s May 2013 Annual Meeting that he has chosen not to participate on the basis of the “separation of powers” concept and his concern that the judicial branch not be subject to the executive branch of Cook County government.

<sup>6</sup> The Forest Preserve District, while a separate government entity, also participates in STAR.

<sup>7</sup> The Performance Management Web site can be accessed through the Cook County Web site ([www.cookcountyil.gov](http://www.cookcountyil.gov)) under “Find It Fast” and then under the drop down menu by clicking on “Performance Management.” It can also be accessed directly at <https://performance.cookcounty.il.gov>.

<sup>8</sup> As of January 12, 2015, however, even the Goals, Measures and Targets for the Finance & Administration Area are no longer available online.

## **Departments**

Within each Area of County government, there are multiple departments. Under the STAR process, each of the other Elected Officials is to set **Department Goals, Measures, and Targets** and report quarterly as part of the STAR Reports.

Each of the departments reporting to the President also has set Department Goals, Measures, and Targets. These departments report monthly to the Performance Management department, as well as quarterly as part of the STAR Reports.

These quarterly STAR Reports are available to the public through the Performance Management Web site, though, as described later in this Report, reading the information from the Web site<sup>9</sup> is very cumbersome.

In addition to reporting monthly and quarterly, each of the departments under the President also meets at least yearly, and in some cases more often, to discuss its Goals, Measurements (which may also be referred to as “sub goals”) and Targets with the President’s Chief of Staff, Chief Performance Officer, Bureau Chiefs, Budget Director, Chief Procurement Officer, and Chief Administrative Officer. Members of the Study Group were allowed to sit in on one such meeting in March 2014.

## **Office of Performance Management**

Overseeing and coordinating the STAR program is the Office of Performance Management that falls under the Budget and Management Services Department under the President. The leader of this section, Chief Performance Officer Andrew Schwarm, met with Study Group members on several occasions and provided much of the information contained in the “Description of the Process” found in Appendix 2. Mr. Schwarm also arranged for members of the Study Group to attend a department review meeting. The Study Group thanks Mr. Schwarm, the nine Cook County Board Commissioners,<sup>10</sup> and Board of Review Commissioner Dan Patlak who met with Study Group members to discuss the STAR system.

## **OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS**

I. **The concepts behind the STAR Performance Management System are sound and the STAR Process, as described to the League, could have a positive impact on the functioning of and services provided by Cook County government.** The concept of setting goals, identifying measures, and providing targets for those measures is not revolutionary, but is a major change for Cook County government. STAR encompasses the four major goals that the President has set out for her administration: (1) Fiscal Responsibility, (2) Innovative Leadership, (3) Transparency & Accountability, and (4) Improved Services.

A. The process of documenting the major purposes of a department, determining goals for that department, identifying measures to assess progress toward achieving those goals, and setting performance targets can be very beneficial. The process can

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<sup>9</sup> The STAR Reports are no longer available to the public in a “pdf” format that can be downloaded.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Steele (2<sup>nd</sup> Dist.), Stanley Moore (4<sup>th</sup> Dist.), Edwin Reyes (8<sup>th</sup> Dist.), Bridget Gainer (10<sup>th</sup> Dist.), Larry Suffredin (13<sup>th</sup> Dist.), Gregg Goslin (14<sup>th</sup> Dist.), Timothy Schneider (15<sup>th</sup> Dist.), Jeffrey Tobolski (16<sup>th</sup> Dist.), and Elizabeth Gorman (17<sup>th</sup> Dist.).

result in a greater understanding of what that department should be doing by the department head, the department's employees, those to whom the department reports, and the rest of County government. Making this information public can provide the citizens of the County with a better understanding of County government. Knowing that the public will see this information and be able to hold government accountable, may provide department heads and the officials to whom they report an additional incentive to make this process a worthwhile effort.

B. Further, the concept of setting goals, measures and targets by department heads and Elected Officials who need to be working together within Areas in order for the County to properly fulfill its functions has the potential to be a means to encourage that needed cooperation.

C. There are several keys to whether STAR (or any performance management system) can help to achieve the positive results that are the ultimate goal of the program:

1. The value of STAR hinges on the relevance and quality of the goals, measures, and targets adopted. These goals, measures, and targets need to truly reflect what and how well each department and Area should be doing. The goals, measures and targets should also focus attention on the actions needed to produce the desired results.

2. Department heads and Elected Officials would all ideally accept the concepts behind STAR and implement them at least in some form, whether or not the same terminology is utilized.<sup>11</sup>

3. There needs to be accountability for both the degree and quality of participation in STAR (or the concepts behind STAR) and the actual results, or lack thereof. This accountability should be achieved at a minimum in the form of recognition (positive and negative), as well as through other means.

a) The STAR meetings held with the departments reporting to the President appear to be one way to achieve this accountability and recognition for both participation and results, as well as provide assistance and encouragement for continued improvement.

b) Since STAR has been legislated as part of the budget process, it would be expected that the goals, measures, and targets of the past year, as well as the upcoming year, would be the focus of the department meetings held by the Cook County Board during the yearly review of the Executive Budget. In addition, there would seem to be ample opportunities for the Cook County Board, through the functioning of its many committees, to review the goals, measures, targets and results of individual departments and of Areas throughout the year.

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<sup>11</sup> Board of Review Commissioner Patlak was only vaguely aware of STAR, but described in detail to the League a STAR-like process in which the various Elected Officials in the Property & Taxation Area worked together through regular meetings, as well as individually improved processes within their own departments, to achieve the result over the past 3 years to meet the goal of getting the 2<sup>nd</sup> installment property tax bills out on time.

c) Making the goals, measures, targets, and results (along with any necessary explanations) public through an easily read and understood report available online and downloadable is also an important means of providing accountability.

II. **STAR is very much a work in progress.** The performance management system is only four years old. There have been steps forward and backward, which is not surprising. Whether STAR actually becomes an important tool for improving the workings of County government or becomes merely a public relations tool (a concern expressed by some Commissioners to the Study Group) is still to be determined.

A. Currently, most of the measures used are output measures, i.e., measuring how many things are produced or how many services provided. There are also a few efficiency measures, i.e., measuring how quickly the products or services are being provided and how many people are involved. While those measures are needed, it is important that STAR evolve to also include

1. Customer service measures (that will reveal whether or not the customers of that product or service are satisfied),
2. Quality measures (that reflect the quality of the product or service provided), and
3. Outcome measures (that will demonstrate to those outside of the department whether or not the intended results are being achieved).

B. A number of measures still do not have targets listed. In some cases, this is appropriate as the metric is not an indication of performance, but is useful in evaluating performance and/or staffing needs. For example, the number of cases filed in the Circuit Court does not reflect any County department's performance, but may indicate why a department needs (or does not need) a certain level of staffing and/or explain why the department is meeting or not meeting other measurement targets. But in some cases, there clearly should be a target. This is particularly true with respect to the measures listed for the departments reporting to the other Elected Officials.

C. The importance of STAR to the President is demonstrated by

1. The creation of an Office of Performance Management to help educate departments on how to set goals, measures, and targets; to work with departments in setting those elements of STAR; to receive and verify data on a quarterly basis; and to meet with departments reporting to the President periodically to discuss how further improvements in performance can be achieved;
2. The full participation of departments reporting to the President in setting goals, measures, and targets as published in the STAR quarterly reports on the Performance Management Web site, as well as in the STAR meetings held with the departments;

3. The incorporation of STAR information into the Executive Budget books, both in the Resident's Guide in Volume I and in the information for each department in Volume II in 2014 and 2015; and

4. The incorporation of STAR information in the Annual Report that the President has published the past several years.

However, incorporating STAR information into the Executive Budget books and in the Annual Reports can also be viewed as more public relations than public reporting. Only some of the STAR information is included, and the information selected to be used for the departments in the 2015 Executive Budget in most cases is positive. Most troubling is the discrepancy between the information contained in the Executive Budget books and the online STAR Reports (at least for the Other Elected Officials). See Appendix 3. Further, in the 2015 Resident's Guide, only certain metrics are shown for the Areas, some of which do not relate to any type of performance goal. There is a discussion of some Area goals and some results, but there is no clear tie-in with the metrics shown.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the inclusion of metrics and the discussion reflects an increased appreciation for the value of setting goals and measuring outcomes within an Area, as well as for departments.

D. Some Commissioners have reported that they have been present at meetings of departments where they have observed a new emphasis on metrics, a greater desire to work together to achieve better results, and a new sense of accountability for results, which are all consistent with the STAR process. This has been cited as a culture shift within County government that is critical to achieving better results.

E. The members of the League Study Group were very favorably impressed with the STAR review meeting with the Revenue Department they were allowed to observe on March 6, 2014. There were in-depth discussions about the goals, the measures being used for activities deemed necessary to achieve those goals, the targets, and the actual results. A new goal was established during the discussion. Questions were asked and feedback was given to the members of the Revenue Department. The Study Group was particularly impressed by the fact that it was clear that the Department had been working with other departments under the President to assist them with fee collection methods and share information about effective computer program tools.

F. The other Elected Officials have embraced STAR to a far lesser degree, at least to the extent this can be determined by a review of the goals, measures, targets, and results (or lack thereof) reported in the online STAR Reports. See the reviews found in Appendix 3.

G. While the STAR concepts are incorporated into the Cook County ordinances as being integral to the budget process, the Cook County Commissioners, who have the ultimate responsibility for determining the budget, do not generally see that they have any role in utilizing STAR or assisting the STAR process. They generally see STAR as being an Executive program.

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<sup>12</sup> See pages 12 through 15 of the *Cook County Executive Recommendation, FY2015 Volume 1*.

1. Study Group Members interviewed nine Commissioners, and only one said that the STAR information was utilized by that Commissioner's office in reviewing the proposed 2014 budget.

2. League observers of the public budget meetings held by the Board's Finance Committee have said that there was little evidence that any Commissioner utilized STAR information in the Budget Books or in the online STAR Reports based on the Commissioners' questions that were asked of departments and the Commissioners' discussions during the 2014 and 2015 budget reviews. There was one exception. Commissioner Larry Suffredin did refer to STAR information in several questions he asked each year.

H. As discussed earlier in this Report, initially there were STAR Reports published online for each quarter of the County's fiscal year that were available as downloadable "pdfs" which showed the goals, measures, targets and results for each Area, as well as each department within an Area. These Reports are still available online in the "Archive" section of the Performance Management Web site.

However, starting with the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2013, only the most recent quarterly report can be viewed by the public, and only online. No longer are the Area goals, measures, targets, and results available online. Viewing the Department goals, measures, targets, and results for any department is very difficult and cumbersome given the width of each row. A single row of information cannot be viewed all at once. Moreover, it is now impossible to see whether there have been any changes to the goals, measures, and targets from the prior report since it is not available. Thus, it is impossible to make any assessment of whether the quality of these goals, measures and targets is improving over time. As a result of these changes to the online reporting mechanism, there is less transparency for the public than initially.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

I. Area Goals. **All Elected Officials need to work together** (such as by setting and working toward achieving Area Goals as called for under the STAR process) for the best results in the effort to improve the workings of County government. The Property & Taxation officials have shown what can be accomplished by working together to achieve timely 2<sup>nd</sup> installment property tax bills.

II. Elected Officials. Similarly, **each Elected Official should embrace STAR, or some other performance management system**, as a vehicle for improving the functioning of the departments reporting to that Official by identifying goals and establishing measures and targets to meet those goals.

III. Department Goals, Measures, and Targets. **All departments throughout the County need to continue to work** on improving the quality of their goals and measures, setting targets for those measures that will encourage better results, and providing the data for the measures.

A. Goals should reflect the core of why the department exists and the key services and products that are expected from that department.

B. Most measures currently relate to only quantity or output, with some measuring efficiency. There is a need to have more measures related to customer service, quality, and outcome. We understand that the Performance Management Department plans to continue to provide training to help departments to identify these other types of measures.

C. Targets, whenever appropriate, should be set based on benchmarks and best practices from other government entities and the private sector. It is important that the targets continue to stretch employees in an Area or department so that real improvement is achieved.

D. In past STAR Quarterly Reports, there were a number of measures that did not have targets and/or did not report any results.

1. If targets are not appropriate, then it should be so indicated in the Reports.

2. If quarterly targets are not appropriate, but only yearly targets, then that should be indicated in the Reports.

3. If data has not been collected for a particular measure, either the measure should be changed or a means for collecting the data should be identified.

E. While a number of goals and measures may remain the same from one year to the next, we would expect that the targets would generally be set higher from year to year. In a few instances, we were surprised to see that the target for the new year was lower than the actual result for the prior year. If there is some reason why that is appropriate, that needs to be explained in the Report.

IV. County-wide Goals. **Consideration should be given to whether there should be County-wide goals, measures and targets.** For example, should there be a county-wide goal of reducing the number of sick hours and other absences? Alternatively, should such a goal be included for an Area or each department, possibly with different targets if appropriate?

V. Commissioners' Role in STAR. **The Administration should consider seeking the Commissioners' assistance and discussing how they can be partners in STAR and utilize the information in their policy, budgetary, and oversight roles.**

VI. Web Site. **The STAR web site needs to be improved,** as set forth in a separate set of recommendations that were previously provided to the Performance Management Department and which are included in Appendix 4.

VII. Executive Budget. **The information about STAR in the Executive Budget, both in the "Resident's Guide" and in the detailed descriptions of departments, should be consistent with the STAR Reports.**

VIII. The League.

A. The League should continue to periodically

1. Review the STAR Reports and comment to appropriate County personnel on improvements that are observed, as well as what needs to be improved with respect to the
  - a) participation of all Elected Officials and departments in STAR,
  - b) the quality of the goals, measures, and targets and changes from the prior year (when such a comparison can again be made),
  - c) how the information is presented on the Web site, and
  - d) whether the other recommendations in this Report have been followed;
2. Observe the Finance Committee's meetings with Elected Officials and department heads to see whether there is any evidence that the Commissioners are utilizing STAR as part of the budget process; and
3. Observe the Board and its Committee meetings throughout the year to see if they are utilizing or otherwise involved with STAR.

B. Based on these observations and review, the League should then provide input regarding STAR to the appropriate County officials.

C. In order to provide the structure for this review, the League should adopt an appropriate position to be included in *Where We Stand*. A proposed position is included in Appendix 5 which reflects a consensus of the active members of the Study Group.

## **APPENDIX 1 -- OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY GROUP'S ACTIVITIES**

1. The Study Group first met on April 30, 2013.
2. Members were divided into "teams" to review and report on each section of the 2012 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter STAR Report for each Area and Department.
3. Study Group members met on May 22, 2013 with then Deputy Chief of Staff Carlos Ponce, Chief Performance Officer Andrew Schwarm, and Legislative Coordinator Ashley Velchek, who provided an overview of the STAR program and the STAR process.
4. In July, the Study Group met to discuss the information gleaned from the review of the STAR Reports and the May 22 meeting. Preparation began on a list of "Comments and Questions Regarding the STAR Reports."
5. These "Comments and Questions" were sent to Chief Performance Officer Andrew Schwarm in early October and a meeting to discuss this document and verify the STAR process was held with Mr. Schwarm on October 9.
6. The Study Group sent a letter, via email, separately to all 17 Cook County Commissioners in early October to make them aware of the STAR Study and to let them know that League members would be observing the upcoming Finance Committee meetings with departments concerning the proposed 2014 Budget and would be looking at, among other things, whether and how the Commissioners utilized STAR information during the budget review process. The letter also said that members of the Study Group would like to meet after the 2014 Budget was passed to discuss STAR with the Commissioners.
7. From November through January, members of the Study Group met with 9 of the 17 Commissioners. (During these meetings, there was also some discussion of the budget process and Special Purpose Funds in connection with other interests of the League.) Lack of time and availability of Study Group members prevented meeting with all 17 Commissioners.
8. On February 5, 2014, members of the Study Group met with Chief Performance Officer Andrew Schwarm to again confirm the STAR Process and find out if there had been any changes during the setting of the Goals, Measures, and Targets for 2014. The "Description of the STAR Process" contained in this Report reflects the information obtained from this meeting, as well as the prior information supplied by Mr. Schwarm. The highlights of the meetings with the Commissioners (without identifying which Commissioner said what) were also shared verbally with Mr. Schwarm. The Study Group members also provided some comments on the new interactive Performance Management Web site which had been unveiled in the fall of 2013.
9. An Interim Report was prepared and provided to the League Board in early March of 2014.
10. Three members of the Study Group were invited to observe one of the weekly meetings held with individual departments under the President to review and discuss a department's STAR Goals, Measures, Targets and progress in meeting the Targets and Goals. That meeting took place on March 6, 2014.
11. Information from the Interim Report was shared with local League members as part of the Cook County League's Annual Meeting in May, 2014.
12. A phone conversation took place between Mr. Schwarm and the Study Group Leader on August 5, 2014 to verify whether there had been any changes to the process and to discuss issues with the Performance Management Web site.
13. Members of the Study Group reviewed the STAR reports for departments reporting to Elected Officials (other than the President) in the fall of 2014.
14. The Final Report was prepared during the winter of 2014-15.

## **APPENDIX 2 -- DESCRIPTION OF THE STAR PROCESS (2013 and 2014)**

This outline was prepared based on meetings with and material from Andrew Schwarm, Chief Performance Officer in charge of STAR for Cook County, and the 2014 and 2015 Cook County Executive Budget books.

### **I. Area Goals**

#### **A. The Areas are**

1. Finance & Administration, composed of departments which report to the President
2. Economic Development, composed of the Bureau of Economic Development, which reports to the President, and the Cook County Land Bank Authority
3. Healthcare, composed of all the departments overseen by the Independent Board of the Cook County Health & Hospitals System
4. Property & Taxation, composed of the departments reporting to Assessor, Board of Review, Clerk, Recorder, and Treasurer.
5. Public Safety, composed of departments reporting to
  - a) the Chief Judge, the Clerk of the Circuit Court, the Sheriff, and the State's Attorney, and
  - b) the Public Administrator and Public Defender, appointed by the President and approved by the County Board for a stated term, and
  - c) the Departments of Facilities Management, which reports directly to the President, and Homeland Security & Emergency Management, which reports to a head appointed by the President and approved by the County Board

B. The Performance Management Office staff and STAR liaisons from the other Elected Officials or Bureau Chiefs for each Area meet to discuss the past year's Goals, Measurements, Targets, and results. Then discussion moves on to what should be changed for the new fiscal year. These meetings are to take place shortly after the budget for the new fiscal year is approved.

C. Once the staff deems the Area is ready, the President meets with the other Elected Officials or their Chiefs of Staff and/or Bureau Chiefs by Area, and together they review the past and finalize the new fiscal year's Goals, Measures, and Targets.

D. Information on measures is provided electronically following each quarter for Healthcare, Property & Taxation, and Public Safety to the Performance Management Web site. The information is due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the end of the quarter. The Office of Performance Management's role is to analyze the data and verify the integrity of the data.

E. Information on measures is provided electronically by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of each month for Finance & Administration and the Economic Development Areas (which fall directly under the President) to the Office of Performance Management which again is to analyze the data and verify the data's integrity.

F. The Quarterly STAR Report is to be made available to the public by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the second month after the quarter (April 1 for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, July 1 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter,

October 1 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, January 1 for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter). This is required by ordinance. However, since the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2013, there have been no publicly available Area STAR Reports, except for the Finance & Administrative Area. Since January of 2015, that Area's information is no longer available online.

G. Following the finalization of the Quarterly STAR Report, the President meets with the Elected Officials or their Chiefs of Staff and the applicable Bureau Chiefs or Department Heads for each Area to discuss the results and see what needs to be done to collect missing data and to improve performance in order to meet Targets. The Finance & Administration Area and the Economic Development Area may meet more often than quarterly.

H. It appears that there are no particular positive or negative consequences for meeting or failing to meet targets for these Area goals.

II. **Department Goals** (this description only applies to Departments reporting to the President; if any of the other Electeds have department goals, that is solely within the applicable Elected's purview and not under the STAR program administered by the Office of Performance Management).

A. After the Area Goals, Measures, and Targets are set, the Office of Performance Management meets with the Department Head and designated STAR liaison in that Department to discuss setting that Department's new Goals, Measures, and Targets.

B. The Department then discusses internally and comes back with a proposal.

C. The proposal is discussed back and forth and finalized at a meeting among the representatives from the Department and the applicable Analyst and the Chief Performance Officer from the Performance Management Office, the Deputy Chief of Staff, and often the Special Legal Counsel to the President.

D. Information on measures is provided electronically by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month to the Office of Performance Management, which analyzes the data and verifies the accuracy of the data.

E. The Quarterly STAR Report is made available to the public by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the second month after the quarter (April 1 for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, July 1 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, October 1 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, January 1 for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter). This is required by ordinance.

F. Each week, the Chief of Staff, Chief Performance Officer, and applicable Performance Management Analyst meet on Tuesday for 1 hour to prepare for a Thursday meeting with a department. At this Tuesday meeting, the participants

1. look at data
2. identify areas of focus for Thursday review
3. answer questions
4. identify follow-up in advance of review

G. Each Thursday, the Chief of Staff and Chief Performance Officer lead a review of a department's STAR efforts. Those attending include the Presenting Department, all the Bureau Chiefs, the Budget Director, the Chief Procurement Officer and the Chief

Administrative Officer, all of whom ultimately report to the President. At this meeting the participants

1. Discuss opportunities to improve performance
2. Identify impediments to improvement
3. Review key department initiatives
4. Coordinate efforts
5. Discuss data collection and data integrity
6. Identify next steps

H. There have been “awards” given out at these meetings for performance, which includes small trophies for the Department.

I. Departments are divided into different tiers with regard to how often they will have a Review Session. Tier 1 Departments can meet as often as every 6 or 7 weeks. Tier 4 Departments will likely meet only 1 or 2 times a year. The Tiers are determined based on how critical meeting the Goals of that Department is to the functioning of the County as a whole.

III. The **Office of Performance Management** is also responsible for providing training for the Departments to help them set the Goals and Measurements and help them identify Measurements that will go beyond mere output (quantity) but also deal with quality. The Office has completed a second set of sessions on data and process mapping.

A. The Office of Performance Management for fiscal year 2014 and 2015 (per the Executive Budget) falls under the Budget and Management Services Department under the Bureau of Finance and is composed of 4 positions:

1. Chief Performance Officer
2. 2 “Industrial Engineer II” positions (analysts)
3. 1 Performance Management Analyst

B. The primary work of the Office of Performance Management in each of the quarters of the fiscal has been described to the Study Group as follows:

1. 1<sup>st</sup> quarter (Dec. – Feb.): work with departments and Areas to set Goals, Measures, and Targets.
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (Mar. – May): work on how to collect data.
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter (June – Aug./Sept.): work on how STAR fits in with the budget process and how STAR results should influence decisions for the proposed Executive Budget, as well as what to include from the STAR Reports in the Executive Budget books.
4. 4<sup>th</sup> quarter (Sept., but probably more Oct. & Nov.): while the budget process/review is ongoing, there are no weekly Performance Management Review meetings with Departments and this Office instead does quite a bit of the training during this time.

## **APPENDIX 3 -- REVIEW OF 2014 FOURTH QUARTER STAR REPORTS FOR THE OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Generally, there are a number of issues with regard to the online STAR Reports for the Other Elected Officials: missing information; metrics that are not measurements related to goals; and surprisingly, discrepancies between what is contained in the 2015 Executive Budget book concerning "STAR Goals/Key Performance Indicators" and the online STAR Report. Generally, the information in the Executive Budget book appears much more relevant to the STAR process than what is in the online Report.

### **Assessor**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Report reflects 3 goals: (1) Reduce Valuation Time; (2) Increase Positive Taxpayer Experience; and (3) Ensure Fair and Accurate Assessment. All are appropriate goals (though the goal of reducing valuation time might be better expressed as completing the valuation time by an appropriate deadline). The measures for the first two goals seem appropriate, though we would expect more measures for the second goal. For the third goal, we would expect there to be a measure of how many assessments were changed by more than some appropriately small amount by the Board of Review. The measure listed of how many assessments were appealed does not reflect the accuracy of the initial assessment. Rather one needs to look to what the Board of Review did to determine how accurate the initial assessments were by the Assessor's office.

But there is no information reported for the fiscal year 2014. So the question is whether the Assessor is participating at all in STAR or whether the information is simply not available. If the latter, why not and when will the information be available? Interestingly, there are some metrics listed for 2014 in the 2015 Executive Budget, but these are not in the 2014 Fourth Quarter STAR Report.

### **Board of Review**

There are no goals at all listed, just some performance metrics. But without goals or targets, there is no ability to understand what the performance metrics are intended to reveal. We would expect the goals for this body to be very similar to those of the Assessor, except that the first goal would be to complete the reviews of appeals by an appropriate deadline. And that is exactly what was included in the 2015 Executive Budget. There are also some different metrics listed in the 2015 Executive Budget. Why this discrepancy between the Report and the Executive Budget?

### **Chief Judge**

As discussed in the body of this Report, the Chief Judge has told the League that the departments reporting to him are not participating in STAR because of his concern that it not appear that the Judicial Branch is subject to the Executive or Legislative Branch. Of course, the budgets for the Chief Judge's departments are subject to the Cook County Board, and it is pursuant to the budgetary authority that the ordinance was enacted which established the requirements for participating in STAR and submitting reports. The Chief Judge also has told the League that he intended to establish an appropriate performance measurement system for his departments and report on his web site. The League has not seen any such reports on the Chief Judge's web site thus far.

### **Clerk of the Court**

There are 3 goals listed: (1) Improve Customer Service; (2) Improve Employee Development and Training; and (3) Ensure Financial Accountability. In addition, there is a category of "Other

Indicators” with metrics. However, none of the measures listed reveals how well the office is operating, particularly since there are no targets listed. We are not sure why the metric of “Value court-ordered traffic money paid (collected)” is an appropriate metric for the Clerk since this office does not set the amount to be collected. Rather, an appropriate measure might be the percentage of what was ordered to be paid that was actually collected, assuming the Clerk is responsible for this collection.

In any case, there is no information reported after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter for 2014. The STAR Performance Data contained in the 2015 Executive Budget has no relation to what is contained in the STAR Report.

### **Clerk**

For the online report, the “goals” listed are actually departments under the Clerk; and the “measures” are goals, albeit fairly specific and narrowly focused. Information for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter is missing, though in some cases it may be because the actions would have only taken place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters. Again there is a discrepancy between the STAR information in the 2015 Executive Budget book and the online STAR Report. Why?

### **Recorder of Deeds**

There are 3 goals listed: (1) Ensure all Recordation Is Efficient and Accurate; (2) Increase the Availability of Recording Data; and (3) Ensure Good Customer Service. Some of the measures do not directly reflect performance, though they may be important to know in assessing performance and staffing needs. For example, under the first goal, there is a measure of the number of documents recorded. We are not sure why there is a target for this since this measure is out of the Recorder’s control. But under the same goal, there is a measure of the number of days to index a document, which is a very appropriate measure indicating performance. Unfortunately, there is no measure reflecting accuracy. A measure listed for the third goal is the number of phone calls received. Again, this measure is outside of the Recorder’s control and does not reflect whether the customer received good service, so why does that measure have a target?

There is no information for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter and thus not for the entire 2014 fiscal year in the STAR Report. And again, there is a discrepancy between the STAR information in the 2015 Executive Budget and what is contained in the online Report.

### **Sheriff**

There are separate online reports for four (4) of the eight (8) Operating Fund departments that report to the Sheriff, and none for the areas covered by the Special Purpose Funds (such as Sheriff’s Youthful Offender Alcohol & Drug Education). It is not clear why there are no reports for these other areas under the Sheriff. There are goals for each of the four departments that are reporting, but it is not clear how the measures shown reflect performance, though they are interesting metrics, such as the average daily jail population. Appropriately, there are no targets for these metrics that do not measure performance or are otherwise under the Sheriff’s control. In the 2015 Executive Budget, there is a STAR Goal listed under the Department of Corrections of coming into full compliance with the Department of Justice and a statement that the Department was able to come into full or partial compliance with 90% of the provisions. Neither this goal nor any performance measures are listed in the online STAR Report. This is just another example of a discrepancy between the STAR information contained in the 2015 Executive Budget book and the online STAR Report.

### **State's Attorney**

This is the one Elected Official for whom the STAR information in the 2015 Executive Budget book matches the online STAR Report. The 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter STAR Report is also complete. Further, the measures listed do relate to the goals and performance related to those goals. Hopefully, going forward, the goals and measures will expand to quality of performance, and not just to efficiency or quantity of performance. Further, since the department's purpose, as described in the STAR Report, is to "provide extensive services to victims and witnesses," it would be appropriate to have goals and measures related to that aspect.

### **Treasurer**

In prior quarters' reports, there were no targets for 2014, and the target for that particular quarter matched exactly with the actual results, calling into question whether there had indeed been a target set before the results came in. However, in this 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Report, there are targets for the year. Unfortunately, there are no 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter results listed. The measurements are for the most part output-oriented, but there is one important efficiency measurement (the average number of weeks to process overpayments). Again there is a discrepancy between the information contained in the 2015 Executive Budget book with regard to goals and measures and those contained in the online Report. The Executive Budget states that a reduced headcount and a reduction of duplicate payments are goals, but these are not listed in the online Report.

## **APPENDIX 4 -- SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING COOK COUNTY'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (STAR) WEB SITE**

1. The home page should be more comprehensive as it was in the past. We think it would be better to have the home page of this site explain that all the departments within Cook County are divided among 5 Areas, plus the Forest Preserve (but see Suggestion #4 below), and list the Areas. Then it should be explained that each Area has a set of Goals, Measures for determining whether the Goal is being met, and a Target for each Measure. Then explain that within each Area, the departments themselves have Goals, Measures, and Targets. This home page should then direct the viewer to click on the heading "STAR Reports" to view the actual information.
2. The viewer should be able to click on each Area from the initial "STAR Reports" page and see the Goals, Measures, Targets, and data for that Area. From there, ideally all the information for all the individual departments in an Area would be able to be accessed by scrolling down, as opposed to having to use the "back arrow" to go back first to the list of Areas, and then click on the Area again to see the list of departments before clicking on another department. However, from this initial page, it would still be nice to have the option to click on a particular department of that Area to go directly to see that department's goals, etc., as one can now. In other words, we would like these two ways of accessing department information.
3. Not having the Goals, Measures, Targets and data for the five Areas is a major omission from the Web site and should be corrected as soon as possible.
4. Is it appropriate to include the Forest Preserve STAR Report on the County's Web site? Does including the Forest Preserve STAR Report on the County's Web site improperly blur the distinction between Cook County government and the Forest Preserve District as separate governmental entities?
5. There should be an ability to see and print out the complete STAR Report by having a pdf version. It is very time-consuming for the viewer to have to constantly click and return to be able to see information for multiple departments. Further, it is difficult to see an entire line of information on the online report because the line of information is so wide.
6. It should be clear from the Web site what quarter (by beginning and ending date) the information shown is for. You cannot tell from the current Web site until you dig into the metrics that the information "2014 YTD" is actually the entire 2014 fiscal year. Some people who view the Web site will not realize that the fiscal year ends November 30, 2014, as opposed to being a calendar year. Also, how will someone know when the information has been updated for the latest quarter unless the time period is clearly stated?
7. The use of colored lines, as long as the colors are consistently red for an undesirable variance and green for a desirable variance, is helpful because it is not always easy to determine whether being above or below the Target is good or bad.
8. Under the Archive section of the Web site, there are no reports after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter for 2013. You should be able to at least see the final report for each fiscal year.
9. Whenever a Target was not met, it would be good to see what action is being taken to improve. Otherwise, when you see action plans in some cases, you wonder why there is no

plan in other cases. Also, seeing an action plan is good for instilling confidence in citizens that the County is trying to improve.

10. When it is not appropriate to have a Target, there needs to be some way of designating that so the viewer can distinguish between those Measures and the Measures which have not had a Target set for another reason or those situations when there has been a failure to set a Target.
11. Similarly, when it is not appropriate to have a quarterly Target, but only a yearly Target, that needs to be indicated so a blank is not interpreted as a failure to set a Target.

**APPENDIX 5 -- PROPOSED NEW POSTION TO BE ADDED TO THE "COUNTY GOVERNMENT" SECTION OF *WHERE WE STAND*:**

**Performance Management**

The League supports the use of performance management system(s) by all elected and appointed officials in Cook County Government in order to improve the workings of the County for its citizens.

- A. Such performance management system(s) should set goals reflecting core missions and duties, results-oriented measures, and targets of achievement for individual departments and across related departments that need to work together to achieve desired results.
- B. Wherever appropriate, benchmarks and best practices from government entities and private industry should be utilized in setting goals and targets of achievement.
- C. Results should be reported at regular intervals (at least yearly), should be made available to the public in an easily readable format, and should be archived.