**TEXAS BOND REVIEW BOARD**

*Governor Rick Perry, Chairman*

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**REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE**

June 1, 2012

**TEXAS BOND REVIEW BOARD**

**Report on Customer Service**

Section 2114, Texas Government Code, requires state agencies to develop customer service standards and implement customer satisfaction assessment plans. This process is to be completed by June 1st of each even-numbered year. This is the first step in an agency’s strategic planning process.

In order to gauge how well the Bond Review Board (BRB) serves its customers, a process similar to the prior customer service survey was used. This included surveying the widest variety of customers as efficiently as possible. To this end, customers from all three of the BRB’s program areas were asked to complete the online survey that was automatically emailed to BRB staff for compilation and analysis.

**Inventory of External Customers**

The BRB’s mission statement includes three goals: Goal 1 is the review and approval of most state-issued debt; Goal 2 is the tracking and reporting of Texas local government debt; and Goal 3 is the administration of the state’s Private Activity Bond Allocation Program. The agency has a wide variety of customers, from state and local issuers and municipal securities professionals to the general public, all of whom seek debt data and information.

Goal 1 customers include state debt issuers, professionals employed by state debt issuers (i.e., financial advisors, bond counsels et al), state agency staff, legislators and their staff, media, legislative and academic researchers and the general public. Services provided to this customer base include review and approval of debt issues, preparation of reports on state debt and posting state debt information, compilation of the state’s capital expenditure plan and posting guidelines on debt management and interest rate management agreements.

Goal 2 customers include rating agencies, issuers, legislators, policy makers, state agency staff, local government officials, academic researchers and the general public. Services provided to this customer base include information on local government debt outstanding and related debt-ratio statistics and trends. The available data can be used as a tool for local governments to assess their debt-management practices.

Goal 3 customers include local issuers and public finance community and the professionals they employ (i.e., financial advisors, bond counsels, developers and issuers), certain state agencies and the general public. Services provided to this customer base include the administration and allocation of the Private Activity Bond Allocation Program (PAB) and ministerial functions for certain federal tax-exempt bond programs.

**Information Gathering Methods**

The Bond Review Board has had an online customer service survey available since the agency’s website was redesigned in December 2003. Customers can access a permanent link to the survey on the home page of the agency’s website at [www.brb.state.tx.us](file:///%5C%5CApollo%5Cbrbdata%5COffice%20Admin%5CStrategic%20Plans%5CStrategic%20Plan%202006%5Ccustomer_service%5Cwww.brb.state.tx.us).

On April 18, 2012 emails were sent out to 210 customers of the Bond Review Board requesting that they complete the survey online. Responses were received from 38 recipients for a response rate of 18.1%, comparable to the rate in prior biennia. The last response was received on May 11, 2012.

The survey included queries on service areas, facilities, staff, communications, the agency’s website, complaint handling processes, timeliness and printed information. The survey also allows respondents to add general comments as desired. When asked to select a service area, respondents separated the results into five areas – the three agency goals listed above, the Capital Expenditure Plan (CEP) and “Other.” Each respondent was then asked to select poor, below average, average, above average, excellent or does not apply. These scores were given the numerical representation of one through five, respectively, and the “does not apply” response received no score.

Email addresses from internal databases and staff address books were used to source Goal 1 customers.

Goal 2 surveys were distributed to members of the state and local government entities that had initiated contact or interacted with the BRB since the prior survey was taken in 2010. They were selected by reviewing contacts that had provided email addresses that were listed in the agency’s performance measure database.

In addition to the customers listed for Goals 1 and 2, inquiries about Goal 3 are often received from the legislature and the general public. Because the PAB program administrator uses email for certain required notifications, persons listed in the PAB database were included in the survey.

The BRB also administers the state’s CEP in conjunction with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. All state agencies and institutions of higher education that have plans to purchase land, buildings or information systems in excess of $1 million are required to file this report with the BRB. Email contacts derived from the CEP were requested to participate in the survey as well.

**Customer Satisfaction Findings**

The agency sent emails to 210 recipients requesting completion of the online survey and received 38 responses. Five was the highest rating available in a customer-service quality element, and the BRB chose a rating of three as the minimal level of satisfaction.

The results indicate that the highest scoring customer-service quality elements were the BRB staff, communications and timeliness in providing requested information. The sample size for ease of filing service complaints (shown as “complaints” in the chart) and for efficiency of complaints processed (shown as “complaints2 in the chart) was small with more than 80% of respondents selecting “does not apply.”

The chart below shows the average of the responses for each question. Responses of “does not apply” or omissions were not counted towards the averages.



The lowest average scores were still above the minimal satisfaction level of three. They related to the agency’s website user friendliness (shown as “website” in the chart) and adequacy of online information about the BRB and the services provided (shown as “website2” in the chart).

The agency has made improvements to the website by making it accessible to all users and complying with the Texas Administrative Code Section 213 - Electronic and Information Resources Accessibility Standards. Staff will utilize the results of this survey to continue to update and improve the website’s functionality to better serve agency customers.

The following tables show each question and the responses received.

|  |
| --- |
| Staff – Are the staff members helpful, courteous and knowledgeable? |
| Poor | Below Average | Average | Above Average | Excellent | Does Not Apply |
| 0 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 26 | 1 |

|  |
| --- |
| Facilities – Is the Board’s office accessible, clean and adequately equipped for your needs? |
| Poor | Below Average | Average | Above Average | Excellent | Does Not Apply |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 12 | 18 |

|  |
| --- |
| Communications – Is communicating with the Board staff via telephone, mail or electronic mail a trouble-free and efficient process? |
| Poor | Below Average | Average | Above Average | Excellent | Does Not Apply |
| 0 | 0 | 1 | 12 | 24 | 1 |

|  |
| --- |
| Website – Is the Board’s website user friendly? |
| Poor | Below Average | Average | Above Average | Excellent | Does Not Apply |
| 0 | 1 | 6 | 13 | 17 | 1 |

|  |
| --- |
| Website (website2) – Does the site contain adequate information about the Bond Review Board and the services provided? |
| Poor | Below Average | Average | Above Average | Excellent | Does Not Apply |
| 0 | 0 | 3 | 17 | 17 | 1 |
| Complaints – Are service complaints easy to file? |
| Poor | Below Average | Average | Above Average | Excellent | Does Not Apply |
| 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 32 |

|  |
| --- |
| Complaint Process (complaints2) – If you used the complaint process, was it resolved in a timely manner? |
| Poor | Below Average | Average | Above Average | Excellent | Does Not Apply |
| 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 33 |

|  |
| --- |
| Service Timeliness – Are Board staff members prompt in providing requested information? |
| Poor | Below Average | Average | Above Average | Excellent | Does Not Apply |
| 0 | 0 | 2 | 10 | 25 | 1 |

|  |
| --- |
| Printed Information – Are any reports, instructions or other printed information provided by the Board accurate and easy to understand? |
| Poor | Below Average | Average | Above Average | Excellent | Does Not Apply |
| 0 | 0 | 3 | 12 | 21 | 2 |

**Representative Sample of Comments Received**

* The information on private activity volume cap and Ike cap is not always up to date. Staff is helpful and cordial.
* I work around the country on PAB financings and the BRB staff is by far the most responsive of any agency I've dealt with. The only area that I would recommend reviewing is the website. It has a lot of great information but things can be hard to find after you get past the main page.
* I am not sure who your customers are but as a taxpayer and the guy footing the bill, TBRB, especially Heather Rosas, is only rivaled by the Texas Jail Commission on being responsive to requests for information. I have worked with many state entities and only two are considered top notch operations.
* BRB staff have been exceptionally helpful in my efforts to respond to the Comptroller's state and local debt-related requests. John Barton and Heather Rosas have consistently provided me with quality information in a very timely manner.
* Communication by staff members is particularly outstanding. They are not only prompt and helpful in response to questions and requests, they are proactive in providing assistance and in assuring that the state's interests are being met. Probably the most helpful governmental agency I have ever dealt with.
* The local government services staff has always been prompt, friendly and helpful.
* Jodee Martinez goes beyond helping other state accountants. She is a great resource. Always professional and a joy to work with.
* John Barton provided superb and timely support last November during an audit my office (the State Auditor's Office) was conducting.
* Rob Latsha is awesome! Helps Treasury Operations Division of the Comptroller's office with quarterly updates to our bond appendix. Great to work with!
* It would be helpful to include true interest cost and years to maturity in all your local government services downloadable spreadsheets.
* Phone is always answered which is appreciated and staff understands issues and provides requested information immediately or promptly after request. Thanks.
* The staff is always helpful and responsive concerning our private activity bond questions or issues.
* Very helpful and knowledgeable staff.

**Estimated Performance for Fiscal Year 2012**

**Outcome Measures**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Percentage of surveyed customer respondents expressing overall satisfaction with services received. | 100.0% |
| Percentage of surveyed customer respondents identifying ways to improve service delivery | 5.0 % |

**Output Measures**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of customers surveyed | 210 |
| Number of customers served\* | 3,000 |

**Efficiency Measure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Cost per customer surveyed \*\* | $ 0.10 |

**Explanatory Measures**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of customers identified\* | 5,700 |
| Number of customer groups inventoried\* | 8 |

\* Estimates based on contacts, performance measures, and service areas.

\*\* Estimate – Survey is done online; cost reflects staff time to compile survey data.

**Customer Service Representative**

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