

New Hanover County Customer Service Committee Meeting Notes – 6/13/2007

Members in Attendance:

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| Leslie Stanfield | Captain Ed McMahon | Andy Atkinson | Olivia Pace |
| Melissa Hight | Jennifer Hardison | Diane Morgan | Cindy Kee-Macpherson |
| Jane O'Brien | Katie Elzer-Peters | Harry Tuchmayer | Kim Roane |
| Bob Glasgow | Tracy Dawson | Dennis Ihnat | Linda Augino |

Accomplishments:

- Reviewed Progress of Customer Service Initiative
- Understanding of The Carrot Principle and Employee Recognition

Summary:

- Welcomed Katie Elzer-Peters from Airlie Gardens and Captain Ed McMahon from the Sheriffs Department to the Customer Service Committee.
- Approved 5/09/07 meeting notes.
- Discussed the Customer Service Initiative
 - Earlier this year, the Government Center Customer Service Committee and the broader County Customer Service Committee merged into one united group.
 - The Health Department started a Customer Service Initiative one year ago and is seeing the positive results from their emphasis on customer service.
 - We have formed a Customer Service Initiative Requirements Development Team with the following members:

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| Lynn Sanders | Dennis Bordeaux | Chuck Shiver |
| Angela Bernard | Anthony Jinwright | Marie Spencer |
| Trena Ballard | Melissa Hight | |
 - We are in the initial stages of our countywide Customer Service Initiative. There will be a total of thirteen Focus Groups from a broad cross-section of County Employees. Ten focus groups have met over the past week and we have received a lot of good input. The Focus Groups have validated our Core Values (Respect, Integrity, Service, Empathy, Excellence) by helping us define them and by helping us define, “What is Quality Customer Service?”
 - The Focus Groups have brought over 100 employees together to generate ideas on customer service and then go back to their departments to spread the word.
 - Reviewed Customer Service Vision:
 - Empowered Employees taking initiative to deliver service and solve problems for the citizens of NHC in an atmosphere of trust.
 - Trust is a large component of Customer Service Initiative. We can't have empowerment without trust.
 - We can't have excellent customer service without excellent performance. We can't have excellent performance without internal support.
 - We are starting to hear some clearly defined themes from the Focus Groups, such as knowledge, listening, support and ownership.
 - Customer service isn't just about how you answer the phone, the Focus Group meetings have helped us realize that it's all about relationships.

- If we are following the Mission, Vision and Core Values, we will be providing excellent customer service.
 - Reviewed the Customer Service Initiative Mission Statement:
 - To develop a culture within New Hanover County Government that fosters an elevated focus on quality Customer Service through training, communication, knowledge and personal ownership.
 - We are creating an elevated level of awareness and developing the culture that this is how we do business.
 - We are trying to get the values out there and emphasize them from the beginning of the hiring process.
- Discussed recognition and The Carrot Principle. Recognition is essential to encourage and motivate employees. Applying employee recognition in an atmosphere of trust helps organizations move from a scarcity mentality to an abundance mentality.
 - The Basic Four
 1. Goal Setting
 2. Open Communication
 3. Building Trust
 4. Accountability
 - Recognition has to be sincere
 - Sometimes the recognition is all a person needs, but it must be:
 1. Timely
 2. Specific
 3. Personal
- Continued discussing the Customer Service Gallery of Excellence and the “RISE to Excellence” Award draft.
 - Accountability is important for good behavior as well as bad
 - The standards will be a tool for review
 - Recognition will be ongoing and everyone will have the opportunity to be recognized.
 - We are working to develop a culture where excellent customer service and recognition is the norm.
 - Discussed ways we currently recognize employees, i.e. employee picnic. Leslie Stanfield mentioned Johnston Counties and their yearly Employee Convocation Ceremony.
- Discussed Surveys and their importance for evaluating internal and external customers.
- Discussed everyday examples of great customer services. Some of the employees who were mentioned include Steve Simms, Evelyn Evanko, Pat Melvin
- Briefly discussed de-escalation training and the use of conflict management techniques when handling face to face contact and everyday interactions with upset customers. Other ideas for training include diversity training, stress management and empathic listening. We will discuss these in more detail at the next meeting.

- Briefly discussed ways to familiarize employees with all County Government Departments to further their knowledge and to help them provide better customer service when asked about other departments. We are looking into ways to give tours of County facilities to employees.

Next Meeting:

Date: June 11, 2007

Time: 3:00 – 4:30 PM

Place: Property Management