

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

2013-2014 Performance Report

Commissioners of the Land Office

AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT:

Here a simple statement of the adopted mission of the agency should be provided, along with the entity or person(s) who adopted the mission statement and when it was adopted.

The Enabling Act and Constitution set out the mission of the Land Office. It is “Managing Assets to Support Education”

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR:

Here the name, title and contact information for the lead administrative person should be listed.

Secretary
Harry Birdwell
405-521-4008
Harry.birdwell@clo.ok.gov

GOVERNANCE:

Here a brief description of the agency’s governance structure should be provided. Is the agency headed by a Governor appointee? An appointee of an independent board? Who selects the board, and who are the current members of the board.

The Commissioners of the Land Office was created by Congress pursuant to the Enabling Act. The creation of a Land Office was mandated before statehood consideration. Part of its structure and the members of the board are laid out in the Constitution with additional statutory references. The Land Office is headed by the Secretary who is appointed by the Governor and approved by the Commission. The Commission is Chaired by the Governor and includes the Governor, Lt. Governor, State Auditor and Inspector, Superintendent of Education and the President of the Board of Agriculture

Does the Board have any committees or subgroups? If so, please provide a detailed listing of the subgroups and their areas of focus.

An Investment Committee appointed by the Commission

GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY:

Please provide copies of the minutes for any Commission/Board meetings the agency has had since July 1, 2010 in electronic format (Only in PDF format) Is there an attendance policy for board members/commissioners? If so, is it being followed?

Please see attachment. All copies of minutes are available on the Commissioners of the Land Office website. There is no attendance policy

MODERNIZATION EFFORTS:

Please provide a listing of all government modernization efforts undertaken by the agency since July 1, 2010. Additionally, please provide any authorizing statutory changes that prompted the modernization efforts and whether those efforts have led to cost savings or additional cost burden.

In 2010 House Bill 3026 was passed to allow for modernization of the Land Office. It was the first major update and upgrade to the agency in four decades and in some cases since statehood. The measure included increased education and certification standards for staff, allowing for increases in the distributions to schools, major technology upgrades, the restructuring of divisions in the agency, a full time internal auditor, user friendly web access to information for the beneficiaries and lease holders and major security upgrades. The security upgrades include the first time use of lockbox services for checks, 24 hour monitoring of the mailroom and cashiers window.

What steps has the agency taken to cut costs and/or eliminate waste? Are there efforts that have been successful which you believe could serve as a model for other state agencies seeking to keep costs minimal?

Increasing the qualifications for staff has allowed for the consolidation of divisions. New technology upgrades will allow more efficient use of staff time and insure better accuracy.

CORE MISSION:

What services are you required to provide which are outside of your core mission? Are any services you provide duplicated or replicated by another agency? Are there services which are core to your mission which you are unable to perform because of requirements to perform non-core services elsewhere?

Gas Marketing to state agencies. The minerals division works with other state agencies and universities to purchase whole sale natural gas to provide cost savings to the agencies. The Real Estate division has highly skilled appraisers and a sale mechanism that works with other state agencies that are trying to sell property or buildings. This does not increase the Land Office FTE but does provide a cost savings to other agencies.

PRIVATE ALTERNATIVES:

Are any of the services which are performed by the agency also performed in the private sector in Oklahoma? In other states? Has the agency been approached by any foundation, for-profit or not-for-profit corporation with efforts to privatize some of the functions of the agency?

The Land Office was contacted by Electronic Auctions firms. The programs offered had inadequate security to insure the integrity of with Mineral or Real Estate Auctions. A large metro area bank contacted the Land Office about managing the minerals and records of the agency. The bank decided the Land Office's staff sophistication in the area exceeded its staff.