

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

August 12, 2014

Consolidated Small Business Assistance

Small businesses are a vital sector of the Los Angeles County economy, and we need to continue to look at innovative ways to offer support and guidance towards their development and success. Starting a small business as well as keeping one in business can be an incredibly challenging endeavor. Unfortunately, the County's system can be burdensome and confusing to small business owners, especially if they do not know who to contact and/or how to start the process.

In response to my motion from last December, the Chief Executive Office worked with relevant Departments and came up with recommendations to help small businesses in navigating through the County's procedural requirements. Their report of May 2, 2014 made some very good recommendations, including creating internal and external small business reference documents, implementing a small business web portal, and initiating a small business concierge service. These recommendations would greatly improve the aid that the County delivers to small businesses.

- M O R E -

MOTION

MOLINA _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

YAROSLAVSKY _____

ANTONOVICH _____

KNABE _____

I believe that locating the concierge service under the Department of Consumer Affairs would be a great way to provide our small businesses that are seeking support with a great advocate that can guide them through the County's process. We have seen similar positions work in other locations, and this new concierge will be a tremendous asset to our small businesses.

While the County already has an Office of Small Business (OSB), its primary focus is connecting small businesses with government contracting opportunities. We need a comprehensive small business center that goes beyond contracting to help these entities launch and thrive. The Department of Consumer Affairs already does a fantastic job of assisting consumers, and I firmly believe that they could do the same in supporting small businesses. Current and prospective small businesses owners need a true one-stop location to receive County assistance for all of their issues, including both permitting and contracting.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with the Director of Consumer Affairs and the Director of Internal Services, to report back in 90 days on the following components:

1. Feasibility and fiscal impact of transferring the functions and personnel of the County's Office of Small Business to the Department of Consumer Affairs;
2. Evaluation of moving the Small Business Commission under the Department of Consumer Affairs or the Executive Office, including working with the Executive Officer of the Board; and
3. Analysis of adding a Consumer Affairs Specialist position to the Department of Consumer Affairs in the Fiscal Year 2014-15 Budget who would function as the County's Small Business Concierge.

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