2013 Budget Hearing Statement
Patricia Jackowiak, Director
Department of Administrative Hearings
Friday, October 26, 2012

Good Morning, Chairman Austin. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today about the Department of Administrative Hearings, what we have achieved this year, and what we plan to accomplish in 2013.

The mission of the Department is to provide quality administrative hearings for the City of Chicago in a timely and efficient manner, with respect for the dignity of individuals and their due process rights. DOAH is an independent entity that hears cases relating to violations of the Municipal Code, the Chicago Park District Code, and the Chicago Transit Authority Code. DOAH does not hear cases where incarceration is sought.

The Department hires and trains outside attorneys to hear cases. These administrative law judges preside over approximately 525,000 cases per year. The Department hears cases that fall under the following categories:

- Buildings: violations of zoning code, fire code, building code including targeting of gang and drug houses, vacant buildings, and lead paint in buildings with minors.
- Environmental Safety and Consumer Affairs: public passenger vehicle violations, false advertising/deceptive practices, unlicensed businesses, outdated food products, home repair and motor vehicle repair fraud, unstamped cigarette sales, tobacco sales to minors, overweight trucks; violations of sanitation and health codes including overflowing garbage dumpsters, unsanitary restaurants or stores, recycling violations, improper waste disposal, and towed vehicles.
- Municipal: police-issued tickets, non-payment of business taxes, wage garnishments, false burglar alarms, animal care and control, vehicle impoundments, debt determination including water debt, denials of parade permits and gun registrations and CHA tenant grievances. In the summer of 2012, DOAH was appointed by the Chief Procurement Officer to hear debarment cases. DOAH also began hearing cannabis possession violations up to 15 grams.
- Vehicle: parking tickets, booted vehicles, red light camera violations, and driver's license suspensions.

The Department continues to maintain an exceptionally high level of service to the public. We have accomplished this through cross-training personnel and identifying and employing various efficiencies.

The Department remains committed to assisting *pro se* (self-represented) litigants to effectively navigate the administrative hearing process. The help desk at the Central Hearing Facility, which is staffed and independently operated by attorneys from the

Coordinated Advice & Referral Program for Legal Services (CARPLS), is open four days a week. CARPLS is a non-profit legal aid service that gives low-income clients direct access to experienced attorneys through legal aid hotlines and court-based help desks. The help desk provides support to *pro se* litigants by educating them about their legal rights and remedies, providing them with practical "how to" advice on how to present their evidence and their side of the case, and with assistance in preparing motions. The help desk, which is jointly funded by the City and the Chicago Bar Foundation, assisted 1,444 low-income respondents during CARPLS fiscal year of 7/1/11 – 6/30/12.

A second source of assistance for respondents continues to be provided by the *Telephone Language Line Interpretation Service* (Language Line). This service is available for respondents whose first language is not English. Language Line provides over-the-telephone foreign language translation service.

Access to Language Line interpreters is provided in all the hearing rooms at the Central Hearing Facility and also at neighborhood hearing sites. This service enables respondents to understand and fully participate in the administrative hearing process. Language Line enhances the accurate translation of proceedings by providing ready telephone access to interpreters who are skilled in more than 170 languages. The average time to connect to an interpreter is customarily under one minute. The top two translation requests are for Spanish and Polish. This service also promotes efficiency by obviating the need for continuances. It minimizes the inconvenience to non-English speaking respondents who no longer need to make additional court appearances because a friend or family member is not available to interpret at the first hearing.

We also make the Language Line service available at the information counters at all of our facilities through the use of special equipment (dual handset telephones). In this way, both our customer service staff and the non-English speaking respondent are able to more effectively communicate once they are connected to the interpreter. In 2011, there were 22,233 minutes of interpretation service. As of August 31, 2012, DOAH has utilized 18,199 minutes of this service - - an increase of 29 percent over the same period last year.

Quality training for staff and administrative law judges continues to be a key component to our successful operation. Since 2007 the Department has been certified annually by the Illinois Supreme Court's Continuing Legal Education Board ("MCLE Board") to provide mandatory continuing legal education to hearing officers. Certification by the MCLE Board must be supported by a proven track record and this certification validates the quality of the Department's past and present training program.

During 2012, the number of matters that are administratively adjudicated has continued to increase. This is evidenced by both the number of new case filings and the number of annual hearings. The Department has worked hard to efficiently handle the increases in caseload by balancing the work force so that staff assignments are based upon work

load. DOAH continues to monitor the case filings among its four operating divisions. For example, in early 2012 DOAH balanced the work force within two divisions by transferring a staff position from the Buildings Hearings Division into the Municipal Hearings Division. This was appropriate based upon the documented increase in case filings in the Municipal Division and the concomitant decrease in the Buildings Division.

DOAH plans to continue to monitor case filings and work loads in all its divisions and to reassign current staff members to ensure that citations, FOIAs, customer service, and telephone inquires are handled in a timely manner among all divisions. As an additional efficiency, DOAH transferred one staff member to Support Services to serve as "floater" who can be assigned to the Central Hearing Facility to reduce wait times during peak periods at the Information Desk; or among the various operating divisions on a daily basis depending upon respective case loads.

Goals for 2013

We remain ready, willing and able to achieve the Department's core mission. This includes a commitment to:

- Maintain an exceptionally high level of service to the public while focusing on treating all with respect.
- Respond effectively to the needs of the enforcing departments to ensure that hearings are scheduled in a timely manner.
- Ensure that an adequate number of hearing rooms are open, staffed and available to meet existing and future enforcement initiatives.

Thank you.

Dept. Of Administrative Hearings 2013 Budget Hearing

MBE/WBE Data DoAH does not hold any contracts outright. The three (3) Departmental contracts, Language Line, IBM and Motorola are held by other departments. Language Line for interpretation services is held by OEMC; IBM (parking contract) is held primarily by Finance with DoAH as a participant; Motorola (DoAH non-parking system) is held primarily by DoIT with DoAH as one of the multiple users. These primary departments will report MWE/WBE compliance.

Period:
Total Purchases: $xx

	MBE	WBE	Total MBE/WBE Purchases
Asian	$xx (xx%)	$xx (xx%)	
African-American	$xx (xx%)	$xx (xx%)	
Hispanic	$xx (xx%)	$xx (xx%)	
Total Spending	$xx (xx%)	$xx (xx%)	$xx(xx%)

Staffing Data

Department Ethnicity and Gender				
	Male	Female	Total	%
Asian	0	0	0	
Black	3	18	21	57
Hispanic	0	5	5	13
White	3	8	11	30
Total	6	31	37	100
	16%	84%		

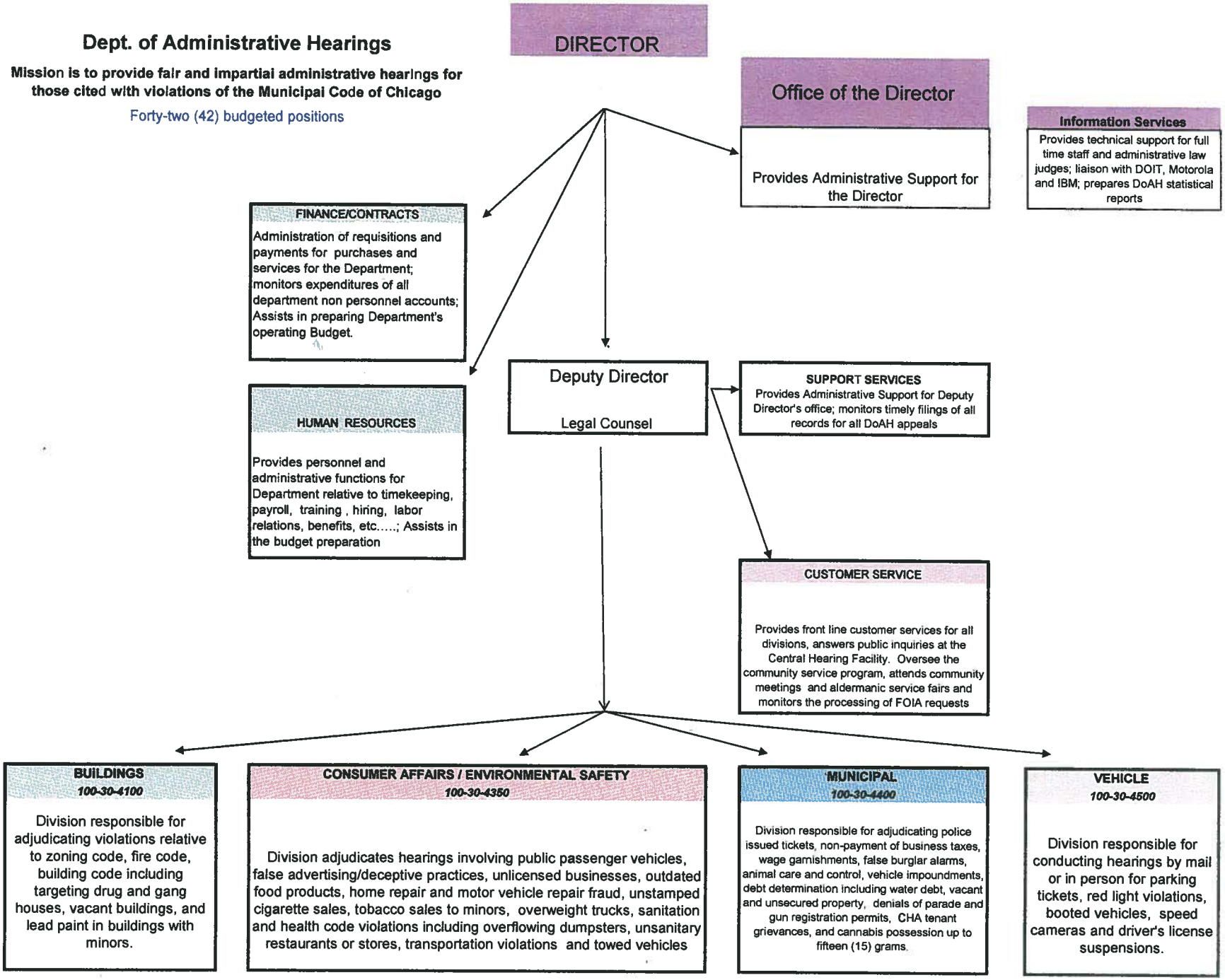
New Hires Ethnicity and Gender				
	Male	Female	Total	%
Asian	0	0	0	0
Black	0	3	3	100
Hispanic	0	0	0	0
White	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0
	xx%	100%		

Department Managers Ethnicity and Gender				
	Male	Female	Total	%
Asian	0	0	0	0
Black	1	2	3	43
Hispanic	0	0	0	0
White	2	2	4	57
Total	3	4	7	100
	43%	57%	100	

Interns

School	Gender	Race
N/A		

Dept. of Administrative Hearings

Mission is to provide fair and impartial administrative hearings for those cited with violations of the Municipal Code of Chicago

Forty-two (42) budgeted positions