Des Moines, Iowa

City Streamlines Maintenance with Munis Work Orders and Field Sheet Mobile App

Challenge

The city of Des Moines had achieved significant data integration and reduction in paper usage since the implementation of core Munis® financial applications and Tyler Content Manager™ four years ago. Yet, the paperwork began anew each time there was a request to check on a boiler, fix a water issue in a restroom, or paint a building.

The city’s facility staff was using a rudimentary ticketing system to manage a wide array of departmental service requests. This system was basic — merely a way to communicate to supervisory staff what type of work was needed and where. It was paper-based and relied on staff jotting down their hours and materials, and then passing their ticket to another person to manually enter the data. The process was inefficient and there were many opportunities for error.

The city wanted a dynamic real-time solution to do much more. “We wanted a solution that provided electronic workflow to authorize projects, provide status updates, and deliver faster communication. One that was able to track labor, costs of parts, inventory used, and at the end of the day, use less paper…” explained Justin Armatis, ERP systems manager at the city of Des Moines.
Solution

The city selected Munis Work Orders™, in part, because it integrated with their ERP solution and would quickly streamline their financial data, but also because it provided an essential mobile solution to help facilitate the day-to-day workload for their field service team. In August of 2016, the city started to implement both solutions in tandem.

The implementation team consisted of a few core staff from facilities and IT. The plan was to train one department at a time to access and use Munis Work Orders to facilitate service requests. Since most of the staff had used Munis and were familiar with the user interface and menu options, a two or three-hour training session was all that each department required.

Next, they launched the Field Sheet mobile application to more than 25 facility staff in the field. “We had a wide array of skill levels when it came to rolling out mobile devices to all field staff so we kept our expectations realistic,” Armatis recalled. “We focused on how to access the workflow, request approvals, log hours, capture materials costs, and enter basic data on the field sheet. A few were reluctant to give up the paper tickets, but not for long. We were really pleased with their willingness to adapt to the new technology.”

And the final part of the plan was to set up a preventive maintenance program to help reduce the number of service incidents. The city set up routine inspections and service appointments for select facilities and assets. Long term, the goal was to get ahead of issues and have a better handle on the city’s annual maintenance costs moving forward — something they had never achieved before.

Results

By August of 2017, the city had completely transitioned to the electronic work orders and streamlined workflow. Requestors from more than 20 departments and divisions across the city were on board and able to enter their own work orders, monitor the progress of their requests, and receive service notifications.

The city was better able to control and monitor their costs. They could tie requisitions of supplies and other purchases directly to active work orders so that it would drill all the way through the system. And with Munis Capital Assets™, the city could use work orders to capitalize the costs of new assets or existing assets which allowed for greater processing and reporting capabilities.

“The workflow provides so many ways to tie costs to work orders such as labor, parts, inventories, and overhead rates,” explained Armatis. “This allows our management to finally get the reporting and data they need to make and support important business decisions.”

The city has been impressed with how Munis Work Orders and the Field Sheet app have improved their processes. “Although we have more scheduled jobs than we did without the preventive maintenance program, we have a lot more control,” said Armatis. “We can monitor how work is getting done. We can be more responsive. Our users appreciate the system-generated notices and live up-to-date information they can access anytime about their requests and corresponding work orders.”