Missouri Department of Economic Development

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I. INTRODUCTION

Missouri's state government is organized into three branches: the Legislative Branch, the Judicial Branch, and the Executive Branch. The Executive Branch, headed by the Governor, consists of all state elective and appointed employees and is responsible for executing the laws of the state. As shown in Figure 1, there are six statewide elected officials and sixteen executive departments, including the Department of Economic Development (DED), within the Executive Branch.

The purpose of the DED is to cultivate job creation and economic growth for the state of Missouri. The mission statement is: "To create an environment that encourages economic growth by supporting Missouri's businesses and diverse industries, strengthening our communities, developing a talented and skilled workforce, and maintaining a high quality of life" (MO DED, n.d.).

The DED accomplishes this mission by providing resources for businesses, such as financial assistance, job training and recruitment, and even business consulting to assist business owners in a one on one setting. The Department also creates incentives to encourage industries, such as automotive suppliers and health sciences and services, to grow their companies in Missouri. The Department promotes community planning and development with grants and workforce resources and encourages tourism to support the economy.

The Department possesses authority in six distinct categories: planning, development, redevelopment, infrastructure, grant/financing, and workforce strengthening (MO DED, n.d.). Each of these areas affect the ability of Missouri residents to gain or maintain economic stability and indicate roles that the Department is enabled to address.

In their planning role, Missouri's DED collaborates with local communities to develop goals and find funds to solve local problems that create more healthy, equitable, and attractive communities for future generations. In their development role, Missouri's DED invests in and collaborates with communities in order to ensure that each possesses enticing elements, such as arts districts or parks, that attract residents and thus businesses. In their redevelopment role, Missouri's DED provides funds to update existing community facilities. In their infrastructure role, the DED is tasked with strengthening the state's infrastructure to facilitate increased economic growth, in addition to improved daily life. In their grants and financing role, the DED provides an easy to use online tool which reports all known grants available for community development objectives. In its workforce strengthening role, the DED is the state's go-to department for providing training to empower local workers.

Missouri's DED recently received a $58 million block grant to help local communities recover from 2017 disasters. The Department's role will be to alleviate housing, infrastructure, and economic struggles that resulted from natural disasters. The Missouri Legislature's Budget Conference Committee also provided additional authority and funding for the DED to work with communities around the state to expand broadband access. The DED is enabled to use a set of state funds and provide training sessions to facilitate this objective. The DED furthermore collaborates closely with state businesses to expand energy efficiency, highlight performance, and accelerate growth, among additional tasks.

Due to the core functions provided by the Department of Economic Development, the DED takes responsibilities to develop new and expanded business opportunities to facilitate economic growth and provide job training and related services to Missourians. Missouri's DED is responsible for services and funds provided through their department divisions towards the efforts of business retention and expansion tools and community/workforce development programs throughout the state (Missouri Office of Administration, 2020). The Regional Engagement Division (RED) is responsible for serving as a local contact for the DED across the state's six regions in the provision of state and federal resources. The Regional Engagement Division also actively markets the state on national and international levels in efforts to bring jobs and investment opportunities to the state.

The Business and Community Solutions Division (BCSD) received roughly two-thirds of FY 2020 appropriations and is responsible for providing "subject matter expertise, program administration, and innovative problem solving" (MO Office of Admin., 2020, p. 1). BCSD works closely with other Divisions in the DED through the application of development tools and programs. BCSD specializes in facilitating international trade, technology investment, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), and community redevelopment and assistance programs.

The One Start Division is responsible for providing appropriate workforce development through funding and job training programs. The Division of Tourism is responsible for implementing "strategic investments in travel promotion with integrated marketing strategies that provide economic benefits for Missouri" (MO Office of Admin., 2020, p. 9). The Strategy and Performance Division is responsible for informing effective planning, development, and management for the DED. The Housing Development Commission is responsible for providing grants to meet low-income housing needs through the Missouri Housing Trust Fund. The Administrative Services Division coordinates efforts between all the divisions under the DED.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS

The Missouri DED provided a moderate amount of information for fiscal analysis on their website. The data was provided in the form of year to year budgets, which were broken down by department. These included allocations from the General Fund, Federal Fund, and Other Fund. These budgets further included prior year expenditures, current year appropriations, and future year requests. Upon request for more detailed budget information, the DED budgeting office was able to provide us with more specific information on each of these topic areas. The general state budget was also obtained to draw overall comparisons.

The Missouri DED budget revealed several general trends. Figure 2 displays DED appropriations in both the Total Fund and General Fund, reported between 2015 and 2019. This five-year analysis demonstrates that total appropriations remained fairly consistent for three of the years reported, whereas there was a noticeable decline of over $50 million in appropriations in FY 2018. During this time period, Missouri did not experience a significant recession, which could have been a cause of this dip in appropriations. However, the DED was preparing for a dramatic reorganization around the time, which may have caused the decline. The complete effect and intent of this reorganization will be discussed in a later section of the paper. Overall, during the entire period evaluated, 2015 through 2019, expenditures remained fairly consistent. As expected, General Fund appropriations at the Missouri DED also traced the trends in total appropriations for the overall DED closely. Interestingly, however, General Fund appropriations declined in 2018 and did not increase very much in 2019. The DED has instead begun receiving greater allocations from other funding sources.

One specific agency within the DED, the Business and Community Services (BCS), experienced a slightly different situation compared with the other DED agencies. This occurred because BCS remained largely intact throughout the department reorganization and remained one of the largest departmental agencies by appropriation and expenditure. Nevertheless, they did experience similar trends in total appropriation variance, revealed in Figure 3 below. Throughout the entire period evaluated, total expenditure again remained fairly consistent, but total appropriation dropped significantly in 2018, and at an even larger rate than for the overall DED. It dropped so significantly that total expenditure was nearly even with total appropriation, which never occurred in another year for the BCS or the DED as a whole. The decline in total appropriations was also tracked by a significant decline in General Fund appropriations. However, the following year BCS's total appropriations were much higher, exceeding any prior year by nearly $30 million. This surge was not reflected by increases in the General Fund, which only slightly increased, but primarily resulted from an increased allocation of federal funds.

In Tables 1 and 2, we assessed the General Fund revenues and expenditures across 2015 to 2019 for the DED. For a more accurate comparison, we used the GDP implicit price deflator to measure the difference between nominal and real revenues and expenditures in the General Fund. Nominal revenues and expenditures do not account for inflation while the real revenues and expenditures do account for inflation. As a result, nominal fund revenues and expenditures will most often be higher than real GDP in an expanding economy. To account for inflation, the GDP deflator in Tables 1 and 2 is divided by 100. As shown in Table 1, General Fund revenues increase each year, peaking in 2017, and then begin to decline. In Table 2, there is less of a pattern regarding General Fund expenditures. There is a significant increase in expenditures from 2014 to 2015, but every year after 2015 there is a slow but steady drop in expenditures until a slight increase in 2019.

The breakdown of DED funding sources, whether state or federal, for revenues and expenditures reveals a relatively similar path as shown by the total appropriations in Figure 1.

Table 3 demonstrates that from 2015 through 2017, the proportion of state funds to federal funds remained consistent (state funds: about 41% and federal funds: about 59%). However, when the DED began its reorganization, the state was forced to supply a much larger percentage of its funding (48%) while the federal government supported the DED less (52%). When the DED completed its reorganization, levels returned to relative normalcy, with 38% of funding from the state and 61% of funding from the federal government. It is possible that the reorganization aligned some of the DED's objectives and programs more closely with federal funding requirements. As an overall percentage of the state budget, shown in Table 4, the percentage that is contributed to the DED operation has declined steadily over time, from 2.45% to 2.09%, providing support that the department is increasingly reliant on federal funding post-reorganization.

Changes in agency spending between 2015 and 2019 were observed. As illustrated in Table 5, each year the DED requested over $100 million more than expenditures from the previous year. The DED had an average increase of 67.30% in budget requests from 2015 to 2019. This substantial increase in budget requests may be due to increased pressure in the labor market. The DED helps create and retain high-quality employment opportunities for Missourians. For instance, following the Great Recession, the DED oversaw the issuance of loans to stimulate local business in Missouri and consequently received a greater proportion of state funds (Susan, 2014). Specifically, the DED seeks more money to continue designing, implementing, and managing various job training and business promotion programs. It is apparent that the Missouri government supported the DED's plan because the governor's recommendation is nearly the same as the DED request. The average change between what the agency requested and what the chief executive recommended from 2015 to 2019 was -1.30%. It also does not appear that the DED had any obstacles in the legislative process because the legislative appropriation only decreased by 0.15% compared to the agency's request.

In terms of total appropriations and total expenditure, BCS is the largest unit of the DED. However, its funding was cut drastically before the department-wide reorganization. The next year's massive growth in appropriations, largely supported by federal funds revealed that both the state and federal government rely upon it to perform essential economic development services for the state. Now, during the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis, it is likely that the DED and BCS will play a large role in the state's response, which will require allocation of a greater proportion of state funding, as was the case after the 2007-2009 Great Recession. It is anticipated that the governor and legislature will support the DED requests for more funding than many other departments, especially now since the DED's response will be urgently desired.

III. BUDGET PROCESS

On Friday, March 13, 2020, we interviewed Stacey Hirst, Director of Financial Systems and Larissa Best, Budget Administrator for the Missouri Department of Economic Development (DED). Stacey Hirst graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration, and Larissa Best graduated with a bachelor's degree in General Studies. They both have extensive experience in state government. Stacey has worked for the Missouri state government for 30 years, 23 of which have been with the DED. Larissa has 10 years of experience with state government and was recently hired to the DED in September 2019. This interview shed light on the MO DED's budget process and provided greater explanation about the information we gathered online, such as the reorganization of the department last year.

The MO DED's fiscal year starts on July 1st and runs through June 30th. While some states go through the budget process every two years, Missouri goes through an annual budget cycle. In July 2020, they will start the budget process for the fiscal year 2022 budget. The new budget is created from the previous year's budget, and new decision items may be brought forth by division directors and managers as needed. The first step in the DED's budget approval process (1) is to send the budget to the Office of Administration Budget and Planning, which is an arm of the governor's office, by October 1st. Next, (2) the Office of Administration develops the governor's recommendation, which includes items the governor views as important. Then, (3) in January of every year, the governor conducts the state of the state address and introduces his recommended budget. (4) The governor's recommendation is then sent to the House of Representatives for approval in mid to late February and then the Senate. (5) Both the House and Senate must reach an agreement on the budget and pass it by the second Friday in May every year. (6) The budget returns to the governor for approval, with exceptions for line item vetoes. (7) If the governor decides to veto a line item, the House and Senate can overturn the veto with a two-thirds vote of the House and Senate.

Because the DED is in partnership with the governor, the governor is typically supportive of the budget they request. The DED emphasizes the importance of items requested, what performance results have been, and why the program or additional funding is needed. Performance measures are required for all programs and are tracked by the managers of each program. The ability to justify needs through performance measures is critical to gain support from the governor's budget staff and legislators. The Missouri state government uses a Strategy and Performance Division (SPD) to develop and implement performance measures. The SPD helps the DED ensure that the measures they provide to the governor's budget staff are clear and consistent with those received by other departments.

In general, the MO DED has experienced much success in collaborating with the governor to achieve their funding priorities through the budgeting process, especially since economic development was one of the governor's chief priorities during his campaign. This success has been reinforced by performance measures, which played a large role in the department-wide reorganization of the DED in 2019. The DED realized they were not competitive with similar states in the Midwest, and they were usually in the middle as far as national lists for top states for job growth. The subpar performance measures helped them determine a plan for reorganization to become more mission focused, customer centric, and data driven. The reorganization moved several divisions, such as energy and the MO arts council, to other departments, and the DED dropped from over 800 full time employees to less than 200 full time employees.

The MO government's response to the COVID-19 public health crisis has caused changes throughout the state government, including the MO DED, although the majority of funding is funneled through a separate agency. First, the department has begun preparing staff to work remotely for the next several months to be able to continue the necessary budgeting operations in the department. Second, the recent stimulus package passed by Congress included many small business loans to stimulate the economy. The DED is facilitating the granting process for these loans so that local businesses in Missouri are able to access the funding. Third, the DED is providing informational resources to communities around MO about how they can help businesses survive during this time. Overall, the DED expects to be well prepared to handle the many challenges confronting the state at this time.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the summer of 2019, the DED experienced a department-wide reorganization. This action caused a single year drop in total appropriations, although expenditure remained relatively consistent. It also was reported as a difficult process by the staff we interviewed. Fortunately, the DED has had nearly an entire year to adjust, and appropriations have risen back to their highest levels. The BCS experienced similar trends but now receives appropriations that are higher than ever, fulfilling a greater proportion of the DED's primary goals following the reorganization. In light of the ongoing COVID-19 public health and economic crisis, both departments are being challenged to adapt.

The DED has already begun to ensure that its employees can work digitally and can continue the budgeting process as usual, although the amount of state revenue, and thereby available appropriations, will decline drastically. A key component of each state's recovery from the crisis is how it responds economically. This will place the DED at the center of Missouri's recovery strategy. Consequently, the state will likely continue allocating a large portion of its total funds to the DED, especially since the governor and legislature have already demonstrated commitment to positively supporting the budgetary requests of the DED in the past several years. As the BCS provides critical services for the DED, it too will continue to receive appropriations to support its expenditure without drastic cuts as will be the case in other departments and agencies.

Nevertheless, both the BCS and DED should experience an overall drop in funding since sales tax, a major source of revenue for the Missouri government, is expected to drop dramatically due to the shelter in place orders. Missouri also is one of two states which do not collect internet sales tax, where larger amounts of consumer spending is currently occurring (Schneider, 2020). This will place Missouri's overall response further behind other states. With escalating unemployment, income tax, another large source of state revenue, will drop further. The overall budgetary reductions will prove formidable for the state to overcome without significant cuts, and they will challenge the DED and BCS to continue receiving funding to serve Missouri communities and businesses, even though they will be central to the state's economic response.

Sources

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Appendix

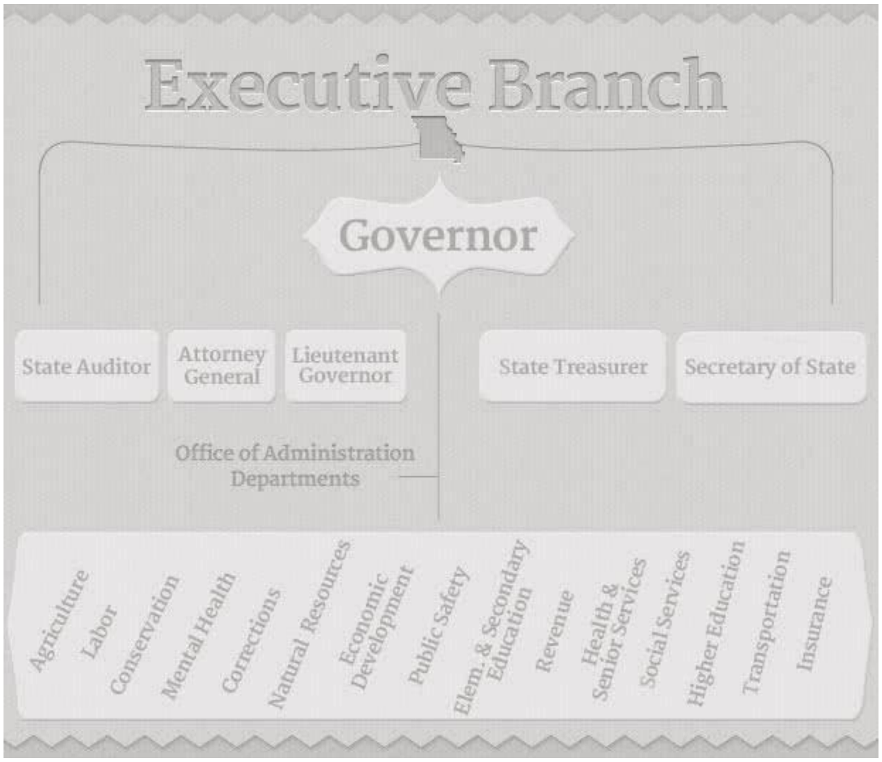

Figure 1. Organizational Structure of Missouri's Executive Branch

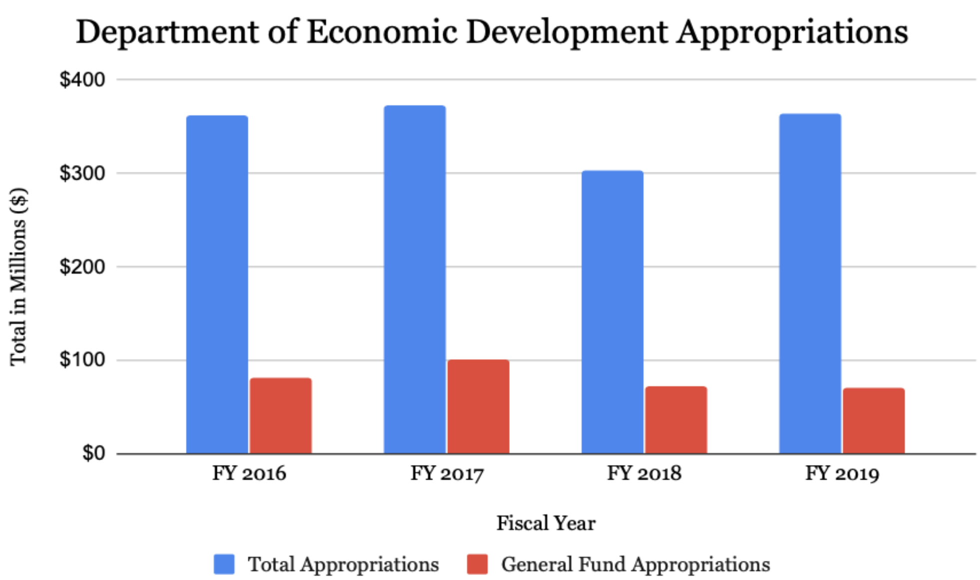

Figure 2. Department of Economic Development Expenditures and Revenues

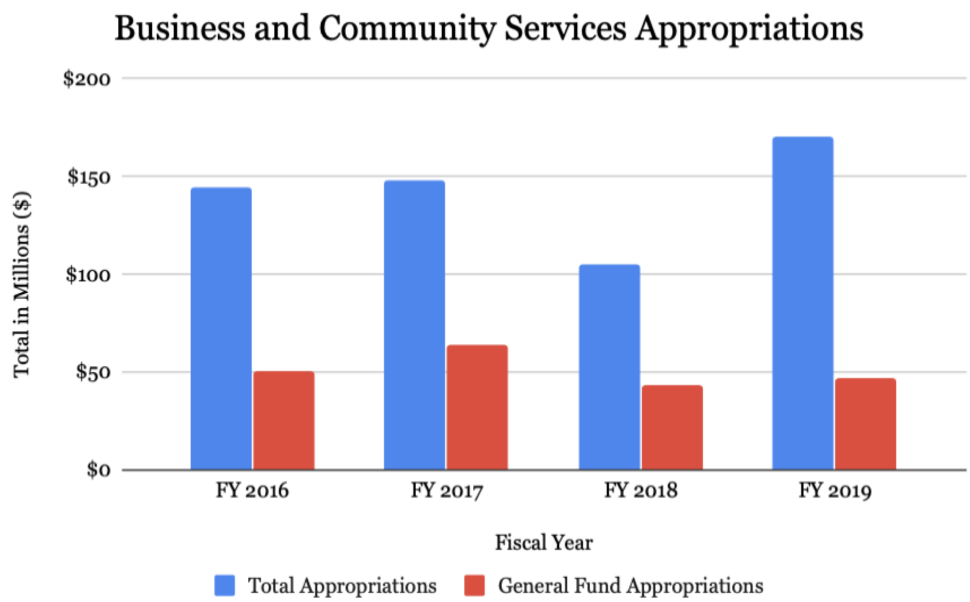

Figure 3. Business and Community Services Appropriations

Table 1: Comparison of Total Nominal to Real General Fund Revenues (a)

Fiscal Year	Current $	Nominal % Change	Deflator (b)	Real $	Real % Change
2014	58,326,086.00		1.04123	$56,016,524.69	
2015	88,324,611.00	51.43%	1.05049	$84,079,440.07	50.10%
2016	80,948,436.00	-8.35%	1.06551	$75,971,540.39	-9.64%
2017	100,283,375.00	23.89%	1.08713	$92,245,982.54	21.42%
2018	71,088,465.00	-29.11%	1.11256	$63,896,297.73	-30.73%
2019	69,813,153.00	-1.79%	1.13043	$61,758,050.48	-3.35%
	Average % Change Across Years	7.21%			5.56%

(a) Missouri Budget Information. https://oa.mo.gov/budget-planning/budget-information

(b) Quarter deflator on October 1st in each year. Source: Gross Domestic Product: Implicit Price Deflator. https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/GDPDEF

Table 2: Comparison of Nominal to Real General Fund Expenditures (a)

Fiscal Year	Current $	Nominal % Change	Deflator (b)	Real $	Real % Change
2014	57,339,602.00		1.04123	$55,069,102.89	
2015	78,509,636.00	36.92%	1.05049	$74,736,205.01	35.71%
2016	76,991,368.00	-1.93%	1.06551	$72,257,762.01	-3.32%
2017	73,676,609.00	-4.31%	1.08713	$67,771,663.92	-6.21%
2018	56,767,296.00	-22.95%	1.11256	$51,024,031.06	-24.71%
2019	65,621,998.00	15.60%	1.13043	$58,050,474.60	13.77%
	Average % Change Across Years	**4.67%**			**3.05%**

(a) Missouri Budget Information. https://oa.mo.gov/budget-planning/budget-information

(b) Quarter deflator on October 1st in each year. Source: Gross Domestic Product: Implicit Price Deflator. https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/GDPDEF

Table 3: Comparison of Total Revenues

Fiscal Year	**Agency Revenues**	**% State Funds (General Revenue Fund+Other Funds)**	**% Federal Funds**
2015	$370,604,690.00	41.72%	58.28%
2016	$362,460,962.00	41.19%	58.81%
2017	$373,060,592.00	45.39%	54.61%
2018	$292,094,561.00	48.14%	55.41%
2019	$363,817,947.00	38.09%	61.91%
	Average % Change Across Years	**42.91%**	**57.81%**

Table 4: Comparison of Total Expenditures

Fiscal Year	Agency Expenditures	Total State Expenditures	Agency Expenditures as % of Total State Expenditures
2015	$220,793,222.00	$9,009,105,359.00	2.45%
2016	$227,456,081.00	$9,296,635,848.00	2.45%
2017	$222,647,007.00	$9,805,429,957.00	2.27%
2018	$205,906,415.00	$9,663,011,051.00	2.13%
2019	$208,056,198.00	$9,963,918,345.00	2.09%
		Average % Change	**2.28%**

Table 5: Changes in Agency Spending

Fiscal Year	Previous Year Expenditures	Agency Request for Fiscal Year	% Change of Previous Year Expenditures to Agency Request	Chief Executive Recommendation	% Change of Agency Request to Chief Executive Recommendation	Legislative Appropriation	% Change of Agency Request to Legislative Appropriation
2015	$197,394,388.00	$359,776,241.00	82.26%	$367,881,007.00	2.25%	$370,604,690.00	3.01%
2016	$220,793,222.00	$369,323,994.00	67.27%	$342,522,452.00	-7.26%	$362,460,962.00	-1.86%
2017	$227,456,081.00	$365,218,923.00	60.57%	$388,385,592.00	6.34%	$373,060,592.00	2.15%
2018	$222,647,007.00	$399,612,906.00	79.48%	$349,027,880.00	-12.66%	$302,477,421.00	-24.31%
2019	$205,906,415.00	$302,527,076.00	46.92%	$317,101,304.00	4.82%	$363,817,947.00	20.26%
		Average % Change	**67.30%**		**-1.30%**		**-0.15%**

Missouri Department of Economic Development
Interview Questions

Interviewed: Stacey Hirst, Director of Financial Systems, MODED
Larissa Bess, Budget Administrator, MODED

1. Please provide a description of your educational and work background.

   Both graduated with bachelor's degrees – Business Administration for Stacey and General Studies for Larissa. Stacey worked for state government for 30 years and 23 of those have been with DED, started in 1997. Larissa has been with the state government for 10 years and has been at the DED for about 7 months. Larissa came to the DED in Sept 2019.

2. How long have you worked at the Missouri Department of Economic Development?

   Answered above

3. Can you provide us with a brief overview of the budget process—from agency/program budget development to final audit?

   Fiscal year budget runs from July 1st through June 30th. They start developing the new budget for the next fiscal year after the current fiscal year ends. This July they will start working on the fiscal 2022 budget. They use the budget from the prior year as their starting point and any new items that the department or divisions want to bring forth those are called new decision items and they develop those with division directors and managers as needed. The budget is due to the Office of Administration Budget and Planning, which is an arm of the governor's office, by October 1st. They use a computer system and forms that end up as a 2" book for each year's budget. The Office of Administration (OA) then develops the governor's recommendation, which includes budget items that are important to him and he may bring new decision items forward. The governor does a state of the state address every year in January and this is when his budget is introduced. The budget the governor brings forward is submitted to the House of Representatives and the Senate. They each have their own appropriation budget committees that review the budget. The budget bills start on the House of Representatives side, and that process starts mid to late February. The House goes through their process and then gets sent to Senate for approval. If the House and Senate don't agree on the budget, they do a conference committee. 5 members form each side and decide what they are going to pass. The bills have to pass both House and Senate by second Friday in May every year. This version then goes to governor for him to sign and he has the power to line item veto. The House and Senate can then come back and overturn a vetoed item if 2/3 of the House and 2/3 of the Senate agree. MO passes a budget every year while some other states do this process every two years.

4. How has the reorganization in 2019 affected your department? Did it have any effect on your department's budget process?

The reorganization was of the MO DED, brought on by the department itself. The DED has almost 800 full time employees and had divisions that weren't part of the core mission – job development, helping grow the workforce, helping businesses and communities with their infrastructure and growth. Divisions like the division of energy, public service commission, MO arts council moved and transferred to other departments. They dropped to less than 200 full time employees. Started working on this in July 2019 and it was an intense and stressful process. The reorganization didn't really affect the department's budget process other than there were less divisions they had to work with. There were 8 or 9 divisions and now there are only 6. The process is pretty much the same it's just less people to work with. Through the reorganization they set up some new divisions with new missions, so the budget looks different than it did before, but the process is the same.

5. When requesting funds, does your agency generally fare better with the governor or the legislature, or about the same with both?

   The DED is in partnership with the governor and they are part of his cabinet, so generally the things they bring forth are things the governor is usually supportive of (but not always!). They fare better with the governor because of this, and the legislature usually has their own priorities. It depends on the situation, but they work well with both. They also have other staff that work with the legislature, like the legislature liaison and director. Stacey and Larissa mostly handle the budget items.

6. Does your agency generally gain or lose with an amended or supplemental budget?

   The supplemental budget process is the same as the regular budget process but its usually fast tracked. Normally they would gain. There have been times when the economy isn't good and there needs to be cut spending, but usually in the amended or supplemental budget they gain. The economic development and infrastructure are two of the governor's main goals and mission, which works well for the DED.

7. When working with the governor's budget staff, what information is most helpful to you for making your case regarding appropriation and program needs? Is this the same when discussing your agency's budget with legislators and legislative staff?

   The DED talks about the importance of the items, what the performance results have been, why the program or additional money is needed. They have to provide the background information to show why that funding is needed. It's the same when discussing with legislators and legislative staff.

8. Can you explain how performance measures are used for making management and/or budgeting decisions in your agency?

   They focus on programs that are critical to their core mission – help to create and retain jobs, training a skilled workforce, assisting communities with infrastructure needs, tourism, increase investments and development projects. Most of the programs focus on these and they just need to show the effectiveness of the program and why they need the additional funding for these programs. Performance measures are tracked by people that run the programs and measures are included on the forms they use to create the budget. They try to measure against similar states – like TN and GA. They look at these states as competitors and see how they are doing their programs and what is and isn't working.

9. Does performance measurement/information come into play for your agency as the budget process progresses from budget recommendation, legislative review and passage, execution, and audit? Are certain measures more important during any particular phase of your agency's budget process?

   Performance measures are required for all programs they get money for in their budget. The performance measures are important in every stage of the process to show why the funding is needed, how many projects they are doing, how many jobs they are creating. They need justification for why they are spending taxpayer dollars on their programs.

10. Who is involved in measurement development for your agency? Do you consider these measures to be valid and reliable?

    The Strategy and Performance Division that is instrumental in helping with the performance measures. Program managers and research staff also help develop these measures.

11. Does your agency engage targets for performance? If so, how are targets determined?

    Yes, they have base and stretch targets. A base target is if everything stayed the same with the program, what are you hoping to accomplish in the next year? For a stretch target if you can be the most effective you can with this program, how can you stretch that target and make it better? They include most of these targets in the performance measures they provide. The targets are determined in different ways by the program managers. Sometimes they look at the previous year and average it or use a percentage. They may also look at other states for comparison and to use as a benchmark.

12. Are there rewards for meeting targets or penalties for not meeting them?

    The reward is continued funding for the program. If you are doing well, you hope the program will continue to be funded. They haven't seen penalties from targets, but it is possible that money could be reduced or cut if a target isn't being met.

13. Has use of performance measures led to any innovation in your agency, given typical and continuing budget and court constraints?

    This is the reason behind the reorganization. The MO DED was not competitive with similar states in the Midwest. They weren't doing well in the national lists for top states for job growth and were usually in the middle of the pack. They used performance measures to determine they needed to do something differently. They were looking to be more focused, customer centric, and data driven.

14. What do you consider the greatest challenge for your agency in managing and budgeting for programs, going forward?

General revenue availability. With any downturn in economy or with what's happening with COVID-19, people aren't spending and there are no events being held where people are paying taxes. All of this affects the general revenue that is brought into the state and that is what funds programs the DED administers. Also, any kind of changes that the federal or state government make regarding tax issues or reform can have an effect on the general revenue and state economy.

15. With COVID-19, what kind of changes have you faced, or expect to face, with the current budgeting process?

    They are preparing for staff to work remotely and be able to continue operations for the department. Most of the funding from federal government to fight COVID-19 goes through a different department. However, the FDA has small business loans that are being approved, so that is something the agency can promote to businesses in Missouri. It's more of the DED providing resources to the community and seeing how they can help businesses survive this time.

16. What do you enjoy most about your position or your department?

    The people they work with make a great team and work well together. It's interesting to see behind the scenes and how programs are being funded. Overall, the budget process is interesting. It's also rewarding knowing that they are helping the citizens of Missouri and that many people rely on their help to navigate government.