



May 2013

## “Hello, Goodbye”

As a baby boomer, it is only appropriate that I quote one of the icons of our generation (the Beatles, in case you Gen X, Y or Millennials were wondering) in preparing my last e-Lean article.

Next month, we say hello to Mary Jo Caldwell who will be taking on the position of Director of Continuous Improvement for the State of Minnesota. Mary Jo comes to this position well prepared, experienced and committed to the goal of helping make Minnesota government as efficient and effective as possible.

As I say goodbye and ride off into the retirement sunset, I want to thank the thousands of kindred spirits at the state, county and city levels who despite the odds and convenience of saying with resignation “well you can’t change that”, expected more, invested more, and committed themselves to be part of something bigger.

With your ongoing support and commitment, the journey continues.

*Tom Baumann*  
*Director, State Office of Continuous Improvement*



*Through training, facilitation and bold leadership, Tom has shaped Minnesota’s continuous improvement efforts over the last handful of years.*

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### Best Wishes, Tom!

Tom’s last day with the Lean program is June 18, closing out a 38 year State career.

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## Legislature Funds Expansion of Enterprise Lean Program

While it garnered very little media spotlight or attention, one small, yet important outcome of the recently concluded legislative session was an expansion of funding for the Enterprise Lean Program, adding two positions to the program. This funding will pave the way for more robust enterprise-level leadership and more active support of state agencies, counties, colleges and universities as they begin, or continue their development of continuous improvement efforts within their organizations.

In the coming days, the new Continuous Improvement Director, along with leadership at the Department of Administration and the members of the Lean Steering team will be determining the most effective ways to implement this expansion of funding and support.

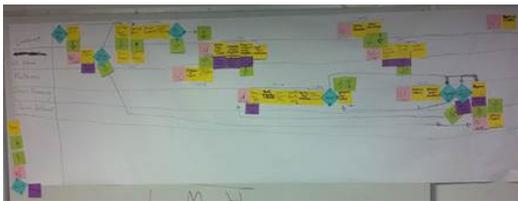
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## Minnesota Department of Commerce Holds Kaizen Event on Unclaimed Property Claims Process

Perhaps you've heard about the Minnesota Department of Commerce's Unclaimed Property unit on the TV or read about them online. When Minnesotans have unclaimed property – dormant bank accounts, un-cashed checks, unclaimed wages, safe deposit boxes, or insurance dividends – the state holds on to these items and attempts to find the rightful owners. In recent days, the program has received a lot of media coverage, which alerts Minnesotans to the potential unclaimed property waiting for them and educates them on how they can go about rightfully claiming it.

In the wake of this increased awareness however, the volume of claims being made for Unclaimed Property often goes up in large spikes. This has put a strain on the small team at the Department of Commerce, so the Unclaimed Property Unit held a Kaizen event May 20 through 23 to assess their current way of processing claims and to devise a new process.

The goals of the event were to shorten the time it takes for claimants to have their claims approved, to reduce the number of touches in the claims process, and to establish clearer roles along with clear ownership of individual claims that are in the approval process.



*The New Process Swim Lane Map put together by the Dept. of Commerce Unclaimed Property Claims Team.*

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### Upcoming Events

**June 6, Lean 101, Open**

**June 25, Lean 101, Full**

**June 27, MN Management and Budget Lean 101**

**Note:** More Lean 101 and Facilitator training sessions will be scheduled and announced very soon. Please stay tuned.

View all Lean events at [www.lean.state.mn.us/calendar](http://www.lean.state.mn.us/calendar)

Register for trainings on our [mnlean.eventbrite.com](http://mnlean.eventbrite.com).

Some of the ways the team will work toward these goals are by implementing technology improvements, introducing more standardized procedures for claims processing, accepting more information from claimants electronically, and enabling processing staff to review and process claims in digital format. This should reduce frequent handoffs of physical information and materials (along with the storage and searching that often comes with it), streamline the processing of claims, and help establish more effective ownership of each claim from beginning to end.

More information about the Unclaimed Property Unit can be found online on the [Commerce website](#).

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