



TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes

Meeting of May 7, 2015

Present: Council Member Carl Chisem, Council Member Sandra Russo-Driska, Council Member Grady Faulkner, Eldon Bailey, Nelson Rivera, Michael Skott and Salvatore Micciulla.

Absent: Mike Gaudino, Marie Norwood, Edward Finkle and Tina Gomes.

Call to Order:

Council member Carl Chisem called the meeting to order in the Municipal Building Common Council Chamber.

Approval of Minutes:

Council member Carl Chisem requested a motion to approve the minutes from the February 5th meeting. Council member Sandra Russo-Driska made the motion to approve, the motion was seconded by Michael Skott and approved unanimously.

Public Comments:

No one from the public was in attendance.

Old Business:

Review of Help Tickets

Eldon handed out a summary of the current help desk tickets to go over with the committee. He stated that the help ticket system is being used more efficiently but there is room for improvement. It was noted that the status of a ticket needs to be streamlined and there should be an owner assigned to each ticket. Eldon also indicated that the system needs to be updated to include more categories.

Carl asked a question regarding an item on the report and Eldon explained that this item was generated by him and it is not a help ticket but a reminder that this issue has to be addressed and that the help ticket system can also be used for work orders.

Sandra asked if the report could include the departments. Eldon said that could be done as well as do a better job with submitter name. He indicated that the IT department is struggling with departments putting in their own tickets because some users are still calling or stopping in to report a problem. It is an ongoing issue to retrain the staff to use the help ticket system. Someone asked if there is tutorial on the desktop that could walk them through it and Sandra stated that is a simple procedure and Eldon said it is only an email that has to be generated. Sandra said departments need to be accountable for their tickets and not the IT department putting it in for them. Eldon stated that if the help ticket icon was on everyone's desktop it might help.

After a long discussion regarding the issue of the tickets it was mentioned that maybe the IT department should be offsite so they would be forced to put the tickets in. Mike Skott mentioned that being offsite works well.

Carl mentioned that the Directors should be aware of this issue and Eldon said he would address in the next Directors Meeting.

Sandra asked Nelson if the Police Department uses the same system and he said yes. He also indicated that he will input a ticket for a voicemail because it could be from an officer in the field. He stated that he doesn't experience the same issues due to the fact the he is dealing with a new generation and they have a better understanding of technology.

Eldon mentioned that the benefit of this system is a better reporting capability and it also builds a knowledge base so when there is a resolution to a problem there is documentation so if the problem comes up again you can look up what was done.

The question was asked if people are knowledgeable with the computers or does there have to be some training. Eldon explain that the process for the help desk is easier than using email. Sending out a reminder and insist that they use the system and not put the tickets in for them.

Sandra asked if the IT Department could tell departments that they have to fill out a ticket and the work will not be done until one is submitted unless it is an emergency. Carl asked if there was a policy in place already concerning the help desk system. Eldon said it is not included in the current Computer Use Policy.

Overview of Job Description Questionnaire (JDQ)

Eldon stated that he talked to the Human Resources Department and at this time the JDQ consultant has not shared any information with the HR Department so the JDQ's could not be distributed but he could talk about them if there were any questions. Carl mentioned that at the next General Council meeting the JDQ findings will be discussed. Sandra asked about the Software Engineer position and was there any adjustment made since some of the responsibilities aren't going to be needed. Eldon responded that no changes have been made just yet because the new Admins program has not yet been implemented and the old Admins payroll program has not been migrated. Any changes for the existing payroll system still have to be written by the software engineer. Right now the Software engineer knows the program and his the go to person for both the City and BOE. Once the new program is working he will be trained in Microsoft Access and take on more responsibilities that now are being handled by a consultant.

There was a long discussion regarding when the new Admins Program will be implemented. Eldon noted that there is some resistance form the Payroll department and Eldon informed them that the payroll department will have use the new program.

Sandra asked if there was any talk of the Infrastructure Engineer being replaced and the response was no. Eldon indicated that he did the JDQ for that position.

Where does the PC Support Technician stand has there been any changes to the JDQ? Sandra asked what does this person actually do and Eldon described some of the responsibilities that were included in the JDQ; troubleshooting hardware and network local printer issues. The question was asked if the Administrative Secretary was full or part time Eldon explained what the duties are for that position and that it is a part-time position in IT and part-time in the PD.

The next position that was discussed was Mario Saraceno as a consultant, Eldon shared that he is an employee of the city and averages 8-12 hours every two weeks. Questions were asked regarding how many access programs the city has and if there are other programs that can be used instead. It was mentioned that Health Department just switched from an access program to the Cott system which the

Town Clerk's office already uses. Nelson suggested that we move forward with caution there might be access programs that are mission critical. Eldon will bring Mario in and talk to him about the possibility of transitioning some MS Access database support over to the Software Engineer. Eldon offered to bring to next month's meeting the list of Access database programs to go over with the committee.

Carl asked if everyone that is listed on the Organization Chart works with the help tickets and Eldon said yes. Mike was asked if the BOE has something similar to the help tickets set up and he shared that they have a help desk solution and it cloud based called School Dude. Mike explained how the system works between the schools and his technicians.

Disaster Backup and Recovery (DBAR) Plan

Review of list of DBAR consultants: Eldon said that he was uncertain about this and that at the last meeting Sandra had mentioned that the Town Clerks office had people that they have worked with for their document retention and archiving. He did not have a list but knows that there was some discussion about reaching for some professional guidance or direction. Eldon does have some plans and thoughts on what should be done initially and is working to implement them. Sandra asked what the plan is and Eldon explained that currently a backup appliance from Unitrends is being used and it would be the most cost effective moving forward to use the same appliance. The goal is to replicate the current data to the cloud. Eldon went on to explain that using Unitrends appliances, cloud and software will give us more capability for DBAR. The questions was asked if it was an all or nothing package and Eldon pointed out that we are already using the appliance and going to subscribe to the cloud and we can go to the next level when necessary. Sandra pointed out that if there was a disaster there needs to be a DBAR Plan for Records. Eldon explained that he would like to have a secondary site maybe at the Water and Sewer Department that is synchronized with the primary site so if something fails at the primary site the secondary site recognizes it and can take over right away. This system is more expensive because license requirements will double but you would not have any down time because you would have a full copy of all the data fully functioning in a different location.

The next step would be putting the plan into action. Do you hire someone to set it up or do it yourself by following a step by step printout? A committee must be put in place to implement an overall plan.

Eldon suggested an outside consultant to help set it up. The subject of funding was discussed maybe pursuing grants.

Mike asked how old the storage for secondary backup is. Eldon stated that Unitrend's support is 3 years. Eldon also mentioned that there is a separate method for archiving e-mail.

Organization Chart

Eldon handed out the current organization chart and pointed out that the Infrastructure Engineer and Network Coordinator positions are vacant and the Network Coordinator position will be filled and expects the Infrastructure Engineer to be filled also. One possible change may be to rename the Infrastructure Engineer to Assistant Director of Information Systems. This position will take on a few more administrative duties including covering for the Director when out. The Department would also like to consider adding a permanent part-time support staff member. This level is below the PC Support Technician and they would work together on support issues. It would be a very modest increase in the salary line to fund this position. Sandra suggested check with Human Resources if this position would have to include benefits because that would make a difference.

Eldon expressed the need to have the Administrative Assistant full time currently she splits the position with the Police Department. He also indicated that the Police Department would like to make her position full time also. Sandra asked if Eldon shared this plan with the Mayor and he indicated that he had.

Sandra wanted to know how it was received and Eldon said he believes it was received well and that it required additional discussion.

Mike mentioned that in comparison it is the same about of people with less money for the BOE. He also indicated that he has fifteen buildings, 2,500 computers and 6,000 end-users.

After some discussion regarding the history of the IT Department including employees, departments and the rapid growth of technology it was suggested that this committee supports Eldon with the organization chart.

Nelson shared that within the Police Department, departments have administrators for their individual systems. He used the evidence department as an example as the officer in charge of evidence notifies Nelson when an upgrade is due and that officer communicates with the vendor directly.

It was mentioned that there are some departments within city hall that do handle their own systems for example the Cott System.

Sandra stated that she felt that the changes Eldon proposed would be good for the department.

Eldon pointed out that the Fire Department does not have someone in-house to go to and he would like to offer training to take some of the burden off of the IT Department.

Councilman Chisem stated that he would like to see the city wean off the application program using the consultant. Mike pointed out there will be a cost involved switching over to commercial programs and maintain the support but it doesn't necessarily mean another person and the cost gets built into maintaining the program.

Councilman Chisem indicated that the organizational chart is not bad and if all the other pieces came together the help tickets etc. feels he could convince the Council to support something along this line but the other pieces have to have a plan and show some progress.

Councilman Chisem again mentioned the directive to the directors regarding the help tickets.

New Business:

Email addresses for all elected officials

Eldon said it hasn't been done yet he stated that Councilman Giuliano sent an email to Eldon regarding this issue referring to FOI. Sal Miciulla mentioned that he was the one who inquired about emails because of conversation he had Roger from the Tax Assessor's office. Sandra explained how the FOI process works and if there was an issue they could access someone's personal email.

Sandra asked would it be hard to do. Eldon stated that we have the capacity and it could be integrated but his concern is the administration of maintaining user accounts, because the IT Department often isn't notified when an individual leaves City service. Even when summer interns are hired they have an email account, and a domain logon account that will sometimes remain active because IT wasn't notified to disable it. He also mentioned that if we keep creating the accounts and don't administer them properly it creates a security risk. He is not opposed to it but it is more administrative work for the department.

Sandra noted that started with the upcoming election those people elected would be for four years and suggested to wait until after the election to set up the emails.

A discussion followed regarding how many elected officials are there and what if they don't want a City email. Sandra recommended sending this issue to the General Council Committee stating that this committee thinks it is a good idea that all elected officials have a city email account. Sal recommended that emails should not be put in place until after the next election in November.

Sandra asked thru the chair about what happened when the email system went down. Eldon explained that the email system is an Exchange 2007 server, an older version but it was working fine. It was on an older set of equipment an older server and older Storage Area Network (SAN). The IT Department had migrated almost everything off the older infrastructure to a newer set of equipment. IT had planned to migrate the mailboxes to a new server and just never got around to it because it was working and other things came up. Then the SAN started to report errors, there was a failed drive in that SAN and Dell was notified and they dispatched a new drive. Then it reported another drive failure so a new drive was ordered for that one. There were also issues with the dual controller modules which caused a catastrophic failure. We worked with Dell to build a new server, restore the data from backup and all emails were restored except the incoming mail for that time period.

Sandra asked if there was there too much data on the server. Eldon stated that was not the issue. Eldon also told the committee that one of our support vendors, the YMCA and The City of Hartford also had their SAN fail that week.

Eldon also shared the immediate plan to migrate from the Exchange Server 2007 to 2013. By doing this we will be able to create another exchange server at another location for only the cost of the software. The two servers will be synchronized with the primary one being at City Hall and the secondary one at a different location. It will be an exact copy and if there is a failure on the primary device, it will be automatically set to go to the other one.

Sandra asked if there is an email policy in place about retention and deletion. Mike said not for end users and Nelson said there is seven year retention in place. Nelson explained the way he handles the email system at the Police Department. Sandra asked how long the 2003 system is going to last. Nelson he does not see it failing anytime soon. Eldon mentioned going to Office 365 could be beneficial because they will still have archiving and e-discovery and it is Microsoft's responsibility to provide the servers and the support. He is looking into 365 not only for the exchange but other Office applications. Mike stated that the BOE is switching to google and possibility adding Gmail in the next 12 to 18 months. He also stated that there is no cost because the education version is free. Eldon said that the Office 365 option would require a commitment for annual operating expenses.

Items to be placed on the next agenda:

Access database overview list

Consultant Timesheet Review

Help Desk Report with Departments added to the list

DBAR records management group

Adjournment:

Council member Sandra Russo-Driska made a motion to adjourn. Eldon Bailey seconded, approved unanimously.