

**Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee for Thursday, June 30, 2011.**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Grenke at 7:00 p.m. Present were Lynn Behrns, Kathy Colvin, and Heather Lockett.

The Committee discussed slow computers in the front office. It was agreed that Lockett would examine the two computers experiencing problems. If possible, we will follow the suggestion of Alderman Orsini and try adding memory. This will depend on the slots available and maximum designs of the operating system. Memory is cheap, and this alternative will not have to be brought back to the Board of Aldermen.

This option will allow extension of the useful life of these computers. The present City policy calls for replacement of computers after three years. After discussion, the committee thought it best to keep this standard for computers that work in harsher environments—such as the offices at the street, water, and electric department shops. For the computers in the front office and in the Police Department, committee suggested that a five-year turnover was more appropriate. An exception would be the case for computers which start to experience significant operating difficulties. The policy should be rewritten. The policy should also prescribe full cleaning every year for computers in offices and every six months for computers in the field or dusty conditions.

Committee also felt that the policy should set out a method of destroying hard drives on surplus computers.

Committee decided that it would probably be appropriate to only update operating system software as new computers are purchased, unless future special software purchases require a particular operating system. Both XP or Windows 7 have been okay to date. We will confirm about the continued use of Office 2003. The Police Department should consult with Huber & Associates with regard to present and future effects on the operating systems of their computers. Lockett will investigate vender preferences and support at CSI, the records management software, and the automatic meter reading software. This issue will be addressed before any major purchase of new software.

Staff is satisfied with the presentation of the City's web page. It is ADA compliant and can be updated by Lockett. It costs only \$360 per year to host, and that includes an hour per month for maintenance and consultations. The web page has many clear links to the Chamber of Commerce, to REDI, to neighboring and overlapping governments, and most other useful sites. Lockett noted that it has been hard to maintain lists of available housing, industrial sites, etc. because of limited cooperation from local landlords and realtors. Lockett told Behrns that there were links to streaming video sites for the recreation center and Avenue of Flags. The Chamber may also still have a link to a promotional video (from the highway banner project). If CREDI or others want to add to these, we will investigate the capacity of host servers.

Several of the laptops used by aldermen in the council room are old and not reliable. Committee was open to investigating their gradual replacement with iPads, since they are used principally as readers or to do quick research on the World Wide Web. They come with built-in wireless connections and would take up less space. Three or four might be necessary in the next year.

Staff is currently researching two major software purchases. Behrns believes that a GIS and GPS system could be implemented next fiscal year. This will not be cheap, but could be funded from the electric utility. Once in place, it would also be of service to the Police Department, and for economic development and planning purposes.

Staff also wants to replace the general ledger and accounting software. It is clunky and too reliant on one

programmer. This is not a sustainable situation. Colvin is researching software used by other cities, from the standpoints of usability, vendor support, ability to interface with the utility billing software, and adaptability to the present system of accounts and equipment use and accrued employee benefits funds. If possible it should also allow a greater segregation of duties and access (to make the auditors happy).

Colvin is also exploring future use of on-line bill payments. Behrns said he strongly wanted any such system to not increase City costs (such as are in effect for charge cards). Colvin believes that, since the City is now charged by the Bank on a per check and per deposit basis), there may be options which are revenue neutral. It may be useful to have such a system only linked to one computer, which is not connected to any other City computer. This is an effort to preserve the City's cyber security.

The Committee adjourned at about 8:15 p.m.

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