



TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes

Meeting of January 6, 2022

Present: Councilman Grady Faulkner, Lauren Middleton, Joe Samolis, Brian Robillard, Councilman Tony Gennaro, Roger Palmer, Karen Warren, Bryan Skowera (Staff)

Absent: Councilman Anthony Mangiafico, Foster Charles

Call to Order Councilman Gennaro called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

Approval of Minutes Karen Warren made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Lauren Middleton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

No one from the public was in attendance.

Director's Report

Bryan Skowera discussed the Director's Report (see attachment) and answered questions from the committee.

Unfinished Business

New Business

Discussion of Items to be placed on the Next Agenda

Karen Warren requested that eduRoam be discussed.

Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 6:34 pm on a motion by Councilman Faulkner. Karen Warren seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report

Personnel

Larry Niland, the Police Department Infrastructure Engineer starts on Monday, January 10th
Carmelo Ticino, the Police Department Network Coordinator starts on Monday, February 7th.
The Administrative Secretary III position, funded and approved by the Common Council, on December 6th, has not been posted and may not be posted until mid-February or later.

Budget

The Mayor has asked that budgets be submitted by February 18th. While the Mayor has requested that departments provide a "flat budget", Technology Services has been exempted from that requirement. The Mayor is aware that we are centralizing technology spend for the Police Department and will need to plan for remediation of outstanding issues there.

Projects

VMware: We have replaced the virtual server hosts at Central Communication. We have two more virtual server clusters to replace this year - Water and Sewer and the main Data Center. Next fiscal year, we plan on replacing the redundant cluster at Mile Lane.

Cisco Phone Replacement: All outdated desk phones which would prevent us from upgrading our Voice Over IP system have been replaced.

Green Street / Youth Services Bureau: The physical paging system has been installed, but its configuration is pending network changes in that building that would allow City resources to securely traverse the BOE network back to City Hall.

NEOGOV: This year, we undertook a project to replace the existing online HR recruitment and onboarding tool. Due to COVID and personnel issues throughout the City, the project is behind schedule. We still anticipate completion by early March, which is two months before we will lose access to the existing tool.

Telestaff: In mid-December, the 3rd party company that hosts the Police Department's scheduling and time tracking system suffered a ransomware attack that took their product offline. It made the national headlines, affected agencies ranging from Middletown to some state governments, and is still offline. An older, unsupported version of the software which runs on local hardware was still available at the PD for historic reporting purposes and has been temporarily brought back into production. We will be working with the PD to determine the best path forward once the vendor finalizes their recovery.

Log4J: Log4J is a building block of open source software; it is found in web sites, back end databases, internal search programs, and driver software that lets servers manage physical storage. On December 1st, the intelligence community saw a smattering of new exploits that used Log4J to take remote control of publically accessible devices. By December 10th, the method to exploit Log4J had been made public, and soon cyber attackers were using the vulnerability to remotely install ransomware, crypto currency miners, and to steal data from businesses and government entities. Since it's a building block, we can't just check a computer's installed software to see if it is affected. We have been running vulnerability scans on a regular basis to target this vulnerability - when we find it present, we then contact the vendor(s) who incorporated it into their software and work with them to implement fixes.

MFA: Still in progress, we've built out test synchronization into a sandbox environment as of today.

Press Releases: We've set up a new Press Release system so that all departments would use the same digital distribution system that simultaneously sends emails, texts, and posts to social media. The system is integrated with our website, maintains a central archive of all issued press releases, and eliminates the confusion of departments maintaining their own lists of press contacts, many of which were left off other departments' lists.

AI Chatbot: We are enabling a new AI powered chat-bot on the City's website that is more powerful than the existing search. The goal of this is two-fold:

- 1) Increase our citizens' ability to get help from the City 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- 2) Reduce the amount of time City employees spend answering inquiries.

The AI requires training; we are having City employees test the system now, and are waiting for the Mayor's office to assign personnel to review unanswered questions and improve the system.

StormWater Resources: We are working with Public Works to review options to inventory waste/storm water assets and liabilities and make them available through our GIS system for our field workers and for compliance reporting. We are currently taking meetings with solution providers.

Water and Sewer Document Management: Brian Robillard is pursuing solutions to digitize designs and make them available for field workers. A workable solution has been proposed by a third party, and we are investigating to see if utilizing the City's existing document management system is a viable alternative.

Body Cameras: We are coordinating with the PD to install wiring and build a virtually segregated network for body cameras. We are waiting on contractors to perform the work.

Payment Card Information Data Standard & Security (PCI DSS) Compliance: We had been asked to assist another department in completing a PCI DSS compliance questionnaire for a payment processing system they had acquired, as they were going to be assessed fees for failure to self-certify. This snowballed with new requirements for our City-wide insurance coverages and has turned into a multi-department initiative, including Finance, the General Counsel, Risk Management, Technology Services, and the various departments who handle credit cards. Risk is identifying a 3rd party subject matter expert to perform a high level review and audit of City departments and to help us develop policies and procedures; based on that outcome, Technology Services will restructure areas of our network to help implement best practices.

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