

Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC)
Town of Belmont
16 July 2014
Conference Room 1

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2014 SEP 18 AM 8:59

APPROVED MINUTES

[Minutes are sent to the Town Clerk, belmont-ma.gov!townclerk when approved]

Voting Members Present

- Phil Lawrence <illinoisalumni.org!pwl> (co chair; dominant) (VM)
- Jim Berets <verizon.net!jberets> (co-chair; less dominant) (VM)
- Dave Goldberg <verizon.net!david.goldberg6> (secretary) (VM)
- Jonathan Green <gmail.com!green.jbg> (VM)
- Charles Smart <verizon.net!cnsmart> (founding chair) (VM)
- Duane Bronson, <real-time.com!bronson> (VM)

Non-Voting Members Present:

Town Staff Present:

- David Petto (Director of IT, Town of Belmont) <belmont-ma.gov!dpetto> (TS)
- Steve Mazzola (Director of Technology, Belmont Schools) <belmont.k12.ma.us!SMazzola> (TS)
- John Steeves (IT/Technology, Belmont Police Department) <belmontpd.org!jsteeves>

Key:

- VM = Voting ITAC Member
- NVM = Non-Voting Member
- FBL = Friend of Belmont Library
- TS = Town Staff

Meeting called to order at 7:35PM

Minutes of the 16 June 2014 meeting approved as is.

Dave Petto reported:

Town Meeting (TM) introduced an electronic voting system for roll call votes. TM members (TMM) have a remote with ten buttons that people press to record their votes and the votes are displayed on a screen for confirmation. The system is set up so that a TMM's name will always show up in the same space to make it easy to find. TMMs can change their votes until the roll call times out. Aggregate votes are saved, individual votes are not, as a matter of policy. So far it has added a bit of time to the process but as TMMs get used to it, it is expected to save time in the long run. Belmont is the first municipality for the vendor of the system, Turning Technologies. Turning Technologies was one of a number of such systems that the town evaluated. The system can also be used for other town departments to use for votes, surveys, and so on. Overall TMMs were pleased with the system with only some minor complaints, some of which were fixed at the meeting, others communicated back to the vendor in expectation that the product will be improved.

The MUNIS system is now fully hosted. The local MUNIS server has been shutdown for the past two weeks. Dave reported that it was a lot of work with the network team, led by Phil Sullivan, the users

and the IT group with a very positive end result. Overall the move to the hosted system costs approximately \$5000 less as a large number of recurring costs, including maintenance and software licensing, related to the local server are no longer necessary. The move to hosted does mean that the town's internet connectivity is more critical. Recently one of the town's ISP systems went down but the network was quickly rerouted to the secondary ISP. Keeping both networks in a high availability set up has been considered but is not done due to impacts it would have on other town operations and the relative ease with which a manual switchover can be done.

Two new MUNIS modules have been added - employee self service and applicant tracking. Employee self service allows employees to update their own contact info, choose benefits, set up direct deposit among other things. Applicant tracking helps automate setting up new employees when an applicant is hired.

The MUNIS hosted system runs the old version that was local, which is no longer supported. Dave's team has been working with MUNIS on upgrading the system, converting the database and so on. The new version is already running in a test mode. Data is periodically copied from the production system and converted to the new and tested. Once all the tests are done and verified, a final migration will be done. There are three environments hosted at MUNIS. Production, Test and Training. The training and production environments run the same version. Test is used for updates to the MUNIS software. The training system can be used to try things out before doing things in production, not just for formal training.

A new email archive system has been installed, doubling capacity.

The new permitting system is now fully implemented. The new system will allow applications and payments for permits to be done on line and receive permits by mail. Records will also be reviewable. Eventually the system will also be used for all department permits such as health department for dumpsters, liquor licenses and so on.

Town IT has kicked off an effort to migrate to Microsoft Office 365, which will move email off premise. Retrofit Technology is the contractor Dave Petto is using to help the town migrate. Although primary email will move, the archive system will remain local. The email move is expected to be done in a few months. Complete migration of all Office applications and Sharepoint is funded in next year's budget.

The move to cloud based systems for Microsoft and MUNIS results in a change in password policy. Town has purchased Lastpass as a password management system and will soon begin training staff on its use. The system will allow the town to better enforce password changes and complexity.

Town IT is working on doubling the storage capacity of the SAN.

Dave Petto reported that BMLD is moving away from Cogsdale for billing. BMLD is evaluating a number of competitors.

Steve Mazzola reported that education IT is ramping up the google apps environment. The pilot this past year was successful so it is being expanded. Training has been going on the past few weeks. Google apps are being used now for more document sharing along with collaboration such as multiple editors. Eventually it will be expanded to student use. In addition student accounts are being managed differently. Instead of removing all accounts and redoing them for different grades, accounts are just

being relabeled for new grades and only graduates are being removed and new students added. Google apps will not be used for sensitive data such as HR. Steve is not considering Office 365 as a replacement for Microsoft Exchange. Educational discounts make it reasonable to continue to use Exchange for the near term but long term some move to a cloud based system is likely. Because of the discounts, the savings will not be as dramatic as with Town IT. Education IT may choose to go with Google. Google is already in use for student email and applications. Other work over the summer includes a variety of fixes and preventive maintenance on equipment, including smart boards. Physical spaces are also being reconsidered since the iPad initiative changes the way some of the labs might be used. Steve has been tracking equipment failures over the past several years to determine trends which help developing budgets for replacement parts.

John Steeves reported that the initiatives related at the last meeting are ongoing.

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 16 September 2014 at 7:30 PM

Meeting adjourned at 9:25PM