

**Technology Advisory Committee
of the City of Onalaska**

Thursday, October 25, 2018

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1 The meeting of the Technology Advisory Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to order
2 at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 25, 2018. It was noted that the meeting had been announced
3 and a notice posted at City Hall.

4

5 Roll call was taken with the following members present: Ald. Diane Wulf, Pam Goldbeck, Scott
6 Wied, Joe Davis, Rick Vogel

7

8 Also Present: IT Systems Administrator Chris Babcock, Public Works Facility Technology
9 Coordinator Nils Housker, Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler

10

11 Excused Absence: Tim Bena

12

13 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

14

15 Motion by Rick, second by Pam, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting as printed
16 and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

17

18 On voice vote, motion carried.

19

20 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

21

22 Ald. Wulf called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that portion
23 of the meeting.

24

25 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

26

27 **Item 4 – Brief introduction of members and staff**

28

29 Joe Davis told committee members he has been employed for more than six years as a server
30 administrator for Ram Systems, Incorporated, which is a software company located in the City of
31 La Crosse. Joe also noted he holds an Associate Degree and two technical diplomas specializing
32 in computer support and server administration from Western Technical College. Joe said he
33 specializes in Unix, Linux, and Windows Server.

34

35 Chris Babcock, the City of Onalaska’s new IT Systems Administrator, said he previously was
36 employed for four years at First Supply, specializing in Xchange and Windows Server
37 Virtualization.

38

39 Nils Housker, the Technology Coordinator for the Public Works Facility, said he worked with
40 Help Desk both at Logistics Health Incorporated and Inland.

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42 Fred told committee members he is attending tonight's meeting in place of City Administrator
43 Eric Rindfleisch, who is attending a seminar. Fred also noted he has been a City of Onalaska
44 employee since 1981.

45

46 Scott said he serves as Network Services Manager at Gundersen Health System, where he has
47 been employed since 1997.

48

49 Rick, who has an electrical engineering background, said he is employed by Trane Company as a
50 software engineer. Rick said he also served as a construction project manager for five years at
51 Gundersen Health System.

52

53 Pam said she serves as a systems analyst for Gundersen Health System, and she previously
54 oversaw the student information system software for the Onalaska School District.

55

56 Ald. Wulf, a Second District Alderperson, said she is currently serving her seventh year on the
57 Common Council, and with the exception of one year she also has served on the Technology
58 Committee since 2003.

59

60 **Item 5 – Update on previous IT items/Diane Wulf**

61

62 Ald. Wulf said a suggestion had been made at the September 25 Technology Committee for her
63 to examine past meeting minutes and determine if there were any outstanding items the
64 committee had not discussed. Ald. Wulf told committee members she had reviewed the meeting
65 minutes from the last several months and said the committee had not touched on the following
66 items:

67

- 68 • The Board of Public Works cameras were installed. Ald. Wulf said a concern had been
69 raised regarding safeguarding the tools of a newly hired mechanic.
- 70 • Meetings that are livestreamed in the Common Council Chambers were cutting out
71 sporadically. Ald. Wulf said the company that had installed the audio/video equipment
72 performed a software update that seems to have resolved the issue. Ald. Wulf said she
73 will continue to monitor the situation.

74

75 Fred said the city will be paying an ongoing maintenance contract to the provider.

76

- 77 • Ald. Wulf said the Social Media Policy the Technology Committee had approved at its
78 September 25 meeting also was approved by the Finance and Personnel Committee on
79 October 3, and then approved by the Common Council on October 9.

80

81 **Item 6 – Update on Capital Improvement Projects 2019 related to IT**

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83 Fred noted he sits on the Board of Public Works and told committee members there had been
84 several deletions to the proposed 2019 Capital Improvements Budget (CIB) at the October 2
85 Board of Public Works meeting. Fred estimated the Board of Public Works still must remove
86 between \$700,000 to \$800,000 at its November 6 meeting to reach its objective of \$3.5 million
87 as it relates to the General Fund.

88
89 Fred addressed Item No. 71 (“Phone system update, includes phones & installation/setup”) under
90 the Information Technology Department, a \$175,000 item the Board of Public Works had
91 removed at its October 2 meeting. Fred told committee members City Administrator Rindfleisch
92 had addressed this issue Monday with city staff and said Ald. Wulf had stated perhaps the
93 \$175,000 budgeted for this item was a little more than necessary. Fred said City Administrator
94 Rindfleisch has given Chris a task.

95
96 Chris said he will obtain “a few different options” on what the city could do to replace its
97 telephone system. Chris noted the city’s internal phones have reached an advanced age, and he
98 said they must be updated. Chris told committee members he will obtain quotes.

99
100 Ald. Wulf noted the current telephone system was installed and training was conducted in
101 November 2008.

102
103 Fred told committee members Human Resource Director Hope Burchell has asked that Item No.
104 72 (“Transfer of new hire info from NeoGov to Tyler Technologies”/\$40,000) be removed from
105 the 2019 CIB as she will not have the time to perform this task. Fred next addressed Item No. 70
106 (“Microsoft Windows upgrade & Microsoft Suite update for all computers”/\$25,000), telling
107 committee members he believes the \$25,000 budgeted for this item is “understated.” Fred noted
108 he had written down a sum of \$45,000.

109
110 Chris noted this is for Microsoft Office 2019 rather than Microsoft Office 365 and said the
111 volume licensing would be purchased outright. Chris said the total would be slightly less than
112 \$45,000. For comparison, Chris told committee members the yearly cost for Microsoft Office
113 365 is \$28,000.

114
115 Fred told committee members the City of Onalaska has Special Revenue Funds, Enterprise
116 Funds, and the General Fund. Fred said, “Some of this is going to be reallocated out to
117 Enterprise Funds – Water, Sewer, Storm Water, Omni Center.” Fred said the balance then would
118 go into the General Fund. Fred also said the Board of Public Works members will receive copy
119 of the quotes Chris has obtained, and he told committee members, “The balance of what is
120 needed will come out of the operational of the Enterprise Funds. [Regarding] the General Fund,
121 I’m looking at taking our share out of the Equipment Replacement Fund.”

122
123 For clarification, Ald. Wulf asked Fred, “This will not come out of our budget?”

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124
125 Fred said it would be a bond issue. Fred also said he will propose to the Board of Public Works
126 moving some of the Equipment Replacement Fund No. 207 rather than borrowing as he feels
127 uncomfortable borrowing through the bond market.

128
129 Fred next addressed Item No. 73 (“Emergency Operations Center updating technology in the
130 room – wiring, etc.”/\$40,000), telling committee members he believes this item will remain in
131 the 2019 CIB. Fred said the EOC is an area of expertise for Billy Hayes, the city’s recently hired
132 Fire Chief.

133
134 Ald. Wulf said she had discussed with City Administrator Rindfleisch the need for the EOC.
135 Ald. Wulf then returned to the telephone system, asking if it possibly could be replaced in 2020.

136
137 Fred told Ald. Wulf yes.

138
139 Chris said he will have quotes ready by mid-June 2019.

140
141 Joe asked Chris if he knows how many telephones will be needed.

142
143 Chris said it is difficult to answer that question at this time.

144
145 Fred estimated between 50 and 60 telephones.

146
147 Chris said approximately 90 telephones, which are registered in Mitel, in all of the city’s
148 buildings would need to be replaced. Chris also said he would prefer to have the flexibility to go
149 with soft telephones or hardware telephones so the city would not need to purchase the hardware.

150
151 Joe said Ram Systems, Incorporated, had recently upgraded its telephone system, noting it is a
152 subscription-based service. Joe said the V-Tech telephones are \$150 each and noted Ram
153 Systems’ monthly cost is approximately \$80 per month for 15 lines.

154
155 Chris said the city could utilize a service through Charter Communications that would allow for
156 centralized control, and also allow the city to utilize soft telephones. Chris said another option is
157 to utilize a hosted provider. Chris said he has scheduled a meeting the week of October 28-
158 November 3 with a vendor to keep everything functioning as-is. Chris also said he has set up a
159 meeting with Five Star Telecom for early 2019.

160
161 Joe said Five Star Telecom had allowed Ram Systems to remove approximately 50 percent of
162 what it has on its wall in relation to boxes, routers and modems. Joe said Five Star Telecom also
163 had included a rollover should there be a power outage.

164

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165 Ald. Wulf asked Fred if the city had utilized Five Star Telecom in 2008.

166
167 Chris said Five Star Telecom might have been working on the original installation in 2008.

168
169 Ald. Wulf said she believes that is the case. Ald. Wulf also asked if she believes the current
170 telephone system will be satisfactory for one more year.

171
172 Fred told Ald. Wulf that if the system were to cease functioning, there are funds available within
173 the Equipment Replacement Fund to subsidize the purchase of a telephone system even though it
174 is not a practice by the Common Council to utilize non-budgeted funds.

175
176 Chris said many of the issues with the system lie within the endpoint hardware, meaning the
177 telephones themselves, adding that the controllers are fairly stable for their age. Chris said that
178 while it is possible to purchase hardware from third-party vendors, it is at best a “holding
179 action.” Chris reiterated he will have quotes ready to present by mid-2019.

180
181 **Item 7 – Discussion and possible action on 2019 proposed IT budget**

182
183 Fred said it is his understanding the 2019 proposed IT budget Hope had compiled was very
184 similar to the 2018 budget, and had been completed prior to Chris being hired. Fred told
185 committee members he had shown Chris where various maintenance contracts and software
186 items were located, and he said that while Chris will need to work within the budget he feels
187 “very comfortable that we should be just fine in both the IT budget and the Equipment
188 Replacement budget.” Fred noted he also had shown Chris the Capital Projects.

189
190 Ald. Wulf agreed that Hope essentially had brought over the 2018 budget for 2019, and she said
191 she had gone on record stating she felt confident the current Common Council would understand
192 the situation.

193
194 Fred referred back to Item No. 70 in the proposed 2019 CIB and told committee members it was
195 understated, noting there had been a misunderstanding between Hope and City Engineer Jarrod
196 Holter.

197
198 Chris said it is “fairly important” that Item No. 70 be addressed, noting that half of the city’s
199 employees are utilizing Office 2010 Suite, while half are utilizing even older software. Chris
200 reiterated that while Office 365 would have been ideal, “the subscription model wasn’t
201 workable.”

202
203 Joe asked what operating systems is being run for the work stations.

204
205 Chris said approximately a little more than half are utilizing Windows 10, and the others are

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206 utilizing Windows 7. Chris said, “As long as we get those replaced by the end of 2020, they’ll
207 still be getting security updates.”

208

209 Joe asked Chris if the city would upgrade the operating systems while keeping the same
210 hardware platforms.

211

212 Chris said the city does not have volume licensing for Windows 10, noting the cost would have
213 been an additional \$38,000. Chris said he likely will stay with OEM licensing and replace the
214 hardware.

215

216 Joe asked if upgrades are an option, noting there are legitimate methods to obtain Windows 10
217 for free.

218

219 Chris said that while he would be able to do so, he also would be concerned about being audited.

220

221 Rick recommended phasing out the personal computers by 2020, noting that the IT budget
222 always includes replacement personal computers.

223

224 Ald. Wulf noted the committee typically does not need to meet either in November or December
225 and said the committee likely will not need to meet again until January.

226

227 **Adjournment**

228

229 Motion by Pam, second by Rick, to adjourn at 6:54 p.m.

230

231 On voice vote, motion carried.

232

233

234 Recorded by:

235

236 Kirk Bey