

Information Systems Advisory Board Meeting
October 5, 1999
Minutes

Members Present: Beth Ahern Peter Kirkby Iva Conti Michael Jaillet Arthur Wong
Absent: Steve Anderson Lee MacQuarrie

The minutes of the September 7th meeting were approved as submitted and will be posted on the web site.

I. OLD BUSINESS

A. TOWN UPDATE

Beth reported that the Town has been occupied with the following:

1. *ISAB Vacancies*
Beth reported that the Board has two vacancies to fill to have a full membership. At the last meeting of the Board of Selectmen, it was announced that our Board is seeking two members. It was also mentioned that Lee MacQuarrie would like to step down as soon as a new member is appointed.
2. *Library*
Beth reported that the IS Department recently purchased three PCs and printers for the Library, with Windows 98. The purpose of the machines is patron usage.
3. *Police Department*
Beth reported that the Police Department has been a leader in GIS use in its investigative efforts.
4. *Cablevision*
It was reported in the news this week that Cablevision is up for sale. Beth has been working with Cablevision to accomplish a short-term switch over for the INET from co-axial cable and updated electronics and amplifiers this weekend (October 9-11). Beth hopes that this installation will be successful and pose little problems at our town locations. Cablevision plans to check and balance each location on Monday October 11th. Beth will update the Board at the next meeting on the status of the switch over.

Peter Kirkby asked Beth if she has heard anything more on cable modem access. Beth said that Cablevision is now saying the spring for Internet access. Much of this is very unpredictable with Cablevision up for sale.

A decision needs to be made whether the Town wants to replace its equipment with broadband or fiber. Beth reported that at this time Zenith is no longer making cable modems and that new equipment will need to be purchased for any growth in the system. You cannot mix different technology brands with cable modems. An estimated cost for the new equipment is anywhere between \$30,000-\$40,000.

B. SCHOOLS UPDATE

Beth reported the following updates for the School:

1. *School/ IS Clerical Position*
Beth reported that the school/IS position was reevaluated and the clerical union and Personnel Board approved an upgrade of the position from grade 3 to grade 6. The Town and School department will each pay for 20 hours of the position.
2. *Purchase Order Processing*
At the time of this meeting, some progress has been made on processing purchase orders and bill payment.
3. *Consolidation of Town and School IT Operations*
Leon and Beth met with the school department's consultant, Infinity Computers to discuss the current information technology operations and identify locations and equipment. Beth will keep the Board updated and provide copies of any reports provided by Infinity Computers as soon as possible so that discussion may be facilitated at the next meeting.

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4. *School Administration Staff Training*

Two days of one-on-one training were conducted successfully. The format for this training was having the trainer from Progressive Solutions sit with each user at their own desks and answered questions of many kinds on Word, Excel and Netscape. The feedback received was very positive.

5. *Starbase Graphical Interface*

The Starbase system interface was successfully changed to a graphical interface. There are some applications that need some fine-tuning.

6. *DOE Information*

The DOE (Department of Education) has requested each city and town in the Commonwealth to collect data on each student's birthplace and middle name so as to provide each student with a unique identifier. The purpose of the data collection is to ultimately provide each student with a (LASID) Local Area State ID. Donna McClellan is working with the schools to obtain and input the data into Starbase and will forward the information to the DOE.

7. *MA Teachers Retirement Project*

Donna McClellan has been working with the town treasurer to automate a monthly report for the MA Teachers Retirement instead of paper reporting.

C. **GIS UPDATE**

1. **GIS Audit**

A GIS audit was conducted on September 29th. The purpose of the meeting was to redefine the future use of GIS. Beth reported that eleven different departments were represented at the Audit. This roundtable discussion attracted some new interest in GIS. The group discussed present and anticipated needs for the future with GIS. Staffing changes at Woodard & Curran and the increased cost of professional services provided on an hourly basis were also discussed.

Beth reported that she has been strategizing about the possibility of hiring a GIS analyst, as an employee of the Town of Westwood. Beth stated that Woodard & Curran has provided some very helpful macros and customization of ArcView, but ongoing maintenance has been becoming very expensive. Peter suggested hiring a young person right out of school.

II. **NEW BUSINESS** - None reported.

III. **OTHER BUSINESS**

A. **WEB SITE UPDATE**

Beth reported that she has received some updates on web pages of the Council on Aging, Recreation and the Board of Selectmen. Also, meetings, some agendas and traffic updates have been provided consistently.

B. **SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY REPORT**

Leon reported that he discovered the Westwood Public Schools Technology Plan on the web site and encouraged others to look at it.

IV. **PUBLIC & PRESS**

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on TUESDAY, November 2, 1999 at 7:30 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting room at Town Hall.