CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
APRIL 20, 2022

ATTENDANCE: Scott Burns, Co-chair; Ernest Newton, Co-chair; Tyler Mack, Mary McBride-Lee, Matthew McCarthy, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia

OTHERS: Council Member(s): A. Boyd, J. Cruz, F. Hodges, M. Pereira, R. Smith & M. Valle; Ken Flatto, Finance Director; Nestor Nkwo, OPM Director; Curtis Denton, ITS Director; Barbara, Tamara Root, 203-209-1058; 203-880-5666

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Burns called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. A quorum was present.

ITS

Council Member Burns said that the ITS budget was on page 138 in the book. Mr. Nkwo said that the ITS world is more competitive than what the City is offering.

Mr. Denton said that in the last six months, the ITS staff has changed because former staff have taken positions in surrounding towns for more money. This makes filling the positions challenging and the City is losing the legacy knowledge to neighboring towns. He hopes to have the vacant positions in the next few months.

Mr. Denton then narrated a PowerPoint Presentation.

Mr. Denton spoke about the upgrades to the system, particularly during the COVID outbreak which allowed staff to work from home. The City has migrated to First Net Public Safety, which brings some savings to the City. Cyber security improvements have also been made to the system. Hardware delivery times now exceed 180 days.

He also reviewed the long term ITS goals with the Committee.

Council Member McCarthy asked about the Computer Services line item, which Mr. Denton reviewed with him.

Council Member Burns asked about the UPS. Mr. Denton explained that it was an Uninterrupted Power Supply, which is a unit that is similar to a battery back-up and gives the users time to save and shut down their computers in the event of a power failure. Discussion about the details followed.

City of Bridgeport
Budget & Appropriations
Special Meeting
April 20, 2022

Council Member McCarthy asked about the increases from 2020 to 2021. Mr. Denton said that the software licensing increase each year.

Council Member Mack asked about the revenue line for Freedom of Information. He also wished to know about the contracted salaries and the actuals.

Mr. Denton said that he does not collect revenue. Mr. Nkwo explained that in the past they had collected fees, but the law has since changed.

Council Member Newton said that the software licensing costs increase every year. He asked if there were other software products out there that were less costly. Mr. Denton said that the financial software was one of the top three packages in the nation. Changing over would cost more than any savings at this point.

Council Member Newton asked if the City has software contracts. Mr. Denton said that the City was under contract.

Council Member Valle asked how the Department could save on utilities. Mr. Denton said that if they were talking about the telecommunication lines, they are already reduced. He reviewed the details. Council Member Valle said that while it was helpful, but not enough.

Council Member Burns suggested that the computers be turned off when the staff is leaving. Mr. Denton said that it is during the night when the software updates are done along with running the anti-viral programs.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked if the BOE has their own separate department. Mr. Denton said that the City maintains the financial system, but the BOE has their own ITS department. Council Member McBride-Lee said that if they shut down the computers, the iPads won't charge for the students.

Council Member Pereira asked how many City buildings including all the fire stations along with all the City devices including desktops, iPads and tablets the department manages. Mr. Denton said that he believed that there were 35 buildings with the ITS infrastructure. He said that he believed there were about 7,000 devices.

Council Member Pereira said that the fire stations have seven or eight firefighters on site. She went on to say that the BOE has 40 school buildings including Connecticut Avenue and other non-school use buildings. They have well over 30,000 devices including Chromebooks, tablets, iPads and desktops. Council Member Pereira said that it blows her mind to see this department, which is double the size of the BOE ITS. She said that the City ITS manages 7,000 devices while the BOE manages well over 30,000, especially during COVID when every single child needed some type of remote learning device. She said that she did not understand the disparity since the City ITS has almost double the size of the BOE budget, yet the BOE manages so many more devices and school buildings. She added that Central High has over 200 employees alone. She

2

City of Bridgeport
Budget & Appropriations
Special Meeting
April 20, 2022

repeated that there was a major disparity between the number of personnel in the City ITS and the number of personnel in the BOE ITS.

Mr. Denton said that the City ITS department runs 24/7/365 days a year and they also manage NextGen, Intergov, and the financial system. They also manage network applications and the servers. If the system goes down, they have one hour to get it back up and running.

Council Member Pereira replied that the BOE was 24/7 because the students take standardized computerized tests and have a number of platforms that they must handle for those tests. She restated that there was a major disparity here and every school was at capacity 181 days a year. Many of the school buildings host summer programs or the Lighthouse Program. She repeated that there was a major disparity there.

Mr. Denton said that the BOE receives a different access rate and Federal funding particularly in the area of software costs. The City pays a different amount for software contracts and there are also costs for the telecommunication software. Many of the BOE applications are handled off site, for which the BOE pays a fee, which is not possible for the City to do.

Council Member Pereira said that that there had been discussions about using AARPA funds for free City-wide access for internet and wi-fi for the entire City. She asked Mr. Denton if there was anything in the budget about that.

Mr. Denton said that the RFP will be released for that. He reviewed the details.

Mr. Nkwo pointed out that the City ITS acts as an internet hub for not only the City, but also for the BOE.

Council Member McCarthy said that he believe0s that the Infrastructure Bill has funding for free wi-fi for residences.

Council Member McCarthy asked how many City employees are issued cellphones. He also wished to know how many people don't use it. Mr. Denton said that they deactivate phones that are not being used and they will be returned to AT&T.

Council Member Newton said that it is not right to compare the BOE to the City. The City picks up many of the services for the BOE. They are two different entities. The City has many more responsibilities for the residents.

Council Member Burns asked about the mitigation of risk in terms of cyber security. Mr. Denton then reviewed the security measures that the City is taking.

Council Member Pereira asked about the Shot Spotter and what the ITS role was in maintaining it. Mr. Denton said that he does not have a direct connection to that program. Mr. Flatto said that some funding had been allocated for the Shot Spotter expansion.

City of Bridgeport
Budget & Appropriations
Special Meeting
April 20, 2022

Council Member Pereira asked about the costs associated with the Shot Spotter hardware. Mr. Nkwo said that it would be best to speak to Acting Chief Garcia about it.

Council Member Pereira asked about page 148 and the debt service. Mr. Flatto said that some of the money was used for Intergov. Mr. Denton said that he does not allow bonding for software and it did not happen during his watch. He explained that the City had bonded five years ago for NextGen and other servers, which run 24/7 because they were at the end of life. RFPs were done and the hardware went through the purchasing process. Hardware only lasts about five years, so taking out a 10-year note is not practical.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she was pleased to see the new North End Library budget line. Mr. Nkwo said that they had included it to make her happy.

Council Member Burns asked about the Emergency Operations budget line. Mr. Denton spoke about how the programs would need to be upgraded and will assist the leadership in decision making.

Council Member McCarthy said that they should not fund any Capital Budget items with AARPA funds because that revenue will not be long term.

Mr. Nkwo commended Mr. Denton for carrying the City successfully through the COVID pandemic.

ADJOURNMENT

** COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Telesco Secretarial Services