May 21, 2009

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Committee on Information Technology held a meeting on May 21, 2009, with Chairman Bruce Desmond presiding and Committee Member Alderman William Roche Trane also present and voting. Also present were Administrative Assistant Jessie Baker, Chief Information Officer Karthik Viswanathan and the city's grant writer, Kate Ashton.

Chairman Desmond spoke about an Energy Efficient Block Grant of $651,000 and said that the city would have to come up with an initiative in order to apply.

Mr. Viswanathan spoke about the retrofit being performed to automatically shutdown all non-essential computers after business hours and told the members that the vendor, Verdiem, took readings over a two month period prior to being contracted. The actual savings won't be known until the end of the year. Mr. Viswanathan also told the members that 8 new virtual servers have been added to the Citrix environment, saving power and Data Center space.

The city has also implemented electronic faxes in city and school buildings, at a cost of $40,000. Cost savings will be realized through reduced paper use and the elimination of individualized fax numbers. The e-fax installation should be completed by the end of the year.

City-wide Wi-Fi is moving forward. The cost to the city, primarily for bandwidth and technical issues, will be approximately $570,000. There will be 3 access points in 19 buildings throughout the city. It is anticipated that the city will save money by implementing Wi-Fi, but the actual amount is not yet known. Mr. Viswanathan explained that Wi-Fi would provide an economic benefit to the city by enticing businesses to come to Somerville.

Mr. Viswanathan also briefly discussed the MUNIS system, a financial system software package that also includes an electronic permitting and licensing module.

No Papers were acted on.

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Alderman Bruce M. Desmond, Chairman
Committee on Information Technology