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May 8, 2007

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Committee on Information Technology held a meeting on May 8, 2007, with Chairman Bruce Desmond presiding and Committee Members Aldermen William Roche and Robert Trane also present and voting. Also present was Chief Information Officer Karthik Viswanathan.

Mr. Viswanathan told the members that he spent his initial time on the job looking at areas within the city to determine where and what the IT needs were. One of the main issues that needs to be addressed is financial accounting and information is being requested from the cities of Boston, Lowell and Brookline to see how those communities are dealing with financial matters. The department will also try to determine how much of its work is repetitive vs new, and make adjustments as needed.

In keeping with the department's mission statement, IT staff will be "partnering closely with other departments to foster and build standard functional commonality across organizations". For example, at the present time, overtime is tracked using 5 different programs and it is IT's goal to standardize various functions so that departments can share data while reducing software costs.

A major problem with smaller "desktop" programs is that regular backups of data are not being performed. By reviewing and combining programs, under the direction of IT personnel, this flaw can be corrected. IT procurement will be centralized with IT recommendations and support.

Mr. Viswanathan presented an outline of short, medium and long-term goals and told the members that a Wi-Fi system, with high speed hot spots, is scheduled to be reviewed next week. The details have yet to be worked out, but the setup cost would be borne by the vendor.

Chairman Desmond requested that Mr. Viswanathan try to come up with a short term plan for a backup data center and offered the Board's assistance, should it be needed.

No Papers were acted on.

Alderman Bruce M. Desmond, Chairman
Committee on Information Technology

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Information
Technology, May 8, 2007

In Board of Aldermen

Clerk