

CITY OF BURTON
FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 1998, 10:00 A.M., COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Meeting was called to order by Charles Cross, Councilman, at 10:17 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cross and Martinbianco.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Cox.

OTHERS PRESENT: G. Webster, Clerk; C. Abbey, Personnel Director; R. Riess, Water Supervisor; R. LaDuke, Building Supervisor; S. Perez, Purchasing Agent; B. Becker, Treasurer/Controller and C. Ladd, Deputy Clerk.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS
CONCERNING:
1. CCS COMPUTER CONTRACT

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Abbey explained that information was sent to the Council during the budget process and we are now trying to make the necessary changes that are needed for the year 2000. We are trying to get the City updated and get the departments networked. At the present time, the Clerk's Office, Mayor's Office and Personnel Office are networked. He said he would let the department heads explain their needs and what they would like to see accomplished with the approval of this contract.

Mr. Abbey said he received information from the MML Conference regarding the Year 2000 and its affects on computers. He will make copies for the Council to review. He noted that computers are important and the City is growing rapidly. Therefore, the mandates are getting greater and greater and the computer system updates are vital to all departments.

Mr. Becker said currently, in the approved budget, there is \$18,000.00 for Capital Improvements for computer improvements. The contract being presented is more of a labor type contract than an improvement contract. He said a transfer of funds would be necessary because most of this contract is labor intensive versus computer improvements.

Brian Thurman, President of CCS, gave a brief overview of the needs of the City. He explained that he has been working with the City of Burton for the past year and a half and has the Clerk's Office, Mayor and Personnel Offices and DPW all networked. There is also a NT Server set up in DPW. The issue at hand is the Year 2000 and the impact that it will have on the City. Two main areas of concern for elected officials is the public safety and the local economy. Today's criminal justice system is dependent on electronic technology for telecommunications equipment in police vehicles, as well as for pardons, paroles, scheduling court action and documenting evidence. Emergency response systems are also vulnerable through their reliance on telecommunications and data processing. Payroll will become a major problem if the department is unable to calculate wages and salaries, withholding, as well as the accounting department. The computer has a problem in reading past the year 1999. Putting in a good NT Network will stop people from coming in and removing data from your files. I have demonstrated this several times at both the City and the County. I can't stress enough the importance of acting on this issue as soon as possible.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 1998/10:00 A.M.

Mr. Thurman said another problem the City has is the System 36. There are currently two departments who are on this system and it will take several months to make the transition from one system to another. This is not something that can be done overnight. Networking is time saving and more efficient than using the floppy disks. Through the networking system, if someone in the Police Department needed an ordinance, they would be able to get into the records through the computer and retrieve the ordinance needed. Burton needs to be on the Internet. There are many people who look for information about the City of Burton and this would be an up-to-date way of getting information out to the public about events happening in the City.

Mr. Thurman said if some of the important issues are not addressed and the systems fail, this will cause major problems for the City. We need to make the City secure. The employees need to be trained, as well as the City leaders. Burton should be promoted and this can be done through the Web site and e-mail address.

Mr. Thurman then reviewed the particulars of the contract in regards to the cost breakdown. (Copies of the Network Contract Detail Report and Contract Cost Summary are on file in the Clerk's Office).

Mr. Thurman said it would be beneficial to the City to take two people and give them a more intense training so they will have knowledge on how to find information on the network itself. It is our goal to have the City become self-sufficient within one year of our being here. There is no need for us to be here when you can be self-sufficient. He asked that the Committee read through the contract and if anyone has any questions, please feel free to contact him at this office. He would be available 24 hours per day. He noted that he would have a person at the City two days per week. He said City of Burton could take the lead on the Year 2000 issue. Many governmental units don't know what they are doing or going to do. The City can take this opportunity to stand up and be a source for others.

Gayle Webster, Clerk, explained that over the past year, Mr. Thurman has worked in our office, addressing the Millennium problem. The training is important to the staff and we are very satisfied with the peer to peer network. We have started archiving data on the Zip Disk. This is a long process and we have a long way to go. Mr. Thurman has been accessible to our office upon a phone call. He is very knowledgeable and has helped us in many aspects.

Mr. LaDuke stated that in the last budget, Council approved a computer purchase for the Building Department. If this contract is approved, would the cost be divided over all the departments. Also, I have a concern about how the person assigned to the City will divide the time two days per week.

Mr. Perez said the contract is one issue, but the cost of replacing the existing computers is another. He said he isn't certain the City can go out and purchase 8 or so computers without a transfer of funds.

Mr. Abbey pointed out that the Capital Improvement Fund has \$18,000.00 which could be used for the purchase of computer terminals. We believe that this contract is warranted and needed to teach our people. We need computer training if we are going to move ahead.

Mr. Martinbianco commented that in the union contracts, funds are allowed for educational classes.

Mr. Abbey stated that since he has held his current position, only one person has taken a computer class. We can encourage the employees to take classes, but we can't demand that they do so.

Mr. Cross suggested the Administration emphasize job performance and the need to be ready for advancement.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

There was no one in the audience who wished to speak.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Webster said she thinks it is beneficial for the staff to be trained on their day to day work. Job site training can be more beneficial than taking classes, as the training would consist of work done in each individual department.

Mr. Martinbianco commented that the Committee should review where we are at today with the concept of a computer system to bring us up to the Year 2000. Items to be considered are the capital improvement budget, interaction of other County agencies, labor related contract and capital costs.

Mr. Thurman commented that to know what the City will need, you will have to have someone come in and review the computer software currently on site and this will not be done cheaply. In the proposed contract, we are offering you this service and it could be more cost effective for the City.

Mr. Martinbianco asked if other bids were taken for this project.

Mr. Perez said although it is always a good idea to get other bids, he thinks the City is getting a good price relative to the services being offered.

Mr. Abbey said when you talk about getting other bids, we have an obligation to put together what our needs are. I don't think we know what we would line up as specifications. Mr. Thurman has put in a great deal of time and effort and it would be unfair to take his name off the specifications and have other computer companies come in and give us a quote.

Mr. Perez said in the past, we have paid Computer Land \$95.00 per hour and it seems if you don't have a person working on the system, everybody has a different way of working the system. We have had several other computer consultants in the past and that is how the City ended up with so many different computer systems. It would be easy to get a bid on a file server, but without coming into the City and knowing what we want, it would be difficult to get an accurate bid.

Mr. Martinbianco asked if Mr. Thurman has any references other than the Drain Commission.

Mr. Thurman replied yes, he would be happy to provide the references to the Committee.

Mr. Abbey said when Mr. Thurman came to the City, no one knew him. We can only go by our track record with him and whether the department have been pleased with his work. The Fire Chief spoke highly of him and he has done a good job with the Mayor and Personnel Office. The bottom line is we need training and the system could be the best ever, but without training, it doesn't do us any good. Costs of taking college classes would be more expensive than having on site training. Most departments have tried to address the hardware systems. Brad's is the furthest behind just because he has more computers and they are in different areas. We don't want to get into the situation where we are shut down someday because we weren't ready for the year 2000. We need to get several people trained on the system. He said it will probably take a transfer of funds, possibly from General Fund. When Brian come in for two days each week, we will have a way of tracking the hours so we know we are getting the training hours we are paying for.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 1998/10:00 A.M.
PAGE -4-

Mr. Cross asked how many departments are still on System 36.

Mrs. Webster said the Controller's Office and the Clerk's Office.

Mr. Becker said the Treasurer's Office is on it very little. Primarily, the payroll department that uses System 36.

Mr. Cross asked how many departments will be affected with buying equipment.

Mr. Becker said he would rather not get into individual departments. The funds should all go in one pot, as long as we know it will be city wide usage. Our intent is to revitalize the Computer Committee. This could be another layer of determining out priorities and needs.

Mr. Cross inquired about the equipment and whether it would come out of each individual department.

Mr. Becker replied yes, it would come out of each individual budget under office equipment line item.

Mr. Cross asked what would happen with System 36.

Mr. Thurman said there is a company in Texas who is interested in purchasing this system. They will give you a price on what they are willing to pay. It's a way to get rid of it instead of letting it sit in a storeroom someplace.

Mr. Cross asked when disposing of System 36, would it be better to go through the County or sell it to someone in another State. Have we go outside the state before when selling items?

Mr. Becker said yes, we have sold equipment before outside the State. In fact, we sold the system we had prior to System 36 to someone out of state.

Mr. Cross asked Mr. Thurman if he had any outstanding debts, if taxes are up to date and if he is a resident of the City. He also inquired if he had any relatives working for the City, on council or any ties to the City in any way.

Mr. Thurman replied he has no outstanding debts with the City nor does he have any relatives working in any capacity for the City.

Mr. Martinbianco asked if an answer is needed today, as he would like the Committee Chairman to have the information

Mr. Abbey said we owe Mr. Thurman something, as he has come in and assisted us at the spare of the moment.

Mr. Martinbianco said if he would go in a different direction in another year, would another consultant be able to track what has occurred. Also, is the system virus proof. He also inquired about protection for power outages.

Mr. Thurman said there will be complete up to date virus proof and hacking data coverage on the system. He addressed the issue of power outages, stating that the servers have redundant power supplies and they are more secure than previous systems. The Clerk, Mayor and DPW Water and Sewer Departments are ready to plug into the server. The biggest cost is getting you equipment Year 2000 compatible.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 1998/10:00 A.M.
PAGE -5-

Mr. Martinbianco inquired about extending the contract beyond one year and asked if it would have to be negotiated again.

Mr. Thurman said if he has met all requirements at the end of contract and you are satisfied, he would extend the contract at the current price.

Mr. Becker said with the bond issue we are selling Monday, there is an additional disclosure we are looking at for the Year 2000.

Mr. Martinbianco said this was a good presentation and he would like to review the material, as well as giving Mr. Cox an opportunity to speak with Mr. Thurman and/or review the materials. He said he would like to get this on the next Council agenda.

Mr. Cross suggested a copy of the tape be made and given to Mr. Cox.

Mr. Becker stated there are a couple of other issues to be addressed by this Committee. The include Burton Neighborhood Housing CD Allocations and Maple Point Special Assessment District additional costs to be determined how they will be funded.

Mr. Abbey said if anyone had any further questions for Mr. Thurman, possibly another meeting could be set before the next regular Council Meeting.

Mr. Martinbianco said he would speak with Mr. Cox regarding a meeting to be set for next week.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

There was no Committee recommendation.

Meeting adjourned at 11:27 P.M.

Cheryl M. Ladd, CMC/AAE
Deputy City Clerk

CML