

# **INVESTMENTS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENT & MODERNIZATION PROJECTS OVERSIGHT BOARD**

## **Minutes**

**October 10, 2023**

### **Call to Order and Roll Call**

The second meeting of the Investments in Information Technology Improvement & Modernization Projects Oversight Board was held on October 10, 2023, at 11:00 AM in Room 129 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Pratt, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

### **Present were:**

Members: Senator Gex Williams Co-Chair; Representative Phillip Pratt Co-Chair; Senator Max Wise; Representative John Hodgson.

Guests: Charles Byers, KY Court of Justice, Chief Information Officer; Jennifer Harp, Executive Director, Office of Application Technology Services; Chris Lindsay, Executive Director, Office of Technology Services; Kenneth Jones, Deputy Executive Director, Office of Technology Services; and Jorden Jones, Executive Director, Office of Legislative Services.

LRC Staff: Jennifer Hays, Adam Johnson, Sarah Watts, and Jennifer Smith.

### **Approval of Minutes of the September 12, 2023 Meeting**

Upon motion by Representative Hodgson and second by Senator Williams, the minutes from the September meeting were approved without objection.

### **Discussion with the Administrative Office of the Courts**

Charles Byers, Chief Information Officer, provided an overview of areas supported within the judicial branch, some that are not necessarily viewed as information technology. These areas included background checks, printshop, court services, courtroom recording, training, and continued education. The Office of the Courts goes beyond the traditional information technology shop.

Mr. Byers gave a breakdown of the judicial branch's technology budget, which totaled \$36.1 million. The general fund being \$30.2 million while the restricted funds stood at \$5.9 million. Currently, the only project active is the continuing e-court program. The e-court program was initially funded by House Bill 238 during the 2011 Regular Session.

During the 2022 Regular Session, House Bill 244 added funding to help complete the e-court project.

Mr. Byers stated that some positions are unable to utilize remote work, but there are other positions that are well suited for it. He has noticed that remote work has helped reduce cost of travel for their department. Also, there has been a reduction in turnover, and that saves time and money in re-training.

Mr. Byers testified that the chief justice created committees and subcommittees to provide oversight and transparency on the various e-court programs. He ended the presentation by stating funding is still needed to complete the e-court project and added they still have technical debt.

Responding to a question from Senator Williams, Mr. Byers stated that the agency is currently drafting a proposal for outside vendors for security and storage. It seems to be more sustainable to contract from outside considering the difficulty to attract and retain technical talent.

Responding to a question from Representative Pratt, Mr. Byers stated that they use the same security measures with remote work as in office. There is multi-authentication, encrypted data, and very sensitive data is not sent or used on remote or personal devices by the courts.

### **Discussion with the Cabinet for Health & Family Services (CHFS)**

Jennifer Harp, Executive Director, Office of Application Technology Services, stated that CHFS provides in-house support for all applications, and COT provides a vendor oversight. All technology security is in-house as well. The Medicaid application is vendor supported, but CHFS has ownership. CHFS partners with COT for desktop support, server storage, printer services, etc. The technology budget is part of the overall cabinet budget. Ms. Harp stated that some of the applications are funded by federal grants.

The cabinet is in the process of moving all services to an in-house managed cloud based system. CHFS currently uses an alternate storage data center, and they work closely with COT for data recovery. COT is responsible for cyber security with an annual cost to the department. The Office of Application Technology Services has an inhouse security team that maintains COT policies and requirements.

Ms. Harp stated the office utilizes remote work, and staff come to the office as needed. The ability to work from home has been significant in retaining and hiring staff.

Additional funding would enable them to look at more innovative modernization, and continue to improve on the processes of the department's applications.

Responding to a question from Representative Hodgson, Ms. Harp said CHFS has a legacy system for child support with the attorney general's office. The system is on the mainframe, and has been a capital project for a long period of time. They are working on modernizing the system. Approval was received to improve the child support system in the last budget session.

Responding to a question from Representative Pratt, Ms. Harp stated that CHFS's technology budget is included in the overall cabinet budget.

### **Discussion with the Education & Labor Cabinet**

Chris Lindsay, Executive Director, said the Education Cabinet's merger with the Labor and Workforce Development Cabinet included unemployment insurance, which means they oversee many different applications such as; workers claim's, unemployment insurance, OSHA, vocational rehab, etc. The information technology budget and maintenance budget are included within the Education and Labor Cabinet's budget. Capital projects are requested outside of the standard operating budget. The unemployment system is hosted at COT. The department uses AWS phone systems, which is vendor managed through Amazon Solutions, and is cloud-based. The call center application began during the pandemic, and they have continued to build on that. Mr. Lindsay stated that the department finds it cost effective. They use the alternate data center, and participate in COT disaster recovery exercises. Their systems are backed up daily, stored, and managed by COT.

Responding to a question from Senator Williams, Mr. Lindsay stated the AWS phone system was a recommendation from COT when the pandemic began. Additionally, staff work three days in the office and remote work the remaining two days.

Responding to a question from Representative Hodgson, Mr. Lindsay stated an open procurement is ongoing, and that is all the information that can be shared.

Representative Pratt addressed Mr. Lindsay by saying, part of the process is we need a budget from your department so we know your technology needs.

Responding to a question from Representative Pratt, Mr. Lindsay said the call center staff answers calls all day long.

Responding to a question from Senator Wise, Mr. Lindsay stated that the call center is in Kentucky, not out of state.

Responding to a question from Senator Williams, Mr. Lindsay said statistics for the call center calls are available. The process is the same as amazon services.

**Correspondence Submitted by the Legislative Research Commission**

Representative Pratt announced to the committee that the Legislative Research Commission response to the technology questions can be found in their packet.

**Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.