

INVESTMENTS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENT & MODERNIZATION PROJECTS OVERSIGHT BOARD

Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the 2024 Interim

October 9, 2024

Call to Order and Roll Call

The fifth meeting of the Investments in Information Technology Improvement & Modernization Projects Oversight Board was held on October 9, 2024, at 10:00 AM in Room 129 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Gex Williams, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Gex Williams, Co-Chair; Representative John Hodgson, Co-Chair; and Representative Nancy Tate.

Guests: Ruth Day, Chief Information Officer, Commonwealth Office of Technology; Jim Barnhart, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Commonwealth Office of Technology; Robert Long, General Counsel, Finance and Administration Cabinet; Kathy Robinson, Executive Director, Office of Procurement Services; Major Brad Arterburn, Division of Records Management, Kentucky State Police; Brandon Marshall, Staff Assistant, Kentucky State Police; Sam Ruth, Commissioner, Department for Facilities and Support Services; and Natalie Brawner, Division Director, Department of Facilities and Support Services.

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

Approval of Minutes

Due to lack of a quorum, the committee tabled approval of the minutes until the next meeting.

Interoperability of Communications - COT, State Police, Finance Cabinet

Brandon Marshall, Staff Assistant, Kentucky State Police (KSP), discussed Kentucky's interoperability infrastructure. The Kentucky statewide emergency responder voice system (KY SERVS) is being built to replace the failing communication infrastructure first responders use. This project has been funded in the last three budgets.

Phase I was appropriated \$35.1 million for new subscriber equipment, system cores, replacement of console positions at 16 posts, and infrastructure build out for posts one

and two. Four more towers were added to aid in radio coverage along with equipment upgrades and replacements, resulting in the communication infrastructure being fully operational 99.999 percent of the time. Phase II was appropriated \$52.5 million for new infrastructure on 48 existing sites and to obtain and construct 17 additional sites. Phase III was appropriated \$128 million for shelter replacement, microwave and router replacements, infrastructure replacements at 30 existing sites, and for obtaining and constructing 35 additional sites. Additional funding of \$47.9 million was appropriated in House Bill 6 from the 2024 Regular Session for Phase III work.

Mr. Marshall discussed the challenges of increased costs in equipment, materials, and labor; along with the challenging topography impacting construction in eastern Kentucky. Sam Ruth, Commissioner, Department for Facilities and Support Services, discussed construction challenges of getting access and utilities to the towers. There are 29 projects that are in progress, six sites upgrading from 100-amp service to 200-amp service, and 12 sites undergoing structural modifications.

Responding to a question from Senator Williams, Mr. Ruth stated it takes about a year and a half after property is acquired to have a tower up and performing.

Natalie Brawner, Division Director, Department of Facilities and Support Services, discussed the difficulties of acquiring property. She stated they have contracted with four new vendors to assist with the process of land acquisition.

Responding to a question from Senator Williams, Ms. Brawner said the primary focus of the RFP is to help acquire land for the sites.

Responding to a question from Representative Hodgson, Mr. Marshall stated they are introducing Kentucky Wired to the microwave network at 16 sites, and there are two microwave radio shots between each tower. He stated towers and mounts are built to a class two specification.

Responding to a question from Representative Tate, Mr. Ruth said they are only preordering tower structures and shelters.

Responding to a question from Senator Williams, Mr. Marshall stated the system would be available to counties across the state.

Responding to a question from Representative Tate, Mr. Marshall said counties would still be responsible for providing end user equipment.

Responding to a question from Senator Williams, Mr. Marshall stated he has identified the ideal sites to build the towers.

Responding to a question from Senator Williams, Ms. Brawner said it typically takes nine months to a year to procure a property, and with the new contracted vendors, they are hoping to accelerate that timeline.

Responding to a question from Senator Williams, Mr. Ruth stated they do not need statutory changes to help facilitate acquisition or construction.

Responding to questions from Senator Williams, Mr. Marshall stated there is a technical subcommittee of the Kentucky Wireless Interoperability Executive Committee (KWIEC) that reviews radio projects to ensure they meet the Commonwealth's and the federal government's technical standards. However, unless local agencies are applying for grant funding through the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security, they are not required to have their radio projects reviewed by KWIEC. He stated the standard used by KWIEC is P25, and it is an open standard that all vendors can utilize for digital two-way land mobile radio systems.

Senator Williams commented that local communities may need help applying for funds to buy standard equipment. Mr. Marshall stated they work with local agencies and assist with their public safety communications.

Senator Tate commented on the high demand for Homeland Security grants and the wait to receive funding.

Identification of Legacy Projects - Commonwealth Office of Technology

Ruth Day, Chief Information Officer, Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT), provided an overview of the requested systems. There are 499 systems across the Executive Branch, 130 are legacy systems, 115 are agency developed, and 15 are vendor developed. Ms. Day discussed the difficulty of determining actual costs.

Senator Williams requested COT focus on the cost of legacy systems along with critical government-facing and citizen-facing applications. Ms. Day discussed the capital IT projects information list and stated they could provide the committee with details of capital IT planning. She said COT could have legacy system information by the next meeting.

Discussion on Master Agreements - Finance Cabinet

Kathy Robinson, Executive Director, Office of Procurement Services, stated there are almost 300 active master agreements.

In response to a question from Senator Williams, Ms. Robinson stated many IT contracts are updated with renewals for maintenance support every year along with technology updates.

Robert Long, General Counsel, Finance and Administration Cabinet, stated some of the older systems are very tailored and specific to the using agency. Transitioning to a new system is dependent on the needs of the agency, what is available to meet that agency's needs, and the cost of that specific system.

In response to a question from Senator Williams, Ms. Robinson stated they identified which master agreements were National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO) contracts.

In response to questions from Senator Williams, Mr. Long said NASPO contracts are put out to market and bid upon by multiple vendors. Vendors then negotiate directly with the state to be awarded the master agreement. During the contract period, there is a period of exclusivity.

In response to a question from Senator Williams, Ms. Robinson stated she could provide a list of statutory and regulatory limitations on contract terms with vendors. She added some IT contract limitations are COT security terms that vendors want to deviate from.

Responding to a question from Representative Tate, Ms. Robinson stated vendors want to negotiate terms favorable to the vendor rather than the Commonwealth.

Mr. Long commented that typically IT vendors like to use a group of standardized terms and clauses in their contracts that Kentucky cannot agree to because of statutes.

Senator Williams stated he wants to make sure statutes enable, not impede, the procurement of the current generation of software as a service technology contracts.

Topics from Discussion Among Members

January Meeting

The board decided to schedule a January meeting during the first week of session.

Revision to Project Request Data Items

The board discussed different technology formats available to use for the Project Request Data Form.

Correspondence Received

The board discussed the correspondence between Kentucky Communications Network Authority and OpenFiber Kentucky Co.

Next Meeting

November 13, 2024 at 10:00 AM, chaired by Representative Hodgson.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:29 AM.