Item 23-0767: iSeries Sunset

Human Resource and Information Technology Committee

Wed, Jun 28, 2023, 4:30PM

Alderperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 03:25
Moving on to information items. 23-0767 iSeries sunset? Would you like to briefly address this, Director Popp?

Director Corey Popp (IT) 03:35
Sure, I'd be happy to. The iSeries is the city's legacy ERP system. A computer system the city's been running on—I don't know, the original date this was implemented—but probably at least 20 years I would say. So this this memo is an announcement that we're going to sunset the iSeries as it's called December 31, 2025, out of production. That is the intent to have all mission critical systems moved to the new Tyler Technologies ERP system by that date.

Director Corey Popp (IT) 04:12
And you can see in the memo that I have outlined the applications that are already on the new system, as well as those that should complete this year, will complete this year, and then out two more years. So the 2025 end of year date sounds close, but it's actually three Christmases away if you stop and think about it. So it is quite a ways out yet, two and a half years.

Director Corey Popp (IT) 04:38
But I wanted to stand up some goalposts. So we didn't have a date in mind. We were sort of working towards darkness. However it rolled out, it rolled out, and I felt it was important to get a date set up to project forward exactly what we could do to make sure we were off of this system in a reasonable amount of time. I worked with the mayor to do that. We drafted this memo, introduced it to the directors and committee on Friday. So with that, I'll take any questions you might have on this memo.

Alderperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 05:14
Thank you. Anyone have any questions? Alderman Hayden?

Alderperson Patrick Hayden (District 7) 05:18
Thank you, Chair. Director Popp, we talked a few weeks ago about the contracting out a firm for databases and things like that. And it seems like the iSeries is staying on our databases, since it's an in-house is—and you're talking about using it for archiving. Is there any expenses that are going to be around this, since we're going to be archiving these databases? Like how much storage, I guess, are we talking about here?

Director Corey Popp (IT) 05:45
Right. So it's, um, it's not difficult to calculate, but the amounts are actually quite small. So hardware wise, I'm doing this from memory. So if you need the exact numbers, I'll go back to the budget book. But hardware-wise to keep a company at hand to work on maintenance on the system is about $6,000 a year. We do keep parts closets. So we actually have three complete iSeries in storage that we could go to for parts. There's no guarantee those parts work when we take them out of the box, but we got tertiary backups of those parts.

Director Corey Popp (IT) 06:23
You know what I—when I look at it, other than just a failure of the system, what we're really dwindling on is human resources, you know. We're facing retirements. We basically have 1.5 FTEs in the department supporting

the system. We started the year with 2.5. That's really my primary concern is, even if the hardware continues to last for two and a half more years, which it probably will, especially with backups, we're eventually going to use human resources—lose the human resources to support this system.

Director Corey Popp (IT) 06:55
And it's custom made. So there's RPG programmers out there we could go and get, but to bring those RPG programmers in and sit them down in a chair and say, "Hey, here you go, start going through this code and help us figure out how to support and keep this going moving forward," that's where the real difficulty comes in. And that's, that's, I think, my urgency to sunset this system.

Alderperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 07:20
Thank you, anyone else? Alderperson Schultz.

Alderperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 07:24
Thank you, chair. Just I guess a couple of questions director Popp. I'm just looking at the implementation schedule looks like most of the work was done in 2018 and 2019. You weren't here at that time, but I imagine you're following things as they occur. Have we had any issues with the implementation? It looks like, basically, for the last three years, we've just been trying to implement the tax billing and collection cycles. Any running into any issues? Is it going smoothly? What do you foresee as potential implementation is it—?

Director Corey Popp (IT) 07:53
So we finished property taxes last year on time. So those implemented the delay—the four-year delay in that I just can't answer that. I can't speak to anything that really occurred before my arrival. Certainly I hear anecdotes and stuff. But to take that forward as conjecture and public record, I just wouldn't I wouldn't feel good about doing that. We're moving forward now, and we have momentum now. So I feel good about the pace we're on. I—we'll complete utility billing this year as well.

Director Corey Popp (IT) 08:26
As—just because we've gone down this path, the order of this, these modules, is intentional. So originally, if you look back at the original plan, asset management was to precede utility billing. I asked the mayor if we could flip those last year, because what I would like to do is get the revenue flowing into the new system. And once we get—with property taxes already on the system—once we get utility billing flowing this year, we'll have about 95 to 98% of revenue coming into the new system. And that is really the critical portion of what we need to accomplish here. I'll sleep much better January of next year.

Alderperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 09:09
Thank you.

Director Corey Popp (IT) 09:10
You're welcome.