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August 23, 2017

FILED
AUG 25 2017

Judge of Superior Court
Honorable Kate Powell Segerstrom
Tuolumne County Superior Court
60 North Washington Street
Sonora, CA 95370

Superior Court of California
County of Tuolumne
By: Clerk

Re: Response to 2016-2017 Grand Jury Report – **Information Technology Department**

Dear Judge Powell-Segerstrom:

The 2016-17 Grand Jury did an in depth review of the Tuolumne County Information Technology Division. We are pleased to respond to the concerns and questions in the items that follow. In this rapidly technology dependent world, it is critically important that technology be used effectively and securely to protect the citizens and employees information and to provide quality, user friendly services.

Grand Jury Findings

F1. IT staffing was significantly reduced starting in 2008, but expectations have grown, leading to the inability of the IT Department to deliver what county departments are asking for in a timely manner.

Response: Agree. At the same time, since 2008 IT has implemented numerous time saving methods such as remote computing, mass software installation without touching every computer, and cloud computing.

F2. There is no IT director. The IT manager reports to a deputy CAO causing a possible conflict of interest. The CAO is responsible for budgeting, and this can conflict with the interests of the IT Department leaving no one at the Director level to advocate on behalf of the IT Department.

Response: Disagree. Having the IT Manager report to a Deputy CAO is purposeful and appropriate. As an internal service division, IT's purpose is to serve the County's departments who in turn serve the citizens. The County Administrator's Office works with all County departments and helps them achieve their goals. A

Deputy County Administrator acts as an advocate for IT and has easy access to communicate technology needs to the CAO and Board.

F3. The IT Project demands from multiple departments throughout the county create delays in many projects and conflicts between departments.

Response: Agree and Disagree. While it is true that not all projects can be implemented immediately and delays do occur, we disagree that this leads to conflicts between departments. In reality the departments meet to match the existing resources with the requested projects. This leads to cordial discussion and project decisions which may mean a delay for one department while the other department's project moves forward.

F4. Security falls under Risk Management, which is the responsibility of Human Resources. The IT Department operates in a manner where security is not its responsibility, creating serious security and reliability issues throughout the county.

Response: Agree and Disagree. Both Human Resources and IT have security in their scope of responsibility.

F5. IT Department staff are constantly "putting out fires" and do not have a lot of time to train. Training is often interrupted in order to work on issues.

Response: Agree

F6. County facilities do not take into account the needs of IT equipment, leading to critical county infrastructure being in danger of destruction if fire suppression equipment were activated.

Response: Agree and Disagree. County Facilities Management does work closely with IT to evaluate critical infrastructure. Yes, IT infrastructure will be damaged if fire suppression equipment is activated.

F7. Labor and cost estimates for projects have consistently been underestimated and have suffered from scope creep contributing to delays in project delivery.

Response: Agree

F8. The projects of highly "visible" departments are prioritized while other work is deprioritized, impacting long-term projects and Maintenance and Operations.

Response: Agree

F9. The Tuolumne County IT Department has no consistent project tracking system, does not break work into milestones, and cannot provide immediate project status reports.

Response: Agree. Although there is not one project tracking software system, the IT employee assigned to any project can provide project status reports upon request.

F11. Staff are not given sufficient time to perform infrastructure maintenance.

Response: Agree

F12. There is no security analyst or specialist in the IT Department. Lack of sufficient time for existing staff to address security issues proactively, and no dedicated security staff, leaves the county at increasing and unnecessary security risk.

Response: Agree

F14. There is no current formal Disaster Recovery Plan/Policy (DRPP). Without a formal plan to address disaster response, any reaction will have to be created under duress, without the time or forethought that proper planning provides.

Response: Agree and Disagree. The Tuolumne County Office of Emergency Services hired a firm to write a disaster recovery plan and the plan still exists, but is outdated. Some of the recommendations contained in the plan are still valid, but in reality, the plan should be rewritten.

F26. The Morning Star facility lacks security cameras.

Response: Agree

F27. The Morning Star facility lacks physical security for the server room.

Response: Disagree. The switch room is locked; in addition, the building is locked and alarmed.

F28. The Morning Star facility server rooms use sprinklers for re suppression.

Response: Agree

F29. The Morning Star facility server room leaves tape backups exposed.

Response: Agree and Disagree. The room is locked and is in a locked and alarmed facility.

F30. The NOC leaves tape backups exposed.

Response: Agree and Disagree. The room is locked and is in a locked and alarmed facility.

F31. The NOC uses sprinklers for fire suppression.

Response: Agree

F32. There is no formal policy for supervised third-party NOC access, which violates HIPAA, PCI DSS, and creates other potential security issues.

Response: Agree. The policy is not written.

F38. Servers throughout the county are out of date and some critical services run on software that is eight years beyond EOL, placing them at severe security risk and increased risk of instability.

Response: Agree

F56. No formal policy or process is in place for external vendor access, creating inconsistency and potential security issues.

Response: Agree and Disagree. Although there is not a formal policy, staff always accompanies external vendors when they need access to secured areas such as the Network Operations Center.

Grand Jury Recommendations

R1: Hire at least two mid-level industry-experienced IT professionals to increase the capacity of the department. (F1)

Response: The recommendation has not been implemented because it depends on budget availability. Board agrees with the need to add staff within IT to increase the capacity to maintain the existing technology infrastructure and to smoothly implement new technology. In the past two fiscal years, the Board authorized adding a Network Analyst and the IT Manager positions. Adding IT positions is a budgetary consideration and were requested by IT for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-18 budget. The IT Division lost a number of positions during the Great Recession. The County is working towards growing IT in a responsible manner within budgetary constraints.

R2: Hire one more technical support analyst to assist county users who require help. (F1)

Response: See the answer to R1. This is a budgetary consideration and must be balanced with all other requested positions.

R3: Hire a Chief Information Officer (CIO) or IT Director that would report directly to the CAO and not a deputy CAO. That individual must have an experienced IT background and not have any other responsibilities within the county administration. Should the position not be created/filled, we request that the CAO, BOS and County Counsel explain why the current arrangement is not a conflict of interest. (F2)

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented, because it is not merited. Whether the County has an IT Director (Department Head), Chief Information Officer, or IT Manager, they would all report to the County Administrator or the County Administrator's Office. The current configuration of having an IT Manager report to a Deputy County Administrator who also supervises the Facilities Management Division has led to efficiencies and more frequent information sharing when projects occur which impact both divisions. As far as IT's budget requests, they all ultimately come through the County Administrator who holds the title of County Budget Officer. No conflict of interest exists.

R4. All County departments must be made aware of needs of the other departments and work together to prioritize their IT needs. (F3)

Response: This recommendation has been implemented. This currently happens during the Information Technology Steering Board process and the quarterly updates which provide the Board of Supervisors and all departments project status reports.

R5. Security training must take place for members of the IT Department. It is preferred that training take place offsite instead of online or on-site training, so they are not interrupted during training. (F4, F5)

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis due to the budget constraints required for off-site training. Training has and is important to the success of IT and as such, an emphasis will be placed on offsite training or uninterrupted onsite training. A more robust training plan will be brought to the Board during the Fiscal Year 2018/19 budget.

R6. Involve the IT Department in all aspects of planning and implementation of how buildings are set up for proper IT infrastructure. The IT Department should be included in final approval of County building plans. (F6)

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. It is common practice for IT, Facilities Management, and the County Fire Prevention Bureau to be involved in the beginning stages when new County buildings are designed. This was the case when the Juvenile Detention Center and County Jail were recently designed.

R7. Investigate project management methodologies such as Agile, Lean, and Kanban. The Jury also recommends that the county investigate software for project management to improve project estimation and tracking capabilities. (F3, F7, F9)

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented and will be further studied to evaluate which project management method is the right tool for the County's IT Analysts to use. The County will also investigate the various project management software options and recommend the possible use of one. A recommendation will be made in the FY 2018/19 budget.

R8. Prioritize projects based on the needs of the entire county, both government and citizens. All projects and project requests should go through the standard ITSB procedures, and prioritization should also include maintenance on IT equipment so that technical debt is not accrued. (F8)

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. A greater emphasis will be given to the replacement of internal systems such as critical infrastructure.

R10. Modify IT Department work schedules to stagger some staff so some Maintenance & Operations can be performed after hours in other departments. (F11)

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis to determine which departments could benefit from varying schedules. IT staff is routinely held late or they arrive early to perform system maintenance required to be performed when County staff is not using their computers.

R11. The Grand Jury strongly recommends hiring a dedicated security analyst. (F4, F12)

Response: The recommendation has budgetary constraints and will be considered along with other budget requests.

R13. Create, maintain and observe a Disaster Recovery Plan/Policy. (F14)

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis due to the budgetary constraints associated with drafting a new Disaster Recovery Plan. There is an existing Disaster Recovery Plan/Policy, albeit outdated. In the past, the writing of this plan was spearheaded by the Tuolumne County Office of Emergency Services as part of a comprehensive process. Redoing this plan is expensive and will be evaluated to see if it can be included in the FY 2018/19 budget.

R26. Immediately install security cameras at the Morning Star facility. (F6, F26)

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. IT's Morning Star facility is locked during the day and alarmed after hours.

R27. Immediately replace the doors, door locks, and implement audited security access devices for the server rooms at the Morning Star facility. (F6, F27)

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted; however, an access control security system will be requested at the FY 2017/18 Mid-Year budget.

R28. Replace the sprinklers with HFC-227ea fire suppression systems, or any other electronics-friendly fire suppression system, at the Morning Star facility. (F6, F28)

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis to see what cost effective alternatives are available. The County Fire Prevention Bureau and County Facilities Management will help research appropriate fire suppression system options for County server rooms. The findings of this evaluation will be made available by February 1, 2018.

R29. Immediately move tape backups into fireproof safes at the Morning Star facility. (F6, F29)

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be evaluated to see what alternatives are available to safely store the backup tapes. The solution will be made known with possible budgetary requests by February 1, 2018.

R30. Immediately move tape backups into fireproof safes within the NOC. (F6, F30)

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be evaluated to see what alternatives are available to safely store the backup tapes. The solution will be made known with possible budgetary requests by February 1, 2018.

R31. Replace the sprinklers with HFC-227ea fire suppression systems, or any other electronics-friendly fire suppression system, within the NOC. (F6, F31)

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis to see what cost effective alternatives are available. The County Fire Prevention Bureau and County Facilities Management will help research appropriate fire suppression system options for County server rooms. The findings of this evaluation will be made available by February 1, 2018.

R32. All third-party access to the NOC should be supervised and logged. (F32, F56)

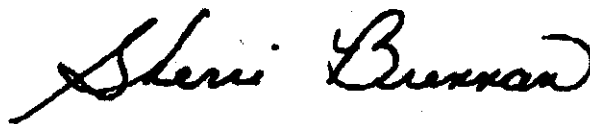
Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but a policy regarding third-party access to the NOC will be written and implemented by January 1, 2018.

R37. Wherever possible, EOL devices should be replaced or terminated. Where this is not possible, we recommend that alternatives, such as Microsoft Premium Assurance, be sought out to minimize collateral damage from unsecurable devices. (F38)

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. EOL devices will be given priority for replacement unless appropriate alternatives exist such as Microsoft Premium Assurance.


Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above findings and recommendations. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions regarding same.

Sincerely,



SHERRI BRENNAN, Chair
Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors

I hereby certify that according to the provisions of Government Code Section 25103, delivery of this document has been made.

By: 
ALICIA L. JAMAR
Clerk of the Board