

Mark Hald

From: Mark Hald
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2004 12:50 PM
To: John Murray; Stephen Barrett
Subject: RE: Electronic Bill Payment

I have spoken with this company this week, as well as Munis regarding their competing product. I am also investigating the cost and technicalities of the Town performing this function in-house.

Regards,
Mark

-----Original Message-----

From: John Murray
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2004 8:58 AM
To: Mark Hald; Stephen Barrett
Subject: FW: Electronic Bill Payment

FYI

-----Original Message-----

From: David Stone
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2004 5:10 PM
To: Finance Committee; Board of Selectmen
Subject: Electronic Bill Payment

Dear FinCom and BOS,

As a follow-up to Saturday's budget session, I've done some research on on-line bill payment options. One I think we should seriously consider is eBill (<http://www.mcc.net/ebill/>) from Metropolitan Communications (<http://www.mcc.net/>) in Berlin, Mass. They currently provide on-line payment services for over 60 Massachusetts cities and towns. The service costs the town nothing, apart from the standard ACH fee charged by our bank, and integrates easily with our existing software. The taxpayer pays only 25 cents for an ACH debit, or 2.95% to use a credit card. There is a slide show with more information at the "click here" link on this page: <http://www.mcc.net/ebill/biller/default.htm>.

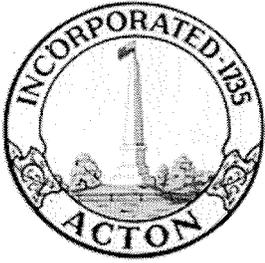
I talked with Doug Ross at Metropolitan Communications, who will send me additional information. I also talked with two current customers. I spoke with Vicki Smith, the tax collector in Harvard, and David Laplante, the tax collector in Leominster. Both of them are extremely pleased with the eBill product and the service provided by Metropolitan Communications. Harvard has only recently implemented the system, so has only a few taxpayers using it so far, and is using only a subset of the available features. Leominster has used eBill for over a year, beginning with excise tax bills, and now has water and sewer and real estate tax bills on line as well. Both Vicki and David would be happy to talk with us further about their experiences.

Regards,

David

David K. Stone, Managing Director
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TOWN OF ACTON

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

To: John Murray

From: Mark Hald

Date: January 16, 2004

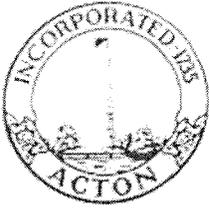
Re: Munis and the Enterprise-Wide Software Search Mission Statement

John:

Per your request, I have attached a copy of the Mission Statement that Staff used for guidance in searching for a comprehensive financial management software package.

During the RFP evaluation process, Staff was instructed that cost was the driving factor for software selection and that some principles outlined in the Mission Statement as approved by the Board of Selectmen would have to be deferred until better financial times.

Regards,



DON P. JOHNSON
TOWN MANAGER

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To: Board of Selectmen
From: Don P. Johnson
Subject: Information Technology

Several Town and School Departments are currently involved in the search for a new financial suite of software. To date we have interviewed approximately thirteen vendors and seen most of their software. As we move forward, we want to be certain this major decision meshes with the vision of where our Town Government is headed with respect to technology.

Attached, please find a proposed Mission Statement for which Staff seeks your comments.

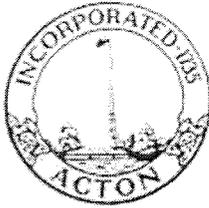
In the near future, the financial software vendor list will be culled to a "short list", which will be taken to the Joint Technology Advisory Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

Don

NOTE TO BOS - 10/5/01
I PLAN TO SEEK DIRECTION FROM
THE BOARD REGARDING THE ATTACHED
DRAFT MISSION STATEMENT DURING
THE TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT SEGMENT
OF YOUR OCTOBER 9 MEETING.

Don

Unanimous approval 10/9/01.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
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OCTOBER 5, 2001

PROPOSED MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE SEARCH AND SELECTION OF ENTERPRISE-WIDE SOFTWARE

INTRODUCTION

Just as telephones, fax machines and mini-computers brought the Town's way of doing business to the level it performs at today, desktop computers and the Internet have prompted our citizens to demand change in the way business is done in their Government.

Just as our citizens expect to be able to pick up a telephone and call Town Hall for information, they expect to visit our web site to access the same information and services. Just as they pay their credit card bills on-line or order from catalogs in the private sector, they wish to log onto a Town server and order one of our products, pay a bill or look up dynamic information about themselves or their Town.

E-Government is the term used for the public sector's version of E-Commerce. Like the ubiquitous telephone, E-Government is no longer a concept; it is the way "things are getting done."

One way E-Government serves both the government and its citizens is portals. A portal is a single access point for this government and its citizens to access services. As of this date, the Town web site is a source of static information about Town Departments and Boards. We propose to improve that and catch up to where our world is with respect to technology.

The first step in that direction was the creation of an Information Technology Department. The Department produced an electronic presence, a web page, containing information about the Town and its activities. This was the first stage of our E-Government evolution.

The second stage in our evolution was the implementation of electronic interaction, the E-Mail system. Now, Town officials and citizens can interact electronically, from the convenience of their home or office, any time day or night.

The third and next stage in our evolution will be the ability to transact business over the Internet, 24 hours per day. Transactions such as paying a property or excise tax bill, reviewing assessment information, applying for permits or signing up for recreational events will all be able to be transacted on-line.

The first step in achieving that third stage is defining the parameters of our current search to replace our under-capable financial suite of software.

PROPOSED MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE
SEARCH AND SELECTION OF ENTERPRISE-WIDE SOFTWARE

PORTAL VERSUS WEB SITE

Achieving the transaction stage of our E-Government evolution requires implementing a portal. A portal is much more than a simple web site. Where a basic web site is static and stops short of interaction, a portal, accessed using the same Internet tools at the home or office, is structured by what the citizen, our customer, needs – not by how our Town Government is structured. Instead of our web site listing our Departments and then what services they provide, our portal will show what *services* the Town provides. The citizen then does not need to know what department serves their need before seeking that service. For example, who would have thought the lockers at the Commuter Lot are maintained by the Planning Department?

<u>Web Site</u>	<u>Portal</u>
Organized by Agency	Organized by Service
Static Information	Dynamic Information and Transactions
Limited Customer Support	Full Customer Support
Information Technology is Separated from most Agencies	Information Technology is Integrated with all Agencies

The United States is ranked third worldwide in terms of Internet services available to its citizens, providing just under 50% of expected services on-line. Similarly, Massachusetts is ranked highest in the nation, providing 21% of expected services on-line. This data proves our citizens demand portal technology be provided by their government, just as they demand on-line services from the retail and service industries.

Several years ago, we would have laughed at the concept of the Registry of Motor Vehicles being “light-years” ahead of Acton in providing a portal to its citizens. Now we can renew our registrations, change our address, pay citations and order duplicate documents without having to stand in line for two hours. Our Town has a long way to go to achieve this level of on-line service. Web sites are fast to design and publish. Making those sites interactive with portal technology requires a vision, determination and leadership, along with a reengineering of the way we do business and a dedication to keep the site’s content fresh and useful.

Selectmen's Minutes

October 9, 2001

7:30 P.M.

Present: Peter Ashton, Trey Shupert, Pam Harting-Barrat, F. Dore' Hunter, Walter Foster, Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager. Meeting was televised.

CITIZEN'S CONCERNS

Peter noted we would be starting at 7:00 P.M. beginning with the October 23rd meeting. Peter also noted the upcoming Planning Board hearing on Thursday and the scheduled Special Town Meeting on the 29th of October.

PUBLIC HEARINGS & APPOINTMENTS

COMMITTEE INTERVIEW- MICHELLE BARABASH – HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION - WALTER FOSTER - Moved to Appoint Michelle Barabash as a full member of the HDC with a term to expire 6/30/04. PAM HARTING-BARRAT. Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

CHANGE OF LOCATION – COLONIAL SPIRITS – From 69 to 87 Great Road. Peter asked about the need for applying now. Mr. Steinberg said it was a financial impact decision, they needed to know if they would be issued a license before they began the endeavor. Walter asked about the recycling portion. They now have 8 machines and they will have another 8. He asked about hours of operation, same as the current location, but less hours then the theater. Walter wanted the lighting looked at, he noted it was a very pedestrian friendly plan.

DORE' HUNTER - Moved to approve. PAM HARTING-BARRAT – Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

ASSESSORS OVERSIGHT MEETING – Donald Rhude gave an overall presentation on the exemptions that they can make in peoples taxes. It was mentioned that they need to get the word out about some of these exemptions to the people that may qualify for them. They are seeking Alternate members and have contacted the VCC.

PRIVATE WAY PLOWING – Dave Abbt and David Brown gave an overview of the process of approving private ways. Several were denied because of signage that is posted. Dore' noted that you cannot have it both ways. He said that he could support the recommendations made. DORE' HUNTER - Moved to approve the recommendations as stated and denying those not recommended by staff. TREY SHUPERT – Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE. Peter suggested we write a letter to each street that was denied on basis of sign, if it is taken down, we would revisit it next year. Tom Oldham asked about plowing of Davis Road and clarification of what would be plowed. Windcliff resident asked if the repairs to the pavement could be done in Spring. The Highway Supt. said no, he was certain the plow would do more damage if left unrepaired this season.

SITE PLAN 366 – ASSISTED LIVING, Site Plan Modification – TREY SHUPERT –
Moved to continue the public hearing until October 23 at 9:15 .p.m. PAM HARTING-
BARRAT – Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

ARRT – Roland gave an overview of the project and funding that has been received for the project. He will be bringing this capital item to the Hill and asked for the Board's support. He felt it would be around \$200,000, which includes construction, screening for neighbors and does not include amenities such as maps, signage parking and perhaps bathroom facilities. The resident of 64 Main Street had several questions, he could not support with traffic issues, he was concerned with the price. A Summer Street resident urged the Board to approve this plan; he felt it would help with traffic.

Stu Gilmore of Albertine Drive said his house is 50 feet from MBTA Railroad. He was concerned about safety given the proximity to the house. TREY SHUPERT - Moved to support and sign a letter to endorse the ARRT implementation as dated June 2001 with available funding. DORE' HUNTER – Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS

DRAFT DECISION – 6/7/01-378 – 31 Powder Mill Road –WALTER FOSTER -
Moved to approve the Site Plan Decision as written. DORE' HUNTER - Second
TREY SHUPERT - Abstained. 1-4 Motion passes.

BANNER REQUEST – Peter thought we might put the banner up in South Acton. Trey did not want to bump an organization. TREY SHUPERT - Moved to hang the banner without displacing The Children's Museum request. PAM HARTING-BARRAT Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

OTHER BUSINESS

CNN Material with Concord. Dore' noted that Pam had offered to attend.

CONSENT AGENDA

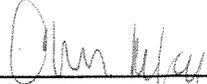
DORE' HUNTER– Moved to approve with the minutes of September 11th corrected.
WALTER FOSTER - Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

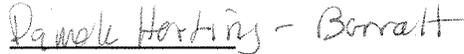
Don spoke about the technology issues outlined in his memo. DORE' HUNTER -
Moved to approve as statement of policy TREY SHUPERT –Second. UNANIMOUS
VOTE.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

PAM HARTING-BARRAT – Moved to go into Executive Session to discuss active litigation PETER ASHTON - SECOND. The Board will only return to open session to adjourn. Roll Call taken by the Clerk, All Ayes.



Christine Joyce
Recording Clerk



Clerk

Date