

Technology & Resiliency Transcript 4/29/2021

SPEAKERS

Steve Bulger, Andrew Jarosh, John Warmt, Tara Gaston, Eileen Bennett, Mike Smith, Bill Peck, Mike Hartnett, Several Supervisors, Eric Connolly

Tara Gaston

Welcome to the April 29 meeting of the Saratoga County Technology and Resiliency Committee. Attendance has been taken. Can you advise who's here just for my own information?

Pamela Wright

In the room you have Supervisor Eric Connolly, County Administrator Steve Bulger, County Attorney Mike Hartnett, Management Analyst Matt Rose, Confidential Secretary Audra Hedden, Purchasing Director John Warmt, IT Director Eileen Bennett. On the phone you have Supervisor Bill Peck and Supervisor Mike Smith.

Tara Gaston

Thank you. First item on the agenda is approval of the minutes of the March 25, 2021 meeting. Do I have a motion?

Eric Connolly

So moved.

Tara Gaston

I will second the motion. This is Supervisor Gaston. Can I second it?

Bill Peck

I will second it. This is Supervisor Peck.

Tara Gaston

All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Tara Gaston

Any opposed? Okay. Matter passes. The next item on the agenda is audio and visual upgrades to the board meeting and committee rooms, IT Director Bennett

Eileen Bennett

In 2020, IT was tasked to find a full turnkey solution for audio visual solution for the Board room and the Committee room. A proposal was secured under the New York state contract for over \$200,000. Due to that cost, it was decided that an RFP would be released for an audio visual solution for the Board room and Committee room. That RFP was sent out. It has been received back. We review them and have completed a review and have recommended Presentation Concepts Corporation out of Syracuse, New York, due to the full solution that they were able to give us. With growth in that system under licensing versus hardware, it was expandable and would be a solution for us for future growth in the event that we wanted more things in that audio visual solution. John is here in case anyone has any questions in regards to the specifics of that RFP.

Mike Smith

How many how many RFP's were received back?

Tara Gaston

Apologies. One second, please if you're speaking make sure to say your name is if you can so that we can make it a little bit easier for the Clerks.

John Warnt

Supervisor, this is John Warnt the Director of Purchasing. 48 vendors actually downloaded documents for that RFP. We did receive four proposals.

Tara Gaston

Thank you

Bill Peck

Madam Chair, Supervisor Peck with a question.

Tara Gaston

Yes, go ahead.

Bill Peck

Yeah, Eileen or John? I didn't hear you the one thing that cost

Eric Connolly

That was my question.

John Warnt

So PCC, their cost was \$143,735.

Bill Peck

Reading the details of what we had for background information, it said audio visual then it has something about individual screens at each location and so is the visual a general room visual or is it like when a speaker starts then the camera would light up on their screen or something.

Tara Gaston

So I think it may be helpful if Director Warmt could give us a brief rundown of the RFP, what we'd ask for.

John Warmt

Everybody remember, I'm not a technical person.

Tara Gaston

Director Bennett, if you'd rather defer that, but like a brief rundown of what we asked for, and then how if this proposal differs at all.

John Warmt

Let me start with an overall review of the RFP process. So this RFP went out on March 17. It was opened on April 16. We did hold a pre bid conference on 3/30 and three vendors attended that conference. After that conference, an addendum was released on 4/09 that included a complete transcript of that pre bid conference, as well as drawings of each room involved in the upgrade. Again, 48 companies viewed the documents, four proposals received. The general gist of the RFP was for a complete turnkey system that included video upgrades to the Board of Supervisors room and the Committee room, as well as a system that will allow each individual Supervisor to have a screen in front of them that can view any presentations that would be shown at any particular meeting, as well as screens for the gallery and the back of the Board room and the Committee room. PCC's proposal included an all in one screen microphone system that would show any presentation that was being shown. Microphone is part of that. So the footprint that it takes up on the desk is very small. And the modifications to the Supervisors' tables here would be minimal. The other, in fact, all three other proposals, all called for separate systems, the microphone system and then just some kind of flat screen monitor that took up a lot of space at each individual Supervisor's space. So along with that, and the fact that PCC system is expandable, scalable, going paperless in the near future, without any change to hardware, we'd simply only have to buy some licensing. Oh, the cameras. Yes, about cameras. So the PCC system does have snap cameras. The current design, they have a camera on each side of the room. As soon as you key in your microphone and begin to speak, the camera will snap to that Supervisor's location or that microphone location. Does that answer that question?

Tara Gaston

It does anything else? in particular?

Bill Peck

So, I think, no, because John, you talk about not being a tech guy, you know that I'm less than you are. So that was a great description. But more importantly, so what I think what you're attempting to do, Tara, is to make this viable for live streaming like on a cable channel or something for the public to view. So that's what I, what I didn't want to see is every time somebody spoke the screen on your table, popped up their face or something. So you have a general room, camera in the room, we'll move to the speaker.

Tara Gaston

Think that availability that option exists with it. How we choose to use that exists. I think the when the RFP went out, it was made purposely not incredibly specific. Because we also wanted to use the expertise of these individual organizations that would be bidding on it, to say what they thought was best. And I appreciate particularly that information about the size, and how that would impact obviously with 23 supervisors in here when the room is full. If you're dealing with a lot of equipment on the table, we're running out of room to sit and write notes and do anything else. But I think part of the idea for all of those was because we knew that the sound system needed some upgrading. And we also wanted to make sure that the public had access to our meetings in a manner in which they were more accustomed to these days and listening on the telephone and it made sense if we're going to do those upgrades to include all of them together. To do them in pieces I think would be, Director Bennett is shaking her head. And I think I would agree with that. So I think it made a lot more sense to do it all at one time. And hopefully this will save on printing and paper as well. If we're able to look at things on the tablet Director Bennett did you have something else about this?

Eileen Bennett

One other thing in this system, it was a upgradable with cameras and TVs, also. So anything that we were thinking of, for future growth, the system can accommodate so that we didn't have to change the configuration of the room or, or wiring or anything like that, that we will be able to expand that with just the additional hardware.

Tara Gaston

Okay, and I know that we also discussed monitors or visuals for the back of the room. Is that part of this as well?

Eileen Bennett

Yes, they quoted us to TVs for the gallery. And there was some discussion would those be enough? If they are not, it's an easy solution for just the cost of additional TVs.

Tara Gaston

And part of that was because our projector system will eventually stop working. And this will allow the gallery to see and see a little bit better for anyone who's watching a presentation as well. Anything else? Either on the phone or?

Mike Smith

This is Supervisor Smith. I'm just curious, you said you got four proposals back? What did they range in price in comparison. I'm just kind of curious as an overall assessment. This was around 143,000 that you're talking about. What were the other numbers?

John Warmt

Sure. This is John from Purchasing. The low bid was \$97,313, the low proposal, I should say. And the highest was \$146,364.59.

Mike Smith

Okay, thank you.

Bill Peck

So, so Supervisor Peck here. If you're not going with a low bid, you're going to need to explain on the record your rationale for recommending one of the higher ones. I'm sure it has to do with flexibility or technology capabilities, but think about to go on the record.

John Warnt

So Supervisor, John again from Purchasing. Part of the RFP process called for I'll call it a grading system or a review. A comprehensive review is done by Purchasing, the IT Department, Clerk of the Board, and the Administrator's Office. We all separately filled out scoring sheets and PCC scored the highest on the scoring sheets. We looked at their capability and ability to do the job. We looked at their experience, the service, the ease of use of the system. We looked at cost. We looked at responsiveness to the RFP.

Tara Gaston

And I think one aspect of cost is also as Director Bennett said the ability to scale. While there may be, you know, a difference, as it stands right now up front, I think the ability to scale this solution would save us more in the future if we need to scale. Is that accurate?

John Warnt

Yeah. All the other proposals had no mention of going into a paperless environment. So any changes to the system to go paperless would require the purchase of new hardware. The system that PCC brought forth, there'd be no change in hardware, it would be simply adding some licensing.

Tara Gaston

So we'd be good to go at least until we start coming to meetings as holograms.

John Warnt

Let's hope.

Tara Gaston

Supervisor Barrett has joined us.

Bill Peck

Okay, Supervisor Peck just commenting that I think that was John, your description of the reasoning is enough. That's all I just want to make sure we had a rational for selecting them.

Tara Gaston

Supervisor Barrett, do you have any questions about the audio proposal? Okay. So we're looking for a motion to award it. Okay. Sorry, supervisor Smith was at you.

Mike Smith

Yeah.

Tara Gaston

Okay. Supervisor Smith moves this. Do we have a second?

Eric Connolly

So moved. Supervisor Connolly.

Tara Gaston

Thank you. Any other discussion? All in favor? Aye.

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Tara Gaston

Any opposed? Okay. Matter passes, and thank you. I know this was a very long process. And Director Warnt is probably very tired of me sending grammatical changes to things. Okay, next item on the agenda is phone upgrades for DMV, Director Bennett.

Eileen Bennett

In 2019, as public safety facility building was being constructed, we needed a phone solution for that building. At the same time, our current phone systems at 25 West High Street, 50, West High Street, 40 McMasters and several other departments were all outdated. And we were only paying maintenance on that lease system. It was decided we would stay and upgrade our lease system. And at that time, as time allotted, we've upgraded each system. And we also put in place at leased phone system in the public safety building. The last part of that upgrade is DMV will be upgrading their system and including maintenance into our lease contract with Twin State. So this resolution is to allow the upgrade and maintenance of a new system for the Department of Motor Vehicle.

Bill Peck

So moved, Supervisor Peck.

Tara Gaston

Do we have a second? I will second that, Supervisor Gaston. Any questions or discussion? So just to have it on the record, the request is for 39 months at monthly \$997.

Eileen Bennett

Yes, because that's coterminous with the original contract that we signed for a 60 month lease, a five year lease.

Tara Gaston

All right. Any questions? Any other discussion? All right. All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Tara Gaston

All right, thank you. Okay, the next item on the agenda is the website discussion. At last month's meeting, we noted that a number of individual supervisors, etc had mentioned that they would like to see changes to the website. And an attempt to discuss specifications did not go very far. So I asked for some examples of websites or parts of websites that individuals thought would work. Well, I was given 7 examples. Two of which came from a member of this committee and five of which came from the County Administrator. So I do have all the websites pulled up on my computer, unfortunately, until that bid is awarded, and we have that, I know, thank you, I see Director Warmt gesturing for his screen. Until that gets done, unfortunately, it'll be a little bit difficult. But I will pass all of these links to the Clerk to make sure they're included in the minutes for any anyone who wants to look at it. So one thing I would like to ask is for the individuals at the table that did suggest websites, what about them you thought was good? Like, how did you find them? What was the thing? Because I think part of the discussions we've had with Director Bennett is there are lots of changes that can be made to our website that don't require going out for an RFP, that don't require additional, they, you know, they're just waiting to suggest them. But without further details, it's a little difficult. I know we did talk about like updating pictures and things but I get the impression people are looking for more. Supervisor Connolly I do have both, Douglas County, Colorado and then Johns Creek. So I have both of those up. So if you want to show them.

Eric Connolly

I took the approach with Google's help, looking for award winning county websites. And I was able to find several reliable lists of counties that have won awards for their websites. And so I started there and then I just started looking at those and those two stood out to me as just very user friendly, very aesthetically pleasing. Just an improvement over what we had. I didn't really break it down super far, but that's how I approached it.

Tara Gaston

Okay, is there something you think that you could do on either of those websites or that you would see on either of them that you can't currently on ours? I'm trying to figure out a little bit of the definition of what user friendly... is it brighter colors. Director Bennett has informed me that I don't think that I'm allowed to put an animated construction gif on the page. But attention grabbing things like that, you know, what, what is it that we're looking for? Yeah,

Eric Connolly

it's been a while since I looked at these. So it's coming back to me here and the Johns Creek website, which everybody will get a link to eventually. It's clean. It has like, their branding right up front, discovered Johns Creek, do some exception to every day. And then like, right away, I've got a search over on the left, that is a different color than everything else. They have kind of three colors in their branding, orange, blue, and green. And you can see them throughout the website. So I like that. And then the menu is right above it, very simple layout. Like a lot of our users aren't necessarily proficient at searching websites. So the more simplistic that we can create, as an experience on our website, the better off in my opinion would be, then I'll go to Douglas County one.

Tara Gaston

Okay. Do you mind if I try and (inaudible)? Because I also want to make sure that what whatever Director Bennett gets is as concise as possible. But it sounds like a more prominent search capacity, correct? natural language, I assume, so that people can just type in whatever question they have. I've noticed that on our website, you can opt in, there are lots of different places where things are and it sounds like fewer directional or navigation buttons is what you're describing.

Eric Connolly

There's basically one navigation button here to get to the menu, and then everything's broken down from there. So when you click on the main menu for Johns Creek, there are four categories: residents, businesses, services/resources, recreational parks, and news and events. And then you go in there, and it breaks down further, but I would have to pull ours up to do a comparison. But you can I mean, just on this when I click on this orange, blue, green everywhere, and it's cohesive graphically, and a lot of thought went into it in that way.

Tara Gaston

So I think that's something I know that we've talked about that some with COVID, that Director Bennett, you made some changes to the front of the web page, when we were putting up more information it was there was a lot of texts are not broken into visually blocks. And it sounds like do you think that would be helpful? I know that that's some of the changes have been made already.

Eileen Bennett

So most websites are based on a template. So what you're looking at when you say like that look, it's really a template that's been set up. So if we could kind of decide on it template, it's possible. I'm working with our current vendor to see if IT could do the change to a template. So basically, you're looking at a template. You have in our county website had a template. It was decided to use that template. Templates get upgraded, different photos, graphics can be added or not added. So that's something that we're looking into right now. If we could find kind of a standard template that everyone's agreeing on, then I have something to work with, with our current vendor, my current staff, maybe we can take care of it in house. I think that's the quickest turnaround, because then we have control as a committee to make changes as we want, because we're working with our own staff.

Tara Gaston

So I think it makes sense to figure out how to run through the rest of the really big hits, and then maybe you could bring some templates, or

Eileen Bennett

Maybe. I'm not sure of that. I'm looking into that. I don't work with this website as much as I do some other websites. So I don't have that answer for you. But I have staff looking into it.

Tara Gaston

Okay, well, if nothing else, we can provide these notes. And then we can see what the next step needs to be.

Eileen Bennett

When you say search, you're saying search. And then you're also saying, there's questions. So I think there's a difference between a search and an FAQ. And maybe we need an FAQ set up. So I don't know what website you're looking at now. Sounds like maybe we need an FAQ. Where do I get a driver's license? Where do I file a DBA? We don't have anything like that. But if that's something that we need to work on, and create an FAQ on versus a search, because where do I get a driver's license in a search? You're not going to find that answer per se, you're going to find license and we're going to give you DMV, right whatever if they mentioned license and if the Board of Supervisors mentioned licensed, we'll bring that in to search. Our search only searches our on website. And we're working on that search because I was brought to my attention. And the reason our search is not ready right now is it's limited to the left side of the page. Because we have latest news always appearing on the right hand side. So we might be able to say, okay, forget the latest news here and search and expand that. So that will help our search capabilities. Certainly. So we're working on that way. I think there's a huge difference between FAQ and search. But we need to resolve that as well.

Tara Gaston

I think that's an excellent point. And I think it would make sense for us to try and across the county figure out what are the questions that are being asked and used most often. We have statistics on visits to the page. Can we find the pages that are visited most often? That's probably going to give us some clue. Is there any way to rank it? Okay, sure. Supervisor Smith.

Mike Smith

How do we, I guess I'm looking for a little background here on how we handle the website now. Is it through a third party? Is there someone in the IT that updated regularly?

Eileen Bennett

Okay, so we have a hosting, so originally, we had a website committee. The website committee decided on a vendor to host and to set up to transfer over the website to the current website. During that, once that was put up a web designee if a department head wanted to work designee within their department, we could set that web designee in each department for their pages. And they could update their departmental web pages. Some departments do it, some departments don't. IT has two staff members that are always available to help departments and/or do any updates if different department did not have web designee. Does that answer your question, Supervisor?

Mike Smith

Yeah, I mean, I got weighing the thought of whether it's more advantageous if we were to have a webmaster type person on staff, especially with the amount of changes that would probably be constantly being made to upgrade news and make upgrades or adding information to it. Maybe we would have better control over it. If that was somebody in your department or somebody in your department did that. Maybe playing devil's advocate here.

Tara Gaston

No, I think I understand where you're coming from Supervisor Smith. I think that's part of the reason that we're trying to go through this process. To talk about what is it that we're looking for in the website. Because depending on what the Board wants, that may be something that's easily handled as it is, it

may be something that requires additional personnel or it may be something that's better outsourced. So I think we're just trying to provide Director Bennett with a little bit more direction, so that then we can talk about how that's best done. Because I agree with you, you know, there may be different ways to do it.

Mike Smith

We're like, I'm account, website, redone, revamp, rebuilt whatever you want to call it. We went out to a couple of different vendors and kind of asked their opinion, you know, what they thought we could improve on on ours and recommendations they made and then kind of went from there. We're going to make it so each department can have access to upgrade their own so it all doesn't fall on me. But with at county level, I'm thinking that there is so much that, you know, like it almost like a full time job. Right.

Eileen Bennett

It could be a full time job. But one of the initiatives that was wanted out of the new design of the current design of the website was that departments could control their own webpage. That was a request. From my understanding that was before it became Director that departments wanted to be able to control their websites, their web pages. So part of the decision on the solution that we currently have was that there was ease of someone being able to add content to the web page with some guidance from IT.

Tara Gaston

And I think part of the discussion Director Bennett and I have had is, we've noticed that some county websites are updated more often than others, some of them need to be more updated than others. And to see if setting some sort of policy or schedule or expectation, and then what departments feel, can they do that? Should they do that? And then what do we need? I. Alright, I think this is getting a lot more in the go ahead Supervisor Smith.

Mike Smith

This just ties back to what we were talking about earlier with the Board room upgrades, I'm assuming we would want our website to.. give somebody to be able to go on our website to access the meeting and have all of the intervals, correct?

Tara Gaston

Yes.

Eileen Bennett

We'll be able to provide that once the AV solution is implemented here. We'll be able to add that to the current website.

Mike Smith

Okay

Tara Gaston

Supervisor Connolly.

Eric Connolly

Thank you, I agree with Dr. Bennett, that the quickest way to do this is to pick a template. But that isn't the only way to do it. I'm not an IT professional, or web designer, but we are redoing our website in the Town of Ballston. So I'm a little up to speed on this. You can start with a template. And then you can completely customize the template. One that I didn't send you that I will is a college website that I found. And when you go to the college website, instead of seeing the generic, very standard photo, and language, it loops, a really interactive video that when you go to their website, you want to go to that college, because you're seeing the video loop. Saratoga County has so much to offer. And, you know, why don't we have a premier website that when you go to that website, you look at it and go, wow, this place looks like a fantastic place to live. Just the point.

Tara Gaston

Ok. Absolutely go ahead. Although I'm going to ask it to be relatively briefish. And then administrator Bulger, if you have a couple of comments about what you did, because I think I have an idea, we're just gonna....

Andrew Jarosh

You know, you might not as a department head, I can say that the website and being able to control the content portion of it is valuable. This is Treasurer Jarosh by the way. I think in the redesign of the website, yes, we can look at ascetics. Let's look at the website purpose, what is the purpose of the website? Is it to market, the government of Saratoga County. Because you're already got saratoga dot com and you already Saratoga dot net and we have Discover saratoga.com. We have all these other associations sites that advertise the county, from a marketing point of view. Is that what you want Saratoga County.gov to do. I would argue that 99.9% of the people coming to the Treasurer's page, if they can find it, because the navigation is problematic for somebody who doesn't know how the government structure. If they could find it, they're there to accomplish something. They're not there to go I wonder who the treasurer is, and I wonder what his responsibilities are. They are like I want to pay my taxes, I want to get a certificate and I want to get off this website, go watch YouTube. You know, it's got to be quick and concise, and the navigation needs to be incredibly improved from the user's point of view. This is one thing that we do so much is that we organize things by departments in this County. A member of the general public has no idea what department does what so when they come to SaratogaCounty.gov they need a navigation based on what they want to do not what department do they want to visit. So I would highly suggest that we review the navigation from the user's point of view. And maybe that entails actually asking some users. Why did you come to the website? What do you want to accomplish? What's your what's your suggestion for how to find a better next time. That's my idea. Thank you.

Tara Gaston

I think that's an excellent point. I think that ties in to what Supervisor Connolly was saying about the limited what you were saying there boxes for like business residents, etc, more tied to direct them. Your department could still have a page, but it's how you get to that page. Administrator Bulger, were there any particular points that you wanted to make about the ones that you've suggested? And again, all of these links will be in the minutes for anyone who wants to review the website.

Steve Bulger

Sure. Thanks, Madam Chair. I sent out an email to all the members of the committee earlier today. So you'll have the links. Believe me, you don't want me picking styles and designs. I'm like the last person you'd want to do that. So I kind of fall where Drew is. Functionality is more important. But I did ask the people at NYSAC some other people I looked at a bunch of myself and the five that I sent out, Cayoga, Franklin, actually six Livingston, Washington County, Ontario County, Schenectady County. They're different, they all have their strengths and weaknesses. And I guess I would just ask everybody, if you're interested in this, to go through those and, you know, provide your own feedback back to the Chair, as we try and navigate this. So I did look at counties that are approximately our size like Dutchess, Orange, Albany, just to get a sense of what they're doing. Albany's actually was pretty good, too. I probably should have added that to the list, but so many others the functionality, and I really just want to reiterate what Drew said, a lot of them seem to be marketing pieces for Saratoga County, we're great, here's a picture of this and that. And that's okay. But I agree, we want to make it as functional as possible to get government business done and make it look good, too. So that would be the only comments I would offer.

Tara Gaston

I think those are excellent points about the purpose of it. Anyone on the phone have any other comments.

Mike Smith

Supervisor Smith. After hearing Treasurer Jarosh's comments, I do get that and probably a point that people come to it for a reason. We'll make that reason simple for them to get to. Thank you.

Tara Gaston

Okay. So. First, I want to make a comment that, again, I made it last time. But the reason our website is the way that it is, is because that's how the board directed it a number of years ago. The reason the website appears and acts in the way that it does is not a result of our IT department. That is the result of a lack of growth, as directed by the board over the years. So I just I do want to make it on the record that when we were talking about improvements that need to be made, that is not a result of decisions or actions by our IT department. It's a more of a lack of action in changing things. So it's good that we're going to. However, I also am finding this a not entirely productive discussion at this committee, because we're going from month to month. I think the time differences long enough. I think we're gonna have a hard time and I don't want to have you come for six months of meetings, so that we could figure out that we need a search bar. So my recommendation would be to potentially consider a smaller, like ad hoc subcommittee for the purposes of that. Treasurer Jarosh, would you be willing to assist in that? You knew you were going to talk and you were going to get voluntold?

Andrew Jarosh

If Director Bennett would like he would.

Tara Gaston

Well, I would like to say, I think, you know, obviously, Director Bennett and you know, whomever if you want to designate or if you believe someone else should be. But I mean, practically speaking as a representative of the county, I also want to make it easier and more inviting for people to give us the money that is owed the county. And so making sure that people are comfortable in accessing the Treasurer's department, I think will be helpful in a number of respects. So I would like that. Whether if you don't want to be a part of it, that's fine. But I would at least like your opinion. And I would also Attorney Hartnett I know that you've indicated before, some changes that you think that would assist in personnel time, especially regards to FOIL, etc. So I would like to make sure that we have your input on that as well.

Mike Hartnett

Be happy to assist. Thank you.

Tara Gaston

Thank you. Are there any members of the committee that are interested in playing on that game? Or? No, wow, the excitement is in fact overwhelming. Okay, well, I'm going to appoint a subcommittee and it's going to be me, and Supervisor Connolly, I saw you hit your button but I don't know if you're volunteering or trying desparately not do.

Eric Connolly

I'll volunteer. Thank you for the offer.

Tara Gaston

Thank you for saying that. All right, so you're at any other supervisor desires to be on it. Okay, I would say I would like Administrator BULger, you or a member of your staff as you choose, because obviously you're going to be helping to smooth this and provide assistance and recommendations from the departments. I think that'll be important.

Steve Bulger

Thank you. I have a fantastic member of my team who would be more than happy to volunteer for this. Matt Rose.

Tara Gaston

I'm not positive, that's volunteering, if someone else does it for you

Steve Bulger

He's much more skilled at technology than I am. So but yes, our office will participate.

Tara Gaston

Thank you. Thank you Matt. Treasurer Jarosh, do you want to be part of it or just provide counsel?

Andrew Jarosh

I'll give my opinion no matter what.

Tara Gaston

Okay, so I guess to make it formal or whatever, when we get the website subcommittee, okay, so Director Bennett, you or would you prefer a member of your staff to be formally on it?

Eileen Bennett

I'll be formally on it.

Tara Gaston

And obviously, as needed, a designate can come for you or anyone else? So, Director Bennett, Matt Rose from the Administrator's office who is regretting a lot of decisions right now, Treasurer Jarosh, Supervisor Connolly, and myself. Attorney Hartnett, do you wish to be on the site on the committee or have someone attached? I would like both regarding FOIL, but also accessibility, and any other legal considerations to be part of it. So if you would like to take part?

Mike Hartnett

My request would be similar to Director Bennett's. It will be myself but I may occasionally send it a designee if applicable to any particular time.

Tara Gaston

Understood and that same Treasurer. That's okay. So, County Attorney, Director Bennett, are there any other individuals Director Bennett, or anyone else who you think need to be on and making decisions? I think the probably the best way to do it is to do this, make some faster movement, decisions, etc. get some input, and then just present that to the committee and then the board. I think we might move along a little bit faster that way. All right. Any comments or further discussion on that from the phone? Okay. All right. Next item on the agenda is the Government Resiliency Plan. Last time we talked, we talked about a resiliency plan and development, and the interest from the Committee was primarily focused on government. So I wanted to see if there was any particular interest or thoughts moving forward on this now. I think there are a number of ways to go about it. And I think none of those involve a nap. Okay, we're just going to skip past this topic. We'll discuss it on a different day when I'll bring more coffee. All right, the next item on the agenda is regarding the Community Resilience Committee. I will be developing, as I mentioned last time, an outside committee that will look at community resiliency, generally. With regards to many areas, it will involve, you know, emergency preparedness, but also just like, what is our community do? What do we need to do? And how can we benefit our community and help organize them? One of the reasons that this is helpful, I think I mentioned last time in the ice storms, and flooding in Texas, they had already developed small units like a neighborhoods that were prepared to respond with each other. And that helped keep a lot of people alive and fed in an emergency. So I would like to see what we can do to help our community in that respect. So I will be putting out basically an interest form and I'd love for any supervisors and community members to either recommend people or organizations that should be a part of this. I think, less like the website, it won't be something that you'll have to go to every time but I would love to make sure that we have input from all the organizations, from businesses, to realtors, to nonprofit agencies, government entities, of course, to make sure that all of these are planning and working together. One of the problems at the beginning of COVID was that communication was not what it could have been in our county to get out information and to deal with each other and figure out what to do and how to respond. Part of the goal of this plan

would be to more codify that information so that it's a little easier if we don't get stuck in that situation again. So any thoughts? Okay, I don't know what it is about this time. You provide coffee or something or party? Okay, so I'm going to be putting out that interest form. All supervisors will have it. I would love for both supervisors and any department heads, etc, to talk to your people, put it out on town, websites, etc. because we want this to have, we don't want it to it needs to have community input and engagement in order for it to be successful. And I know that there are a lot of organizations that have already expressed interest, but we need to make sure that we continue that and move forward.

Bill Peck

One thing, Supervisor Gaston this is Supervisor Peck, one thing you should probably be aware of is reach out to each town has an emergency manager already assigned in each town and I'm assuming the city. That is there to help with plans and put into action when emergencies arise.

Tara Gaston

Yes, absolutely. That will be emergency services. And I know they have emergency committees, as well. And we do have an emergency manager in the city, they will all be a part of it. Although this o be clear, this does extend beyond just emergency response. The idea is to build it up so that hopefully, emergency responses are not needed as much. But I agree. Yes, thank you. Thank you for making sure that points on the record.

Eric Connolly

Yeah, I'm just a little confused. What's the difference between Community Resiliency Committee and what the County already has in place with emergency management procedures? And then, like Supervisor Peck said each of the towns has an emergency management Chairman. So how does this differ? And what exactly are you looking for As far as us to contribute?

Tara Gaston

So community resiliency differs for emergency services a lot. Emergency services is more specifically response not entirely, but more specifically response. Whereas resiliency is the idea of building up either an organization, community, etc, to the extent that these emergencies that needed to be responded to are limited, as much as possible. So it would be let's make sure that all of our houses have the information they need. Do they have emergency kits? Is there education that needs to be put out? Are there changes that may be needed in our zoning, or other guidance that could assist in making sure that emergencies like bridges washing out or pipes being broken. This is not a group that would be making policy or decisions. It would be more, let's find out what the concerns are and where the weak points are so that they can be brought forward. So they can be brought forward for discussion and consideration. It's it's mostly taking an active role in stepping outside of the county and going to where the individuals are to find out what those issues are, proactively and setting that up.

Eric Connolly

Thank you.

Tara Gaston

I will also I know last time, I sent some information about our resiliency plan. I'll make sure that that's attached to these minutes as well. For anyone who wants to look into that further. I know that that's also helped a number of communities with both insurance costs and emergency response reimbursement because if you can show that these are things that you've thought about, planned about and done your darndest much like the website and you know cybersecurity insurance bills go down when you show that you have done the work that has been done to tighten up our system. Same thing. Anything else from a member the committee? What about on the phone? Any other business? Do we have a motion to adjourn.

Eric Connolly

So moved. Supervisor Connolly.

Bill Peck

Second. Supervisor Peck.

Tara Gaston

Thank you. All in favor.

Several Supervisors

Aye. Aye.

Tara Gaston

All right. Any opposed? We're adjourned.