

ILLINOIS CENTURY NETWORK

NOVEMBER 17, 2004 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Submitted for: Action

Summary: Distribution of the November 17, 2004 minutes for review by the Policy Committee.

Action Requested: Adoption of the November 17, 2004 minutes.

Recommended Motion: *That the ICN Policy Committee adopts the November 17, 2004 minutes with any edits as noted.*

ILLINOIS CENTURY NETWORK

NOVEMBER 17, 2004 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Pete Ashi called the meeting to order and asked Cindy Daniele to call the roll.

Members present: Pete Ashi, TM Floyd; Jay Carlson, Department of Central Management Services; Virginia McMillan, Illinois Community College Board; Bruce McMillan, Illinois State Museum; Jean Wilkins, Illinois State Library; Brian Foster, Illinois Hospital Association; Scott Norton, Illinois State Board of Education; Dan Layzell, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Marianne Stanke, Alan Burgard; Illinois State Police.

Lori indicated that there were enough members present to constitute a quorum.

Pete asked Lori if there had been any resolution on identifying those Policy Committee members whose terms were about to expire. Lori indicated that of the three members with expiring terms, (Pete Ashi, Roderick Frazier, Alan Burgard), Pete's and Roderick's had been renewed for the coming year and that Alan's term would expire at the end of the month (November).

Pete asked Lori to introduce the new Policy Committee member from the State Board of Education, Scott Norton. Scott went on to tell the group that he had assumed the role of Division Administrator, Technology Support for ISBE and that he would be participating on the Policy Committee.

Lori welcomed Scott to the group and indicated that the Policy Committee would benefit from the input and feedback of the K-12 constituency as they represent the largest percentage of constituents on the network.

In her remarks, Lori commented on the work of the Advanced Engineering Taskforce. Specifically, the AET is taking up the issues identified in the 2004 report: possible incentives for those constituents who take the time to participate in the statewide E-rate application, which benefits all constituents; and calculation of bandwidth allocations for those constituents who partner in "private" networks to share bandwidth and reduce the number of direct connections to the backbone.

On another note, Lori indicated that the anti-virus contract was close to being awarded and signed. As anti-virus software was identified as one of the most requested services on the ICN constituent survey, Lori said that she expects there to be a great deal of interest

in this service offering and that marketing efforts will be key, once the service can be announced.

Lori went on to mention that the AET had received the results of their content survey and found that one of the primary areas of interest was based on group purchasing of subscription services that can be located centrally and accessed by many, depending on the licensing agreement. In order to more accurately identify specific services, the AET has asked ICN staff to conduct a more focused survey in this area. The results of this effort will be shared at a future Policy Committee meeting. Lori asked if there were any questions.

Pete asked if ICN constituents that participate in the anti-virus offering will be able to extend that service to their constituents from home computers.

Lori responded that the enterprise edition for the software package did indeed have that provision included and that this would be a great benefit to the students and teachers of schools that purchase the anti-virus package.

Bruce McMillan asked if the AET had met since bringing on new members, as the new representative for museums, Bill Barnett, had a number of questions about the AET. While there is no formal orientation for new appointees, Lori responded that she had spent quite a bit of time talking with Bill about the AET and the expertise that he would be bringing to the table. In addition, Gary Wenger, AET chair, spent time at the last meeting asking the new appointees what they felt the AET should focus on for the coming year.

Pete asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes from September 13, 2004. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion: Virginia McMillan moved; Dan Layzell seconded, that the minutes be approved. Motion carried.

Lori asked Cindi Hitchcock to provide the budget update.

Cindi provided a brief overview of the ICN budget, pointing out that cost recovery projections were tracking close to the targeted projection and that the practice of recognizing E-rate funds only when they were actually received, was still being followed due to continuing delays between the application process and the receipt of funds.

Pete thanked Cindi for her report and moved on to the next item.

Lori introduced Joel Vinson to provide an update on the E-rate program and other procurements currently underway.

Joel gave a brief overview of the program, emphasizing the gap between the application process and the receipt of funds. As his current job functions are transitioning in the new

BCCS/ICN organization, Joel mentioned that Tom Oseland has been named the new E-rate coordinator for Illinois and that he had been working closely with Tom to insure a smooth transition. Currently they are working on the application for year 8 and should have an estimate of expected funding at the next Policy Committee meeting.

Jay asked what had occurred at the annual E-rate coordinators conference.

Joel replied that he had attended the conference, however due to the timing of the decision to stop issuing funding commitment letters, the conference turned into more of a crisis management event as opposed to an annual state of the E-rate program meeting. The majority of time was spent hearing from constituent groups who did not want to see the program abolished.

Dan asked if the unpredictability of the receipt of E-rate funds was a cash flow issue or an issue with processing the applications in a timely manner.

Joel responded that this question had never been definitively addressed. It currently takes about four years to get the funds that were approved in the applications. Lori added that the Universal Service Administration Corporation, the E-rate program administrator, had previously set performance matrixes that they were able to meet by attending to the simple applications first. Complex applications, like the ICN's and other state networks, were often pushed to the back burner. The ICN application includes 3,000 entities and approximately a dozen vendors. Applicants like the ICN have been working to get the USAC to reconsider the practice of processing complex applications later in the schedule.

Moving on to procurements and contracts, Joel indicated that the SBC Cisco contract had been renewed for 36 months at the same terms and conditions – 42.5% off on hardware and 30% off on SmartNet.

Jay added that the continuation of these terms was significant in that Cisco had been aggressively trying to reduce the amount of the discount given to statewide networks. Cisco had also been trying to limit the discounts only to state entities and not extend it to other types of constituents. Again, through deliberate negotiations, this provision was maintained. Illinois was also able to negotiate a significant discount of 58% on the core and distribution upgrades required to move the frame relay customers to the ICN MPLS backbone network.

Pete congratulated the ICN/BCCS team on these successful negotiations.

Joel went on to explain the provisions of the anti-virus contracts currently under negotiation. The provision of home-use for both of the products under consideration was a key element in the selection process.

The backbone upgrade on the Bloomington-Champaign link from an OC2 to an OC12 will provide more robust diverse routes in the event that are any failures on the backbone network.

Joel went on to report that there had been an RFP let for egress. Due to independent research it was felt that the ICN could realize significant savings off current rates for egress. Three vendors have been selected as egress providers and the network will be able to triple egress capacity at less cost that is currently being paid.

Lori added that the bandwidth is burstable, so that the ICN can commit to the lower rate while maintaining the ability to burst as constituent needs increase. Joel went on to explain that one of the vendors participates in the national education consortium, known as Quilt, that aggregates their bandwidth purchases to lower costs for all members. The ICN will benefit from partnering with vendors who also participate in the Quilt project.

Joel asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, Lori introduced the next item on the agenda, the network migration update.

Rich Fetter, Senior Division Administrator with BCCS, provided an update on the network migration, backbone, and Regional Technology Staffing to the Policy Committee.

With regard to the network migration, Rich indicated that this project entailed migrating approximately 1800 state agency data circuits from the frame relay service to the ICN backbone. Rich reviewed the extensive planning that had been undertaken to insure that there would be no service disruptions to existing ICN constituents. A significant investment in the ICN backbone to bring the network up to carrier class was made to be able to accommodate the additional traffic on the network. The increase in capacity to the network backbone will also provide the ability to carry video traffic over the same network, eliminating the need to have a separate network in the state for the interactive video application. The current plan calls for all 1800 circuits to be migrated by the end of the fiscal year. The network head-ends and the POP site upgrades are progressing on schedule. The individual remote sites will follow according to a detailed migration schedule that has been established for each agency.

Pete asked how many consultants EKI Consulting would be assigning to the migration. Rich indicated that there were 4 dedicated individuals working with the network monitoring and assistance as the circuits roll over. Internal staff will be taking care of the head end router installations and POP site upgrades.

Virginia asked what the impact of this project might have on the traditional ICN constituents, particularly educational institutions and libraries. While there may be additional maintenance window activity, Rich replied that it was the intent that the original constituents would experience no disruption in service.

Jay added that any impact would be positive in that increased efforts to insure delivery of critical services provided by state agencies would benefit traditional ICN constituents as well.

Rich also mentioned the adjustments being made to the change management processes that would improve communications to constituents and help improve service to all network customers. In addition to the data circuits, the new video platform has been tested with twelve video sites and the results are very positive. The migration plan for video for the remainder of the video sites will fall closely on the heels of the network migration, as the sites are tested and stabilized.

Another component of enhanced service is the development of the Communication Management Center (CMC), a new 24 x 7 support center that will be located in Chicago at the James R. Thompson Center. The final details of the CMC are being worked out with an expected roll out date for late January. In order to better support the addition of state agencies on the network, an expanded version of Regional Technology Center 7 will be housed in Springfield.

Virginia asked about the plans for communicating the changes to the constituents.

Rich replied that a communications strategy was being developed to inform constituents of the contact information and processes for network issues and change management. Efforts are underway to meet with the directors and CIOs of the major agencies impacted by the changes. The Agency Relations group will also become involved in communicating the changes to the network constituents.

Lori added that there will be an 800 number that goes directly to the CMC call center. Existing constituents who use the current number will be routed to the new CMC transparently. This will insure a continuity of service that they have become accustomed to.

Scott asked the name of the solution used for tracking trouble calls. Lori responded that Remedy has been chosen for implementation to track trouble tickets. The ICN has been using Remedy for 2 years throughout the network and all of the RTC staff are familiar with the system. Current plans call for the implementation of Remedy throughout all of the CMS BCCS operations.

Jay added that many of the new staff in the CMC already had experience with Remedy in previous positions, thereby shortening the learning curve to bring the CMC up to full implementation.

Lori thanked Rich for the presentation and asked if there were other questions or issues to be brought before the group.

Jay asked the Policy Committee members if they felt as if BCCS/CMS had lived up to its promises when first faced with transitioning the ICN.

Lori responded that from the constituents' perspective, the transition had been transparent. The feedback received from the AET has been very positive and they are encouraged by the overall direction the network is taking.

Pete asked if there had been any negative fall-out with regards to the employees.

Lori said that there has been minimal turnover of staff, and while there had been some anxiety in the beginning, the staff has realized that the initial commitment has been kept and the transition has gone quite well. Jay added that the staff that left departed to take advantage of wonderful opportunities and not necessarily out of concern about where the network was heading. Jay contributed the smoothness of the transition in part due to the professionalism of the ICN staff.

Pete thanked Jay for his remarks and added that it sounded as if the transition had been quite successful in light of the low staff turnover.

Jay suggested that Policy Committee remain vigilant in their oversight of the network and continue to ask the hard questions and keep constituent needs in mind as changes to the management over time would be inevitable.

Lori asked for a moment to publicly thank Alan Burgard for his service and dedication to the ICN Policy Committee, wishing him the best of luck in his work with the State Police.

Pete echoed his thanks to Alan and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Virginia moved; Dan Layzell seconded that meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

The next meeting is scheduled for the third Wednesday in February from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Video conferencing and an audio bridge will be available. Dan Layzell mentioned that the third Wednesday would coincide with the Governor's budget address, so it might be necessary to move the meeting back a week.