

## Information Technology Policy Advisory Committee (ITPAC) Meeting Summary

January 18, 2024  
8:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.  
Remote Meeting

### Committee Members:

Name	District/Organization	Present	Not Present
Edward Blum, Chairman	Providence District	X	
Michael Aschenaki	Lee District		X
Carter Bates	Braddock District	X*	
Anne Cahill	League of Women Voters	X	
Dennis Carlton	Sully District	X	
Rajni Goel	Dranesville District	X	
John Hanks	Federation of Citizens Association	X	
Susan Hoffman	Mason District	X*	
Kendall Holbrook	Chamber of Commerce		X
Richard Kostro	Mt. Vernon District	X*	
Mark Lay	NOVA Technology Council	X	
Brian McMahon	Hunter Mill District	X	
Sean Rastatter	Springfield District	X	
Kathryn Walsh, Vice Chair	At Large Member	X	
VACANT	Fairfax County Public Schools		X

\*These members were not yet on the meeting when the original roll call was taken; however, they were verified as present about 20 minutes into the meeting and participated thereafter.

### County Staff Present:

DIT – Greg Scott, (CTO); George Coulter; Nate Wentland; Rob Barr; Brittany Cramer; Adam Eldert; Michelle Breckenridge; Lindsey Culin; Charles Gore; Brian Heffern; Yuezhong Huang; Zaki Horany; Ryan Koo; Crispin Netto; Minh Nguyen; Mike Palacios; Maura Power; Charmaine Reed; Anita Rao; Kim Satterthwaite; Randhir Singh; Sheila Wright; Velma Dessuit (Admin Support)

DMB – Mark Thomas; Kim Panzer

DTA – Jay Doshi

Others – Ernest Chrappah

### January 18, 2024, Meeting Agenda:



ITPAC agenda  
January 18 2024 FINA

**Note:** Meeting materials were posted online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/informationtechnology/itpac](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/informationtechnology/itpac) and were sent to ITPAC members via email. This document will be posted on the ITPAC website.

**ITPAC COMMITTEE MATTERS:** Today's meeting was called to order at 8:03 A.M.

### Verifying a Quorum and Clear Audio

Because each member of ITPAC is participating in this meeting from a separate location, it was necessary to verify that a quorum of members is participating, and that each member's voice is clear, audible, and at

an appropriate volume for all members. Accordingly, a roll call was conducted, and each ITPAC member participating in this meeting was asked to state their name and the district/group they represent. It was confirmed that a quorum was present, and that each member's voice could be adequately heard by every other member of ITPAC on the call.

### **Electronic Meeting**

Brian Heffern confirmed that today's meeting was the first of the two annual ITPAC meetings allowed to be held remotely under current Virginia law. To fully conform, ITPAC is required to note in the minutes what type of electronic communication is being used, and how we have arranged for public access to this meeting. ITPAC is conducting this meeting electronically through a dedicated Zoom video conference, and that the public may access this meeting by using meeting number **821 5247 8967** and enter passcode **726736** or live audio of the meeting may be accessed by dialing: **1-877-411-9748** and entering the conference code **2909363**.

### **Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes from the 11/30/23 meeting was moved by Kathy Walsh, seconded by Anne Cahill, and approved unanimously.

### **Membership Matters**

- Membership expirations: Mark Lay, Carter Bates, Ed Blum, John Hanks, Sue Hoffman, Kendall Holbrook, and Sean Rastatter. All can continue to serve pending Board re-authorization or other action. The Board did not consider reappointments at its December 5, 2023, meeting and does not meet again until January 23, 2024.

### **Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2024**

- After discussion, Kathy Walsh was nominated and accepted the position of Vice-Committee Chair for Calendar Year 2024. Subsequently, Ed Blum was nominated and accepted the position of Committee Chair for Calendar Year 2024.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The "**Issue of the Day.**" segment is next on the agenda. This interactive discussion is placed on the agenda prior to any formal DIT presentations, to encourage meaningful discussion and conversation on IT topics of interest. This is an opportunity for ITPAC members to share insight into IT-related challenges and issues with which they are currently dealing and allow for discussion and/or DIT staff to ask questions. Today's discussion also includes an **Open Forum on Topics to Explore in 2024.**

- Anne Cahill starts the discussion by asking about how the State is coming along with their new voter registration systems. Kim Satterthwaite responds that things are running smoothly. Three elections this year, with the first in March. Early voting is starting now. The County is not making any major changes for the November election. Progress is being made on equipment certification, but that has not yet happened yet. Due to our size, there are a limited number of vendors that can provide what we need. For the November election, voter turnout is expected to be high, but the County feels prepared to handle this. Legislatively, the county is seeking 10 days instead of the current 7 to certify elections is noted and Anne confirms that is critically important.
- Kathy Walsh and Sean Rastatter about the status of the County's Draft AI policy – Greg Scott notes it is being reviewed by the County Executive currently. Several County staff (including County Executive Bryan Hill, Greg Scott, and Mike Dent) are all on AI-related committees. A lot of

discussion in this area is occurring. Rajni Goel asks about whether there has been any discussion with FCPS about AI in schools. Greg Scott notes that while there haven't been specific conversations, at the recent Board retreat, one topic that came up was seeking greater communication and collaboration between FCPS IT and County DIT. Discussion on AI-related legislation in the General Assembly ensues. Several AI bills have already been assigned to DIT for review and we will be monitoring these closely.

- Importance of user training in the AI arena is noted by Rajni Goel. Greg Scott notes that the county has put together a steering group on this topic which includes Nate Wentland, Anita Rao, Maura Power, as well as staff from the Office of County Attorney and other agency staff. This is also a topic of discussion regionally and beyond. Nate Wentland notes that the County is participating in several national local government groups that are working on AI-related issues. The County is looking at other best practices as well as our own current policies as we move forward. The goal is not to reinvent the wheel, but develop a reasonable, well-thought-out policy.
- Mark Lay asks about whether the idea of a vendor open house has moved forward – Greg Scott notes that several vendor meetings have taken place; however, they have been the more traditional one on one meetings. Nate Wentland notes that every year we hold a cyber-security conference, and we are considering working on something with that. The more recent focus has been internal, as we still need to think more about how to best do this.
- Greg Scott notes concern about social engineering of cyber-attacks. We are seeing a lot more activity. Charlie Gore notes that we are seeing better crafted phishing messages, there are more hacking tools being developed to automate attacks. Workforce management, education, and training, especially agency security coordinators are focus areas for DIT this year. Mark Lay also notes socially engineered/AI attacks often now include simulated voice and video and texts in addition to email. Rajni Goel notes that we also need to focus on the proper use of AI, where it can be useful, but doing so with a moral ethic.
- Greg Scott notes the issue of data is still in the forefront – he has had several discussions on the topic with the County Executive to include a lead data position. Greg is currently working on the Position Description. County Executive is looking for DIT to take a more active leadership role in data-related issues going forward. Notes that ITPAC letters have had a real impact in this area.
- DIT is going to be looking to update several of its Position Descriptions for its senior engineering job classes to ensure we can recruit the right talent going forward. Chairman Blum asks if recruiting is becoming easier or harder. As an example, Greg Scott discusses recent recruitment of architect position. With some of the layoffs occurring in the private sector, he is hopeful that recruiting will become easier, but it is still a process. Fairfax County tries to sell a work-life balance. Kathy Walsh notes that the amount of time to get through the recruiting process still appears to be lengthy, and Greg notes that there is a new Director of Human Resources, and he is hopeful that will improve some of our processes.

## **AGENDA:**

The first presentation is entitled **Tax System Improvements**; *Robert Barr, Director DIT Revenue Systems Branch* is the main presenter.

- Personal Property – Previous system implemented in the 1980's. Mainframe-based. Was no longer cost-effective to operate. Several attempts to upgrade were unsuccessful. Finally a new in-house solution "TABS World" was developed and implemented in 2021.
- Had some growing pains with implementation. In both 2021 and 2022, the payment processor had issues handling the large volume of payments in the weeks leading up to the payment deadline and this resulted in very long counter lines. They realized the need to improve the user experience was critical. In 2023, the County engaged with Genesis Consulting to complete an entire system review (including database, stored procedures, payment processing, front-end system, batch processing and load balancing) that resulted in several changes being implemented.

- The improvement was dramatic, with greatly improved online processing times and short (if any) lines for those who choose to pay in person.
  - Online processing increased 12%.
  - Help Tickets via MyFairfax for payment issues decreased 73% from prior year.
  - Less calls to DTA Help Desk
  - Overall better user experience for the taxpayer
- What's Next?
  - Adding kiosks
  - Adding additional payment methods both online and in person
  - Business Personal Property Online File and Pay
  - Other online improvements to multiple solutions
  - Transitioning to cloud elastic solutions for external facing systems
- Jay Doshi, Director of DTA is on the call and reiterates the importance of our being able to accommodate the taxpayer.
- Question from Anne Cahill – asks Jay about value of IT to DTA. Jay states that because we are county of over 400 miles, we need to provide multiple options. We need to serve taxpayers where they are in whatever method they choose to engage. Equity is important and IT is critical in this. Some taxpayers will only do business in person. We don't always pursue the flashiest solutions, but we seek ones that provide value and improve the customer experience. The use of license plate readers is discussed as well as some of the issues that caused it to take so long to replace the old mainframe system.

The next presentation is entitled **Web Architecture Modernization**; *Anita Rao, Director DIT E-Gov and Enterprise Architecture Branch* is the main presenter.

- Website refresh launched in June 2023 with the goals of enhancing the user experience, making several functional enhancements, and expanding the virtual assistant capabilities (including adding Spanish and live chat).
- Web Architecture Modernization – transitioned to Linux-based environment in the Microsoft Azure Cloud. This is the industry standard as it provides the most up-to-date and secure environment and will allow for future upgrades. The project emphasized DIT's goals of leveraging cloud services and promoting digital transformation while also aligning with the County's strategic plan.
- Anita highlights the Web Content Management (WCM) system architecture in Azure. She highlights that the deployment process to the cloud included leveraging DevOps methodology using Infrastructure as Code (IaC) tools for managing and provisioning of infrastructure through code, using Kubernetes services for containerization and designed an Azure Kubernetes Services (AKS) cluster architecture. Highpoints also include seamless data migration from on-prem to the cloud, improved storage capabilities, failover process, disaster recovery, and security compliance. The migration was completed on December 30, 2023, and outcomes include improved flexibility, agility, performance and scalability.
- Kathy Walsh notes that users were not impacted and lots of improvements made so that is a positive outcome.

The next presentation is an **Initial Discussion on ITPAC's Letter to the Board**; *Brian Heffern, Director of DIT's Policy, Planning and Administration* branch is the main presenter.

- Timeline is discussed. Next ITPAC meeting is Thursday, 3/7/24. The letter needs to be in a package of materials for the Tuesday, 3/12/24 Board Budget Committee meeting, so much of the work will need to be done in advance of the 3/7/24 ITPAC meeting.
- ITPAC has a very strong letter to work from. The letter to the County Executive was very well received, as noted earlier by Greg Scott. Examples from today's presentations on Tax Modernization and Web Architecture Modernization could potentially be added as successes.

- Kathy Walsh and Mark Lay ask Greg about what resonated the best with the County Executive. Greg notes data and the need to invest in technology as well as the theme of bringing IT to its optimal state were things that resonated. He didn't see anything specific that needed to be removed.
- The plan to execute will be similar to the process used for the County Executive letter. Working with Brian, Kathy Walsh will use December's Letter to the County Executive as the base, incorporate ITPAC's feedback from today's meeting, see what ends up being included in the County Executive's Advertised budget, and pull together a draft letter to the Board which will be circulated to ITPAC by Brian in late February with the summary email on today's meeting. If any further edits are required, ITPAC members will need to reach out directly one-to-one with Kathy Walsh. The final version will be discussed at the ITPAC meeting on 3/7/24, and then forwarded to DMB that day for inclusion in the 3/12/24 Board Budget Committee meeting materials.

**CONCLUSION:**

The meeting adjourned at 9:47 A.M.

The next regular ITPAC meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2024, at 8:00 A.M. It will be an in-person meeting held in Room 232 of the Fairfax County Government Center.