

Minutes

The Governing Body of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Work Session at 4800 Town Center Dr., Leawood, Kansas at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, October 3, 2022. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

Councilmembers Present: Julie Cain (via Zoom), Jim Rawlings, Mary Larson, Andrew Osman, Chuck Sipple, Lisa Harrison and Debra Filla

Councilmember Absent: James Azeltine

Staff Present:

Patrick Geschwind, Interim City Administrator	Patty Bennett, City Attorney
Stephen Powell, City Clerk	Stacie Stromberg, Asst. City Clerk
Patty Bennett, City Attorney	David Ley, Public Works Director
Mark Klein, Planning Director	Mike Blankenship, Network Administrator
Mark Andrasik, I.T. Consultant	Loretta Morgan, Interim Finance Director
Travis Torrez, Dir. of Building & Code Enforcement	

Discuss Licensing and Permitting Software and related Licensing Questions

Mayor Dunn called the work session to order at 6:00 p.m.

Stephen Powell, City Clerk, addressed the Governing Body. He stated he would give a high-level overview of the packet materials and leave time at the end for questions and to discuss policy questions. He stated this was a group effort and I.T. Consultant, Mark Andrasik, took the lead to work with vendors to pull together this proposal, which was part of the technology refresh project approved for the 2023 budget. David Ley, Director of Public Work, Travis Torrez, Director of Building and Code Enforcement, Mark Klein, Planning Director, the Legal Department, and I.S. Department were also involved.

Mr. Powell discussed the software related to core financials, licensing, and permitting. He stated the core financial, permitting, planning, and inspection software is called Eden. The City has had Eden for 19 years. It is a product of Tyler technology.

Mr. Powell stated that Citizenserve was purchased a couple of years ago to provide more services online. It has been partially implemented by the City Clerk's Office for business licensing, animal licensing, and by Codes for code enforcement. It was intended to include permitting, planning, and inspections, but those were not implemented due to functionality issues that the vendor is not able to achieve for the City.

Mr. Powell stated the reason for bringing this forward now is because Tyler Technology, which owns Eden, is going to stop supporting that system in the next several years. Mr. Powell explained that the City has to either migrate to the new version, Munis, or switch to a new software system.

Mr. Powell stated that Tyler Technology does not plan on doing any new modifications to Eden other than any state reporting requirements. They currently have about 135 clients on Eden and they are trying to move them over to their new core financial system (Munis). Additionally, the City's auditor suggested upgrading to the newer technology for core financial software.

Mr. Powell stated that Munis and Energov, which is Tyler Technology's licensing and permitting solution, are both part of the Tyler Tech Company. He stated that they have experience converting other clients from Eden to Munis. This is appealing because one of the biggest parts of a software project is data conversion.

Mr. Powell stated that Energov really stood out to the team. The City has seen some demonstrations and have expanded them to include a large number of employees in various departments. There was an almost unanimous agreement that moving to Energov from Citizenserve and/or Eden would be the best direction for the City.

Mr. Powell stated that the City decided to take a step back from Citizenserve, or other technologies, and identify the City's needs. This created an opportunity to look at the bigger picture, identify best practices, and find better ways to use the full capabilities of the software.

Mr. Powell stated some of the benefits identified by moving to Energov is that it would be coordinated with Munis. For instance, with Energov and Munis, when a customer pays for a service, that financial information would go directly into the City's core financial software. This would streamline the process for the finance department and create a more accurate record of the transaction. He said it is appealing to have systems that work together.

Mr. Powell said Energov would provide transparency to the council and citizens. It would be easier for businesses and residents to conduct business with the city. He referenced surrounding cities that use Energov.

Mr. Powell described how Energov integrates with GIS, which is an advantage for Code Enforcement, building permits, and planning and zoning. It also integrates with Bluebeam, which is used to do electronic plan review. It integrates with Johnson County contractor licensing as well as the state of Kansas. It also has a mobile app that inspectors can use in the field and it has an online citizen portal for residents to use.

Mr. Powell stated the cost for the project is approx. \$675,000.00. This includes a one-time fee of \$515,000.00 for installation, data conversion, and training, then an annual reoccurring fee of \$160,000.00. The City currently pays \$87,500.00 per year for Eden and \$37,500.00 per year for Citizenserve. The cost difference between the technology refresh project that was approved during the 2023 budget process is about \$300,000.00. There are sufficient funds in the City's reserves to cover the additional cost.

Mr. Powell stated that pending approval from the Governing Body, as well as Legal's review and contract negotiations, staff would expect the migration of Eden's financial data to the new core financial

software to begin sometime after the first of the year. Other modules including licensing, planning, zoning, and code enforcement would come online later in 2023.

Mr. Powell stated that staff from multiple departments agreed that Energov would meet all the identified needs. He stated that bringing this item forward to discuss it with Council to expand the original technology refresh project to include Energov was the best approach. He stated that other department representatives are present, including Mark Andrasik, if the Council has any questions.

Mayor Dunn asked how long Energov has been around.

Mark Andrasik, I.T. Consultant, addressed the Governing Body. He stated that he is not sure, but Tyler Technology looks for the best products and then purchases them. They try to integrate them into their core products. They have over 2,500 clients on Munis. He stated that Energov has so many advantages over what the current vendor can offer. He thanked Mr. Powell for a good job explaining the project. He went on to highlight various processes that would be improved by using Munis and Energov, including a citizen portal to report issues to Codes Enforcement, field inspections, electronic submissions, and connectivity.

Mayor Dunn asked if there had been anything negative said about Energov from surrounding cities.

Mr. Powell said he spoke to the City Clerk in Overland Park. Once they worked out implementation kinks, and got the system set up the way they needed, it worked pretty flawlessly. Overland Park has been using it for several years. He said some of the other departments reached out to peers in other cities and may have more to add.

Councilmember Harrison noted how thorough the packet was. She said most of her questions were answered after reviewing the packet. She asked if the City pulled the trigger too fast on Citizenserve or had to rush due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Andrasik replied he thinks it was rushed and in that process you get what you go after. He said he talked to the I.T. Director in Shawnee who said they were pleased with Citizenserve but they did not have GIS integration or a mobile app.

Mr. Andrasik stated that Energov makes the most sense for Leawood from his perspective. Munis has been doing many data conversions for a long time. He stated the City was looking at spending \$20,000.00 on a data conversion from Eden to Citizenserve. He stated that staff did not know how that would go and tried to build metrics into the contract. He said he got nervous during this process and he had a moment to pause, and in that pause, he thought it would be good to get the departments together and look at Energov and figure out the best way forward.

Councilmember Harrison stated she loves the efficiencies. She asked if an RFP is required.

Mr. Andrasik said sometimes it is required but he did not go out for an RFP for this process. He mentioned information from the City's auditor regarding internal controls the City needs to build in as they go through this process. He said the Munis and Eden systems are cloud-based. Tyler Technology is migrating to the Amazon cloud, which is very secure. The cost that was presented earlier also includes the security updates and PCI compliance. This frees up the I.S. Department staff to focus on other projects.

Councilmember Osman said he was very impressed with the packet. He recounted a time when he went through a similar software process. He chose to go with another vendor and quickly found out that it was not a good decision. He had to decide if he was going to stay with the new vendor or cut his losses and go with the upgrade from the previous vendor. He said he was happy he went back to the previous vendor.

Councilmember Osman asked how Energov comes up with their fees. He asked if it was based on the population of the City or some other metric.

Mr. Andrasik replied that the one-time fee is based on all the different modules. They all have a specific fee. He said the City has to pay the annual amount for the services they use. The one-time fee is predominately the implementation and training fees.

Councilmember Osman asked if they charge every city the same or is it based on size or something else.

Mr. Andrasik said he did not know, but the quote has the number of hours associated with implementation and training for various packages. He said licensing fees are higher for licensing and permitting than core financials. He thought the price might be a bit lower after contract negotiations.

Councilmember Osman asked what other software companies provide these types of services.

Mr. Andrasik replied there are a number of other companies. He said the City wanted an off the shelf product that did not require many customizations.

Councilmember Osman asked if the software does not do something the City wants it to do, is the City able to customize it.

Mr. Andrasik stated that Energov allows you to build the process for each type of permit and license. The City has the ability within the permit type to build in levels of actions that have to occur. An action could even be inserted into an open permit, which is not available with the current vendor. There is customization related to the process as well as notifications via email and text.

Travis Torrez, Director of Building and Codes Enforcement, addressed the Governing Body. He stated that he asked Energov questions about problems the City experienced with Citizenserve. Energov answered each question with satisfaction.

Councilmember Osman asked if online payments are part of this.

Mr. Andrasik said yes.

Councilmember Filla noted how much she like the packet and that there are so many pluses to changing the software. She also liked that the system is cloud based. She said she heard complaints about Citizenserve related to building permits and thought animal licensing was clunky. She said she loved the GIS capability. She said the consolidation of software is a trend and was glad the City found a product with many bells and whistles. She said it was a plus that neighboring communities are also using it because they may be able to recruit employees who used it at their previous jobs. She asked if there is any integration with payroll.

Mr. Andrasik replied that is separate.

Councilmember Filla said she likes how much each department analyzed the software. She was happy that staff found what they wanted and asked questions about what they wanted. She thanked everyone for all the work they have done. She felt comfortable with the extra investment.

Councilmember Sipple asked if neighboring cities used both software systems.

Mr. Powell answered that surrounding communities that use Energov are Wyandotte County, Kansas City, Missouri, Olathe, Overland Park, and Springfield, Missouri. He did not know if they use Munis. However, Lenexa and Shawnee use Munis for their core financials, but he was not certain if other cities use both.

Councilmember Sipple asked if they heard any regrets from other users, or if it were harder than they thought it would be. He asked if any other users ran into overtime issues.

Mr. Powell stated the City Clerk for Overland Park said it was a big lift to get it implemented and set up the way they needed it to work. Mr. Powell thinks that is true of any software conversion. He said the data conversion is a critical part of switching to new software and staff training is a big part as well.

Mr. Andrasik stated there have been negative comments from other cities saying the implementation took a while and the implantation person was not good. No matter what software it is, the implementation person you have from the vendor is critical. Having the buy-in from the Governing Body and the City Administrator is critical so things are done when they need to be done. It is also important to have everything in writing that details who is doing what and when.

Councilmember Sipple asked if the vendor would take care of the data mapping or would the City have to do manual data entry if there are issues.

Mr. Andrasik said the vendor would take care of all data mapping for core financials and Energov. He said many of these things would be included in the contract.

Councilmember Sipple inquired how long the financials and other systems would be running parallel.

Mr. Andrasik replied that he is not completely sure. He said he could answer based on what was done with Eden. The City did a couple of cycles on payroll and the general ledger then signed the contract in May 2003. The City went live on core financials in October 2003. He stated the City should be able to meet the same kind of timeline.

Councilmember Sipple asked how much overtime does Mr. Andrasik anticipate in the coming year when the City goes through these conversions.

Mr. Andrasik stated in the past when doing the Eden project staff was able to do it within the confines of the existing work hours. With all the new technology pieces being replaced, staff will be inundated more. He foresees outsourcing some security operations, but he does not have a good number right now.

Councilmember Sipple asked if the City would have to spend money on more hardware, terminals, or other connectivity. He asked where Tyler's home office was located.

Mr. Andrasik replied Tyler is based out of the Dallas area. He went on to say the City has a one-gigabit fiber connection to the internet. He did not see any reason to increase it. He said redoing the main servers, production servers, and media environment was included in the \$1.3 million technology refresh project that was approved in the 2023 budget.

Councilmember Sipple asked if that is before, during, or after the conversions.

Mr. Andrasik said it could be during the conversion. He said the good thing about being cloud based is that the City's servers do not have to be in place.

Councilmember Sipple asked if staff gave any thought to doing the core financials first and doing the rest later.

Mr. Andrasik stated the intent would be to have the general ledger and core financials completed first and then start the process on that. He said the City would not go live until the core financials are complete.

Councilmember Cain said she thinks it will be exciting, but the conversion will be a nightmare. She also thinks Citizenerve is very clunky. She has had good experience with other city's permits, inspections, virtual, and mobile apps and found them to be very efficient. She is glad we are catching up to other cities. She said she does have several comments about animal and business licensing.

Mayor Dunn said she would let Mr. Powell go over the licensing questions next.

Mr. Powell stated the first topic in packet memo is related to animal licensing. He asked if animal licensing is something the City wanted to continue to do. A few other cities in Johnson County have eliminated the program with little to no impact in their ability to regulate animals. He spoke to the animal control division and they were fine with eliminating the program. He also spoke to Great Plains SPCA and they do not use it because they do not have access to the data. Our animal control and Great Plains SPCA rely mostly on microchips.

Mr. Powell stated the first policy question is if animal licensing is a service or program the council still wants to provide. The City generates about \$15,000.00 per year in revenue from the program and has about 1,500 dogs and cats licensed.

Councilmember Cain stated she does not think we should eliminate animal licensing. The City has a dog park and animal codes. She thinks if you have a dog park and you are trying to keep citizens and dogs safe then the City should continue with licensing. She explained that most dogs have a collar and tag or microchip. She stated that she does not like the idea of outsourcing it to a private company and thinks if the City is getting away from Citizenerve with a new company then that might increase compliance. She is not opposed to making it free, because it is not about the money. She fears it would make compliance go down and not up. She like the idea of changing the expiration date to December 31.

Councilmember Sipple asked what percentage of dogs and cats in the city of Leawood are registered.

Mr. Powell replied there is no way to know.

Councilmember Sipple asked if Mr. Powell had a guess.

Mr. Powell stated the registration rate is probably low if the City has 1,500 registered pets and 37,000 residents. He said he thought he remembered Councilmember Cain referencing an average compliance rate of around 30 percent.

Councilmember Sipple asked what happens if residents do not register their dogs or cats.

Mr. Powell replied if someone does not register their dog or cat and is caught, they could be cited through municipal court. The animal ordinance is enforced on a complaint basis. Someone would have to know a dog or cat is not licensed or maybe there is a barking dog complaint or an animal running at large complaint that may lead to a Police Officer to finding out that a dog or cat is not licensed.

Mr. Powell stated that Great Plains SPCA said the animal license does not help them return a dog or cat. Animal control said it does help them return a dog or cat. Both said most dogs and cats are microchipped or they have a vanity I.D. tag with the pet's name and the owner's contact information. Great Plains SPCA said an I.D. tag is the best way to return a pet. They also said the information on the microchip is only as good as the last time it was updated by the owner.

Councilmember Harrison said she has six properties that abut her home. She said five of them have dogs and cats. She said she thinks the compliance rate is even lower than what Mr. Powell mentioned. She is in favor of streamlining things, but the City also needs to know what dogs and cats are out in case there are complaints. She is not a fan of houses having more than two or three dogs. She would like to keep licensing in place and would like to keep the limit to two and require a special permit after that.

Mr. Powell replied in regards to the special animal permit, after he wrote the packet memo he was able to follow up with the City's animal control division. They stated that a majority of barking dog complaints come from homes with two or more dogs. He recommended keeping that as is, so the City does not create a situation where people are disturbed by barking dogs and it becomes a bigger issue.

Councilmember Filla thanked Mr. Powell for the research. She would like to keep the registration. She is good with it being free. She said it sets an expectation that the City wants to know this information and that pet owners need to do this. She is also ok with changing the expiration to the end of the year. She is hopeful that the registration process is so easy that people will not even mind doing it. She thinks when you have a dog park it is important to set the standard that you register your dog.

Mayor Dunn asked if the only question regarding the business license topic is whether or not to change the expiration date to the end of the year.

Mr. Powell stated that is the only question. That would help streamline the process.

Mayor Dunn agreed. She is hearing a lot of Councilmembers say keep the license and keep the animal permitting the same. What she is not sure of is if the pet licenses should be free or have the current \$5.00 fee. She asked if that was the current fee.

Mr. Powell answered it is \$5.00 if the animal is spayed or neutered and \$25.00 if it is not.

Mayor Dunn said she thinks if it is free then it might seem less important. She recommended keeping the fee at \$5.00.

Mr. Powell stated that he will be reviewing the fee schedule in a month and will see what other cities are charging for pet licenses. He can bring back options to the Governing Body at that time to review.

Councilmember Cain agreed with needing a special animal permit for three dogs. She hoped the new program would have a link to educate people. She understood that licensing the dog is not for the purpose of finding the owner. She said if the City is going to have a dog park or any kind of codes then there needs to be a way to back up animal control and others who are trying to enforce the Codes when there is an issue.

Mayor Dunn asked Mr. Powell if all his questions were answered.

Mr. Powell said yes.

Mayor Dunn thanked Mr. Powell, Mr. Andrasik, and all of the department heads that participated in this item.

Mayor Dunn adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.