



## COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

JUNE 15, 2021

Christine Husom	District 1
Darek Vetsch	District 2
Mark Daleiden	District 3
Mary Wetter	District 4
Michael Kaczmarek	District 5

DATE APPROVED: [DATE]

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**Members Present:** Husom, Vetsch, Daleiden, Wetter, Kaczmarek

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Lee Kelly, Matthew Fomby, Gregory Pickard, Sarah Grosshuesch, Brian Asleson, Lindsey Meyer, Tou Pha, Tony Rasmuson, Steve Bot (City of St. Michael), Chuck Carlson (Corinna Township), Tom Praska (Albion and Middleville Township), and Ken Yager; Attending Remotely: Cheryl Foster (Marysville and Woodland Township), Tom Hamilton, Heather Lemieux, Jane Grossinger, Lori Pawelk, Ryan Gleason, John Holler, and Peter Sorensen

THESE MINUTES ARE IN DRAFT FORMAT AND REQUIRE APPROVAL BY THE COUNTY BOARD

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#### I. County Assessing and Local Appraisers

IT Director Matthew Fomby provided the guidance and standards IT recommends for using a government workstation:

- Device should be placed in a public know location – ex. St. Michael, MN Government Center
- Device should be place behind two physical barriers (ex. IT server room or the mail room)
- Restricted access to the specific location
- Cameras are not required to be in the same room as the device; but a minimum of 2 cameras from two different perspective should be face the room in which the device is located
- Devices should be chained lock to the specific location
- The specific location should meet “normal” temperature to avoid overheating and vice versa
- All ports on the computer will be disabled other than the mouse and keyboard ports
- Only access Wright County network via VPN
- User must have Multi-factor Authentication (MFA)
- Workstation should a static internet protocol (IP) – for monitoring and auditing
- Workstation IP should be hidden
- Workstation installed with end-point protection and web filtering
- User Permission: Only read or hidden all non-personal file; read and write personal files, etc.
- User should not have permission to download and execute application
- User should shut down device after using device

County Administrator Lee Kelly stated the group should discuss IT security considerations, the current process, the future process, and any financial impacts. Commissioner Kaczmarek questioned municipalities and townships’ ability to choose between local assessors and county assessors each year. Assistant County Attorney Brian Asleson stated the power lies with the County Board. The County Board, by resolution, can decide that all assessments will be completed by the county assessor. If pursued, the language would not take effect immediately but rather the second assessment that takes place after adoption of a resolution. There are exceptions in the statute for larger cities. Municipalities with a population over 30,000 can have their own assessors regardless.

Commissioner Daleiden stated the County is currently providing the computers for contract workers to utilize. Fomby said Wright County computers operate on the Wright County VPN system, Microsoft Windows licenses are provided, and anti-virus protection.

Daleiden stated some of the independent appraisers work in their homes and may not be able to meet all of the IT requirements. Fomby said the County needs to ensure that the information is protected, that the person accessing the information is the person you're saying is accessing the information, and physical security is maintained. Any government building will meet the physical security requirements. Commissioner Vetsch questioned the need for a minimum of two cameras from different perspectives facing the room in which the device is located. He stated we have allowed Wright County employees to work remote without having two cameras. Fomby stated County employees are covered under a policy and their access can be terminated immediately if they are working in a location they should not be. IT has the ability to only allow access to the network from a specified location. The standards IT is expecting are federal standards used across all organizations.

St. Michael City Administrator Steve Bot stated the city has no issue with physical security within a government building. He only asked that Wright County employees are asked to follow the same standards as his employees.

Daleiden questioned if there is a way to have the VPN open during a limited timeframe, making it more secure. Fomby stated the County does not have the manpower to continually monitor the network, like large organizations do. It may be possible to turn the VPN on and off; it is something he would investigate.

Tou Pha stated the biggest challenge lies with the Internet Service Provider (ISP). ISP's have a limited number of IP addresses available, therefore several individuals are assigned the same IP address. Fomby will be investigating if IT can limit one person's access without a large expense. Static IP addresses cost additional money.

Tom Praska detailed security already in place by listing the steps he must take to gain access to his computer. He must use his cell phone to verify he is the one accessing information. He stated he must connect to internet at his house and cannot gain access at a public location. Additionally, Praska has four separate passwords to access the information he needs. He questioned if Assessors are the only group losing current access. He stated he works many nights and weekends and expressed concerns with not having the ability to enter data from his home. He also stated he has not been given access to County email and he must use his personal email; Adding he would pay the yearly amount for County email access himself. Praska also stated he cannot print anything from his computer.

Private Assessor Cheryl Foster stated she does not want County email on her computer for security reasons.

Ken Yager stated he is close to retirement and has been asked what the County's view is toward local assessors. The advantage of being a local assessor is that you can do things on your own time.

Wright County Assessor Tony Rasmuson said his department handles all the mailings and notifications internally. The entire county consists of approximately 70,000 properties and Wright County assess approximately 19,000 of them. Rasmuson stated he thinks we need to find a solution so local assessors are not burdened by the proposed standards. He suggested implementing it over time.

Commissioner Kaczmarek stated the County pays for the license requirements for employees and the private assessors are responsible for paying for licenses on their own. He requested an approximate cost if the County were to handle all assessments. Vetsch stated the County would need to hire five additional assessors and would see an increase of approximately \$200,000 per year. Kelly stated there are many scenarios, such as phasing it in over several years.

Rasmuson said a five-year plan could be developed or the County could acquire districts over time as individuals retire. Districts would have to pay additional per parcel to attract an assessor. Vetsch stated it becomes more difficult for private assessors to be profitable.

Corinna Township Supervisor Chuck Carlson stated he is hopeful all sides can work together to make something work.

Daleiden questioned if the township association has insurance that will cover cyber security. Carlson stated he did not know but would find out.

Vetsch asked what cities and townships plan is long-term; are they going to keep local assessors, or will they rely on the County? Carlson stated the kind of experience needed cannot be learned in six months. Kaczmarek stated he spoke to Fomby, Rasmuson, four independent assessors, cities and townships, and citizens. Overall, those that have had county assessors for a long time have been satisfied. Those with independent assessors are very satisfied and would like to keep them, if possible. The price range from independent assessors is \$11-\$14 per parcel. The security concerns raised were internal to Wright County. The response from the public was “big government wanting to get bigger”.

Vetsch stated there is more demand for independent assessors while only a limited number of assessors are available. Daleiden stated of the 15 largest counties in the state, six of them have local assessors. Some of the local assessment is done by municipalities.

Kaczmarek stated the new Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) system will be installed soon. All assessors will need training and he feels a portion of the expense should be passed on to the municipalities.

Daleiden stated the county wants to make things work for the independents but also want to make sure the County is protected.

Fomby stated he is working on a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the City of St. Michael. Once signed, IT would physically check the location and complete the checklist. He recommended each city or township work with the County individually to develop a MOA. Daleiden suggested passing some of the costs on.

**RECOMMENDATION: Develop and have Memorandum of Agreements in place with all parties by September 30, 2021.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Elizabeth Clow, Office Manager