



# The Town of Fenwick Island

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## SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING

July 16, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

Town Hall

### MINUTES

**Members Present:** Lisa Lange, Nuwan Seneviratne (Zoom), Lucy Wilder, Jeff Wendel (Zoom)

**Town Council Members Present:** Janice Bortner (Zoom), Jacque Napolitano (Zoom), Bill Rymer, Kurt Zanelotti, Richard Benn (Zoom), Ed Bishop

**Staff:** Lori Dabbondanza; Kathy Grab, Dean Gary, Erin Ellinger, Mike Locke,

**Others Present:** Laurence Ross, Nolan Mallet

Flag salute and call to order 9:00 a.m.

1. Approval of the June 18, 2024, Information Technology Committee meeting minutes
  - On Hold
2. Database Update
  - a. Administration Process Review and Discussion
    - Lori Dabbondanza gave the background on the reason of investigating new database software. Lori Dabbondanza investigated several companies, shared with staff members, and chose a company to bring to the Technology Committee based on the package and the pricing. There have been multiple meetings with Quickbase and the staff and a meeting with the Technology Committee.
    - Erin Ellinger spoke of how the simple tasks requested of staff are not simple. We have too many databases for different reasons. The Police Department has information that we do not have and vice versa. She stated changing information for residents ends up needing to be done four different times in four different places.

- Lori Dabbondanza stated that the end result is for everyone to be on one database working together. She fully recommends the purchase of the product at this time.

b. Council and IT committee discussion

- Kurt Zanelotti stated that for those in the corporate world that this a version for municipalities that are used in sales forces.
- Natalie Magdeburger stated that we have a lot of information in file cabinets (property records) and will need to identify the process of integrating all the pieces. What is in there and what will we want to track in the future to inquiry from the records that we have.
- Lori Dabbondanza stated that Quickbase could do this more effectively and cost effective. Magdeburger agreed, once identified, but the front-end of identifying the factors to follow will need to be completed before implementation would be useful.
- Richard Benn stated that he feels that the program presented isn't efficient because the room to add these into the database is not being built into the proposal. Benn questions the size of the data that can be stored and specifically whether it could store all of the historical data (property records). Lori was not certain the size that could be stored but stated that moving forward we need to scan everything. Benn was concerned that the importance of scanning the historical data has been overlooked with the proposal and that is a priority for the town.
- Natalie Magdeburger stated that we need to let Quickbase know exactly what we need scanned in and what type of memory we need. While it is a good product, she feels we really need to go and revisit these questions and we need answers before moving forward. Natalie Magdeburger stated that we need to digitize our documents; however, we have a lot of front-end work to complete before moving forward with a document management system. Magdeburger questions whether the front-end work has been adequately assessed and planned.
- Lisa Lange stated that while we need to consider scanning the documents, the staff will need to identify the fields of inquiry and who owns the information. Need to consider Edmunds (financial package) or whether we will need another. Need to figure out the processes before we move forward with purchasing the product.
- Lucy Wilder agreed that the staff needs to identify the scope and it may need to be a phasing type project depending on what they identify.
- Ed Bishop stated the software will be great, but the data is the issue. The staff would need to figure out how and what accurate information we need to identify. He feels we need to work on our current information before we can move forward with the project as there is not a clear identification of what

processes we are developing and what we are tracking. There needs to be a clear identification of the processes before implementing. Otherwise, the Town is not getting all that they can given the cost. If they are giving us a free product system build, we need to use the product to its fullest potential and this has not been fully identified.

- Bill Rymer stated that while there are some points with Quickbase that will save work he does not think we are ready. Our current situation with the database is unacceptable. We need to have all databases and needs identified prior to pulling the trigger on implementation or otherwise not worth the money.
- Natalie Magdeburger states we need to digitize all the records as part of the program. We need a proposal that protects those records as we only have paper record. Further, the contract needs negotiations and there are portions of the contract that the Town should not accept. The contract would need to go to the Town Solicitor. While it is proposed that the system is solid, it would only be solid if we do the front-end work and that has not been done yet. There are critical steps that need to be completed first and they have not been completed to date. We need to do more and be more focused on what we want before we commit and incur this type of expense.
- Lisa Lange stated there is critical data missing with the proposal. We need to identify what we want to follow before we can build a system.
- Richard Benn stated that historical data needs to be in the system.
- Janice Bortner stated that the community should be advised of the importance of their help. Feels it is an important tool.
- Ed Bishop knows that historic records need to be preserved. Moving forward information needs to be accurate. The current data collected needs to be accurate, we need to get our processes up to date and identify our inquiry needs before we can or should move forward.
- Kurt Zanelotti stated we need to inventory our time and exposure for the staff and the cost down the road.
- Nuvan Seneviratne stated that there will always be a better more defined data but and we can kick the can down the road but at some point, we need to pull the trigger. There will always be time to refine data. The pulling of the data is streamlined and quick. He agrees that pushing this project off until after peak season so that there is more time to concentrate on it and use resources to have as much ready to upload is better and will save money.
- Lucy Wilder questions the amount of history to be included. Does not know how much data we will be trying to include into the program. Explained the large size of the data in the property files.

c. Quickbase Demonstration:

- Nolan Mallet showed the AI bot data that Lori produced, showing what the database would look like.
- Laurence Ross indicated that it is 100% customizable. Different apps for different departments.
- Natalie Magdeburger asked about how you would pull a query in the database, Nolan Mallet showed where it would be on Quickbase and indicated it is customizable on who can see what information.
- Bill Rymer asked if there would be a manual process to input Police tickets or would it be a form. If a written paper ticket yes it would be manually. Nolan Mallett stated that the app can be downloaded to a mobile device which would automatically add to the system. Correct data issue on the forms would have certain fields that would trigger an error, or have a criteria formula added, "In Review."

d. Quickbase Q&A

- Natalie Magdeburger asked if we agreed to move forward but wait for the data build until January of next year, would Quickbase allow us that time and still offer the free system build. Laurence Ross replied yes.
- Do the staff need to clean up the data before giving it over? Nolan Mallett replied that we would really want to have things cleaned up before the upload. Lisa Lange asked about when loading data do they clean it or are we to clean? Nolan Mallett stated that it is up to us to clean and we could do it before or after the upload.
- Erin Ellinger stated that we are currently working on a new clean database that Caroline Jowder is managing, currently adding emergency contacts for each location. It was the plan to use this database as the starting point of accurate files that will be uploaded.
- Lori Dabbondanza asked about the large amount of historical data – 6 file cabinets worth that we would like to have scanned in and attached to each property. The concern is do we have enough storage space in Quickbase to add these files to our data and is there someone that can do this for us? She conveyed that the data must be searchable. Laurence Ross indicated that the uploading all that data would be a different project and would require an estimate to do. He advised that they do have a company they can work with us on that separate project including the historical information. Nolan Mallett stated depending on the amount, a hyper link to a folder for historic data in another program could be a way to avoid doing it now. Nuwan Seneviratne agreed.
- Lisa asked if there are limits on file storage. Nolan Mallett stated yes. He sent a message in the chat during the Zoom meeting to say the file attachment limit in a field is 100 MB.

- Lisa Lange asked for a quote on a full data upload and asked whether Laurence Ross could provide us with what information that they need to provide an accurate quote. Laurence Ross stated that a conversation is needed to find out what information needs to be uploaded. Lori Dabbondanza to be the contact person for him and they will connect.
- Lori Dabbondanza asked about the enablement plan, that if we used up our 50 hours, what is the cost after. Laurence Ross stated that there are other plans with more hours, and they do offer service hours at \$250 per hour which are nonrecurring.
- Lucy Wilder advised that the term of the enablement services is only good for one year.
- Bill Rymer asked the benefits of SCAG. Are their hours part of the 50 hours purchased? Laurence Ross stated no.
- Natalie Magdeburger asked if we could delay the building until it was ready, Laurence Ross stated yes, that if we could at least possibly sign a contract.
- Natalie Magdeburger asked that if the staff put in some of the hours would it help the process. Nolan Mallet stated yes.
- Quickbase will learn what we need from them.
- Parking tickets and business licenses to be added.
- Natalie asked the turnaround time for someone to come in to provide us with an estimate of the data scanning, Laurence Ross stated in the next week and will provide dates and time to Lori Dabbondanza.
- Lucy Wilder asked about the amount of user access, if 20 is ok and how to add more users. Laurence Ross stated the minimum is 20 users, to add user is simple doing it through the app. But if there are more than a few, the costs per user is \$594 per user per year for the one-year contract and is prorated. Lisa Lange stated 20 users to start should be ok.
- Bill Rymer asked if Quickbase is a debits and credits program, and Laurence stated no but could be linked to an account program. Also, they looked into Edmunds and cannot find the API #, we will need to find that and provide it to them. He is not certain Edmunds could be linked.
- Bill Rymer stated there are two phases, one is how quickly we can digitize our old records and two consolidating the databases into one. Natalie added that there is also a phase three starting the contract negotiations. Bill Rymer is not comfortable currently with the proposal as presented or moving forward with any vote to accept.

Natalie Magdeburger motioned to move forward with the estimate of scanning of property data, three estimates to be gathered by Lori Dabbondanza. Second by Ed Bishop.

***Motion passed unanimously.***

Natalie Magdeburger motioned to move forward with beginning negotiations with Quickbase and negotiate the contract. When negotiations are finished, it will be brought back to the Town Council. Seconded by Bill Rymer.

***Motion passed unanimously.***

Natalie Magdeburger motioned to move forward to identifying the administrative processes by Lori Dabbondanza and staff. Seconded by Bill Rymer.

***Motion passed unanimously.***

Natalie Magdeburger motioned to finalize the data that we intend to use and staff to report to the Town Council by September what data is identified (property records). Seconded Kurt Zanelotti.

***Motion passed unanimously.***

Richard Benn stated that a cost-benefit analysis needs to be done and Lori Dabbondanza needs to provide everyone with what benefits we are going to get both in staff time and community benefit. What services will the residents receive by making this investment? If we are going to spend \$25,000 a year, we need to justify it.

Natalie Magdeburger moved for Lori Dabbondanza to identify the cost benefit analysis and provide details to Council by September. Seconded Bill Rymer.

***Motion passed unanimously.***

Lori Dabbondanza is concerned about how she will be able to get an accurate estimate. Lucy Wilder and Lisa Lange offered and will be happy to help her. Told her to call and they will come in an work with her.

Richard Benn would also like to know, with the free time we are creating for the staff, what are they going to do to enhance our community with that extra time, how are we going to justify that expense?

Note that Kurt Zanelotti and Janice Bortner were absent from the vote as they had left the meeting by the time the vote was taken.

- e. Old Business
  - None
  
- f. New Business
  - None
  
- g. Public Participation

- None
- h. Next Meeting
- August 20, 2024 @ 10:00 a.m., Town Hall
- i. Adjournment
- Motion to adjourn by Natalie Magdeburger and seconded by Richard Benn at 11:14 am.

***Motion passed unanimously.***