

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING IT STEERING COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, July 31, 2024 – 2:00 P.M.**

IT Steering Committee Members (Member Representative):

Roy Brooks, Chandler Merritt, André Mendes, Helen Giese, Kimberly Buchanan, Mary Louise Nicholson, Tom Wilder, Jason Charbonnet, Peju Ajunwon, William Byrd, Melissa Lee, Wendy Burgess, Jason Peters, Scott Sheppard

These notes are paraphrased and are not intended to be verbatim.

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called order at 2:00 p.m. by Commissioner Roy Brooks.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - APRIL 24, 2024**

Tom Wilder motioned for approval of the minutes and Jason Charbonnet seconded to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2024, meeting. The meeting minutes were approved by voting members.

**III. PRESENTATIONS AND UPDATES**

**A. Technical Statement of Direction – André Mendes**

André Mendes noted that the last time he presented the Technical Statement of Direction to the ITSC, he talked about philosophical things in terms of the evolution of IT and how he expected this to drive the decisions we make. Today he talked about observations after interviewing numerous people, including IT staff, county staff & elected officials, and the status of the IT union, where he found diversity and honesty. The conversations he had were not about technology and job responsibilities but human characteristics and the culture of the organization. He noted that through open communication, it becomes easier to establish good working relationships for the greater good and the challenges faced are some of the same as other IT organizations. Mr. Mendes noted change management is the core of everything we're doing and is what will get us from where we are to where we need to be. He noted the state of Tarrant County's IT union, is far better than most and what he had expected.

André Mendes talked about the major IT Tarrant County topics beginning with TechShare. He noted after the pains and eventual success of TechShare, it has potential to grow as an organization. He noted it is not perfect, but it is operating in a stable manner allowing us to move forward in a collaborative effort. In addition, he noted there are now three projects underway, two Criminal Courts (CC) projects, one Criminal District Attorney (CDA) project, and a fourth, Agenda Management, is expected to go live in September. He expects we will be able to establish trust with the county, court, and elected officials to realize its potential, noting its capabilities are unmatched in the industry.

Tom Wilder inquired about who is going to pay for legislatively mandated or Supreme Court mandated items. André Mendes expects an answer by the end of the week on financial responsibility and wants to have a final conversation with the CDA.

Tom Wilder inquired about the TechShare project for the Civil Family & Juvenile to replace Judicial Information Management System (JIMS) and consideration for more funding. André Mendes noted it is his understanding the funding is available, and it has been reallocated. He also noted a reason for doing the CC projects first is to establish trust of delivering on time and scope. Tom Wilder asked if the earliest start would be next year sometime. André Mendes noted we are undergoing requirements gathering and if everything goes as expected, we will begin that process in January.

Tom Wilder also noted they need to know if the SmartBench interface will continue or if it will be incorporated into the new family section. Judge Bennett noted she would like for someone to talk with the family judges in advance of any changes to SmartBench to ensure their data is captured and André Mendes noted IT will meet with the judges about migrating and preserving their data.

Mary Louise Nicholson inquired about details regarding the CC & CDA contracts, governance, and new ask for development. André Mendes noted the three projects are the Mental Health Alert System and the Public Safety Assessment for CC and Case Financials for the CDA, all are scheduled to be finished this calendar year. He went on to note Chandler Merritt & himself have been working with TechShare to clearly define Maintenance and Operations (M&O), break/fix and new development with the objective to finalize a budget to be presented to Commissioners Court. The new development would be for requests for improvements to the existing systems. Mary Louise Nicholson asked once those elements are defined will that be brought to stakeholders and users to be part of that conversation before it goes to commissioners Court. Chandler Merritt noted we've asked TechShare to clearly delineate what is break fix and what is new development, and break fix would be included under the current agreement. He noted new development would be a separate bucket and what was asked of each department working with TechShare is to provide a prioritized list of new requests and that would go to TechShare for pricing. He noted the new development requests can be presented like a project at ITSC, get funding allocated and approval to move to active status. Commissioner Brooks noted there is value presenting to ITSC to get understanding of the process and how it operates. Mike Webb noted IT met with all department subject matter experts and received a list of three hundred development requests; the requests were categorized and submitted to TechShare for pricing. He noted once they have that list of pricing as noted by André Mendes and Chandler Merritt, they can look at what cost can be presented to the Court and if it's not enough, then it comes to governance to prioritizing. Commissioner Brooks noted it is within the purview of the ITSC to set priorities for recommendations to Commissioners Court.

André Mendes went on to discuss SAP as being effective, expensive, and at a crossroad requiring analysis and decisions. We're going to put a Request for Proposal (RFP) to look at four opportunities, 1) migrate R3 to S4, 2) stay with R3 for ten years, 3) migrate to a new package, or 4) maintain some core functionality in SAP and deploy point solutions that have better products than SAP and ask for a ten-year total cost of ownership analysis. He noted we also want an RFP for an external evaluation by consulting with all parties involved internally but without interference in the four solutions or the estimate of the cost of the four options and submit those to Commissioners Court for consideration.

André Mendes also discussed the following.

- Cloud computing and the excellent progress we've made to move forward in this area. He noted we need to accelerate through use of Software as a Service (SAAS), Platform as a Service (PAAS), Infrastructure as a Service (IAAS), and Service as a Service (SAAS). André also noted we will close the colocation sometime in the next eighteen months because we will be moving to the cloud.
- Cybersecurity is good but needs to be excellent. Modifications have been made in terms of communications. Tom Wilder asked about testing as part of our ability to recover from a cyberattack and if we're going to have the same level of restoration capabilities if we're in the cloud. André Mendes noted yes, we will have the same restoration capabilities in the cloud, and we have software that examines patterns you might find in your network when you're under attack and stops the replication.

- Network evolution to software defined, the application looks at the time it takes to reach the server and determines best route and immediately makes the change. He noted long term migration to wither 5G or 6G.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) is all encompassing and everything changes. André Mendes presented two examples of generative AI.
- Productizing IT through building abstraction layers so not to deal with storage environments, networking environments and database environments. Applications will be the only thing that matters. The focus will move away from IT driving product evolution and users will be driving product evolution.
- Vision current state versus future, we need to focus on applications.
- Capability Maturity Model rates an organization on its maturity of processes and the way it operates through a scale of one to five, most organizations are in the first level. André Mendes noted we are in level three defined - process standardizations.

André Mendes discussed the following topics on culture.

- Enormous diversity ethnically, educational, technical background, and methodology. Very solid.
- Very siloed by team tribalism, poor communication, territoriality, and information hoarding. It was an awareness of employees that this is a problem that needs to change, and we've already started the process.
- Tenure and entitlement always biggest difficulty in tenured environments. It can and will be overcome with trust, calculated risk taking.
- Mending old wounds preventing personal/team progress.
- Lunch fund by taking your "foe" to lunch with reimbursement from CIO to mend old wounds.
- Maximizing personal and team growth, 20% of people will perform at incredible level regardless of tenure, 60% producing at the low optimal levels but are convincible to move to optimal levels, and 20% of the people that are real challenges.

Questions and Answers

- Paul Schuder inquired for the bail industry needing access to case information and accurate case information and inquired if he can sit down with someone to discuss some issues. André Mendes noted to start by talking with him.

## **B. TechShare – André Mendes**

TechShare was discussed during the Technical Statement of Direction presentation.

## **C. Active Projects Portfolio Review - Peju Ajunwon**

Peju Ajunwon started by noting the agenda for today is a review of the Active Projects, Project Due Diligence review & approval, and the Demand Intake review & approval. She also noted the change to the title of Project Backlog to Project Due Diligence, noting Project Due Diligence better communicates what the PPMO is doing when a project is in that queue and a detailed definition of Project Due Diligence can be found in the appendix of the presentation.

Peju Ajunwon presented the project portfolio of active and completed projects to date for fiscal year 2024.

- 14 – Completed Projects.
- 28 – Active Projects - 11 Integrated Justice Information System (IJIS), 13 eGovernment (eGov), and 4 Infrastructure
- 28 – Due Diligence Projects

- 13 – Demand Intake Projects

Peju Ajunwon wanted to thank a couple of team members on key projects, Jessica Southwick for her work on the Elections project and Cory Whitaker for her work on the Medical Examiners project.

#### **D. Due Diligence Review & Approval - Peju Ajunwon**

Peju Ajunwon presented the project backlog for review and approval of recommendations.

28 Requests in Project Due Diligence:

- 2 – Pre-procurement, getting ready to engage Purchasing
- 2 – Procurement, already engaged Purchasing and trying to finalize contract, going out to Request for Purchase (RFP), or to complete the evaluation.
- 5 – Not started.
- 8 – On-Hold at the request of the customer or department.
- 8 – Assessment.

Three projects were recommended for transition to Active status.

1. FBI Certified Slap Scanners & Integration to CMS (Criminal Courts)
2. Dispute Resolution CMS (Dispute Resolution Program)
3. Jury Management System Upgrade (Jury Services)

There was a motion made and seconded to approve the transition of Project Due Diligence requests to Active Projects subject to the approval of Commissioners Court for funding. Motion was approved unanimously.

#### **E. Demand Intake Review & Approval - Peju Ajunwon**

Peju Ajunwon presented the demand intake of 13 requests, including 5 IJIS and 8 eGov.

She also requested approval to move the following requests from Demand Intake to the Project Due Diligence allowing us to engage Purchasing.

- Request for Court Coverage – Criminal Courts
- Family District Courts A/V System Upgrade – Family District Courts
- Electronic Voucher System (EVS) for Appointed Attorneys – Juvenile Court
- Fleet Management Software – Transportation

Four projects were recommended for transition to Project Due Diligence.

1. Request for Court Coverage (Criminal Courts)
2. Family District Courts A/V System Upgrade (Family District Courts)
3. Electronic Voucher System (EVS) for Appointed Attorneys (Juvenile Courts)
4. Fleet Management System (Transportation)

There was a motion made and a seconded to approve the transition for Demand Intake requests to transition to Project Due Diligence. Motion was approved unanimously.

Peju Ajunwon also noted IT wants to revise and update the definition of a need considering some of the new technology items that André Mendes discussed. The current and proposed definitions were presented. Dr. William Byrd asked the difference between the two definitions. Peju noted the difference is including strategy, the customer's strategy, business goals, incorporating that and looking at innovation as it currently doesn't technically call out innovation as a solution.

There was a motion made and a seconded to approve the update to the definition of a need. Motion was approved unanimously.

**IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS**

**A. Next Scheduled Meeting Date – October 30, 2024**

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Brooks adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

DRAFT