INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ITAC)

REPORT TO 2007 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REPORT TO 2007 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The Information Technology Advisory Committee was formed at the 2004 Annual Town Meeting. The committee replaced the Data Processing Advisory Board. The new committee retained many of the members of the original committee and added members of the community of Arlington who, by profession, could bring expertise to the information technology needs of the town.

The committee members represent the major appointing authorities in the town and school and five of the members are citizens. The five regular members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen and "have knowledge and experience in telecommunications or information technology and/or are persons skilled in representing and advocating for residents." The "ex officio" members are employees of the town and retain full committee voting rights.

Development of Needs Assessment

At last Town Meeting, the committee reported that the most important task for this year was the development of the departmental needs assessment. The committee is pleased to report that it has completed its initial needs assessment and has reviewed the results with the department managers.

The committee met with every department on the town side and with the Director of Technology on the school side. The purpose of the meetings was to determine what the current status of technology was in the department, how technology was viewed by the department, and what the perceived future technology needs of the department were. The committee is now in the process of refining the information gathered and in developing a technology plan which addresses the identified priorities.

The committee looked at each department in the following functional areas to determine where symmetries were and to identify common themes: Education of residents; events/ response; external communications; land and parcels; money transactions; people/ human resources; push communication to public and training staff.

The Needs Assessment Priorities are summarized at the end of this report. The Committee will be using these in the development of the final report and in building the multi-year technology plan.

Web Site Development

In 2006 the town saw a change in the Web Content Manager. Joan Roman was hired in September into this position and has been working diligently to improve the site and insure timely and accurate information. In March, 2007 the site received the 2007 E-Government Award Certificate from Common Cause Massachusetts. The award is given in recognition of the Town's commitment to open government by posting all key government records on its website. Common Cause launched the Massachusetts Campaign For Open Government last year. At that time, only 24 communities met the Campaign's standards and posted key governance records, which it defines as: the community governing body's agenda, the governing body's minutes, fiscal year 2007 budget information, the municipality's bylaws, code or ordinances, and if applicable, Town meeting warrant and Town meeting results or minutes. Only 72 municipalities in the Commonwealth received this honor.

Meeting schedule

The committee meets monthly on the second Thursday of the month and encourages and welcomes participation from any interested individual.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Aranyosi
Adam Glick
David Good
Kevin Koch
Steve Meister
Nancy T. Galkowski, Deputy Town Manager, Chair
Stephen Gilligan, Town Treasurer
Bob Greeley, Director of Assessments
Alan Jones, Finance Committee and Capital Planning Committee designee
Ruth Lewis, Comptroller
Susan Mazzarella, Chief Financial Officer, Schools
Steve Mazzola, Director of Technology, Schools
Joe Miksis, Director of Data Processing
Michael Quinn, Cable Advisory Committee designee
Corinne Rainville, Town Clerk

Needs Assessment Priorities

Information Technology Department - Priority #1

Business analysis
Requirements gathering
Synergies – departmental
Data and application sharing
Internal customer service
Technology planning (budgetary)
Continuity of Operations
ITAC has identified a need to improve the Information Technology Department in the above areas.

- Training
- Business analysts
- Appropriate response by appropriate employee
- Troubleshooting

Training - Priority #2

Utilizing existing software
ITAC has identified a need from all departments for more training, especially in the software packages that are already installed throughout the town and school.

- High
- On-site "help" person
- Distance learning
- Identified "First Responder"

Training on the Following:

- Word/Excel (mail merge)- Highest priority
- E-mail   - Second priority
- Phones – Third priority
- Munis
- Access
- GIS
- Adobe Acrobat

Records Management – Priority #3

ITAC has identified the need to insure that our records comply with the state law and that every record is also in an electronic version for back-up and retrieval.

Support

Software
Hardware
ITAC has identified a need to provide more support to all departments both on software issues and hardware.

- Help Desk
- External Support for Specialized Software
- Cross-Training
- Other Communities – User groups
- In-house "expert"
- Software 1st priority have the hardware support

Cross-departmental Business Analysis

ITAC has identified a need for all departments to work regularly with each other and the Information Technology Department through a collaborative process on identifying common technology needs.

- Analysis of software applications
- Identify what other departments have

Data and Applications sharing
> Based on address
> Later based on people
> *ITAC has identified a need for a common depository of information that each department can use in unique ways. An example of this is a shared GIS system.*
> - How do you pull together what we already have?
> - Common Standard?

Empowerment (culture change)
> *ITAC has identified a need for the employees to participate in the changes that, through technology, will improve the work product.*
> - Having someone watch the process of an employee and making technology suggestions

Small monetary transactions (automation)
> *ITAC has identified that several departments deal with small monetary transactions which could and should be reviewed for automation.*
> - Credit Card Transactions

Customer Service Response
> *ITAC has identified the need to enhance our customer (internal and external) service response through technology.*
> - Directions
> - Employee Inquiries

Hardware
> *ITAC has identified the need to constantly review the hardware available to the employees to insure that it can perform the functions that we require of them.*
> - Need to be available for training and utilization
> - Physical infrastructure
> - Total cost of ownership