

For Information Only

Leisure Program and Facility Management Software

Presented To: Community Services Committee

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Recommendation

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Health Impact Assessment

The upgrade of Leisure Program and Facility Management software would improve the ability for citizens to communicate for the purposes of their leisure activities.

Background

The former City of Sudbury and subsequently, the City of Greater Sudbury have been utilizing the CLASS recreation program software since 1999. There are currently 84 municipalities in Ontario utilizing the CLASS software and another 19 municipalities using the current provider's new product. This software program encompasses the management of all recreation program registration, such as summer camps and swimming lessons, all facility booking such as ice time, athletic fields, community halls, as well as various other amenities that require this type of software. There are 135 CGS staff using the CLASS system currently, processing approximately \$31,221,854.00 (2014 estimate) in annual transactions, which encompasses revenues, receivables, and payments for the following departments: Leisure, Parking and Environmental Services. The City, through managing this software, has continued to upgrade the system as required.

The CGS has been informed that the current vendor (CLASS) of this software will end its support of the current product in November of 2017.

Executive Summary

As mentioned above, the current vendor of our leisure programs and facilities management system has announced the end of support of the current product and the announcement that a new product is being offered to customers.

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The current system is installed on site and managed by the Information Technology section. The new system provided by the current vendor utilizes a vendor hosted model where the software is installed on the vendor site and maintained by vendor staff. Hosted models, or Software as a Service (SaaS), do provide a number of benefits for the client in the form of a reduction in maintenance and risk of a particular solution. With this hosted model, the vendor is also moving to a new payment model which could see an increase in costs for the new system.

Because of the dramatic change and possible cost implications, many cities in Canada are reviewing the options and trying to determine a course of action. These issues are common to cities all over Canada and some municipalities have been collaborating to discuss the problems. In September 2014, The Municipal Information Systems Association (MISA) of Canada created a working group for municipalities to review the issues, share info, and review options for moving forward towards a new software solution. This working group, which the City of Greater Sudbury joined, was able to successfully lobby the vendor to extend support of the current version of the product to November of 2017 and provide more time for Municipalities to assess an upgrade to the last version of the software before the cloud hosted product becomes the only supported option. The extension provided by the current provider will allow the City of Greater Sudbury to spend more time evaluating options with other members of the MISA Canada working group.

Based on the analysis of the working group, a number of municipalities have simply negotiated with the vendor and transitioned to the new system while others have chosen to RFP in order to review other vendors who can possibly provide a similar or improved service. There will be operational cost implications contingent upon what new product is selected through the purchasing policy. Our goal is to monitor the current projects underway by other municipalities and determine what options exist for the City of Greater Sudbury and report back to Council by spring 2016, in anticipation of a 2017 budget impact.

Benefits of new product

Considering the current technology is 30 years in existence, the opportunities available to the CGS through this upgrade are substantial. Wireless technology has far surpassed capabilities of the current software and our citizens will experience a tremendous increase in services as a result of this change.

From a citizen perspective, our community is looking for more convenience when it comes to program registration, and facility bookings. We continue to experience line ups on program registrations days, and have taken steps to provide extra staff resources on site at Howard Armstrong Recreation Centre, overtime for CSC staff in Valley East and 311 staff for telephone registration. This is just one example of the limited capacity of our current software in reference to recreation program registration. Improved capabilities and convenience for our citizens would dramatically improve with new software.

From a CGS staff perspective, new software could potentially be browser based and not hosted by CGS. This would allow unlimited capacity for staff to access the software, creating more opportunities than currently exist.

There is the potential to use the information in a new system to improve how we market our facilities and programs to our clients, based on their specific needs. Targeted marketing using email, social media, and printed media can provide better information to citizens. For example, a family who participated in swimming lessons in January could receive an email notifying them of the upcoming swim registration in April, with a link to click on and easily register immediately from their phone. New technology could also provide the potential to direct-market available ice-time,

athletic fields or community halls. Most new software also provides the capability to utilize facility and program data to produce a marketing document similar to our Leisure Guide.

There are many opportunities to create efficiencies across departments including, Citizen Services, Leisure Services (Parks, Recreation, Arenas), Information Technology and Communications.

Considering the corporate efforts to increase and optimize revenue streams and increase marketing opportunities, this software change is very much in line and supports these strategic efforts.

Conclusion

Staff will continue to monitor current projects underway in other municipalities and report back to Council in spring of 2016.

The follow-up report will provide Council with an opportunity to review:

1. Potential 2017 operational budget impact related to increased expenses
2. Procurement process
3. Implementation plan, including an update on capabilities of new technology
4. Survey the results from other municipalities related to service provider