



City of Bryant, Saline County, Arkansas  
Office (501) 943-0999

## *Media Release*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 2013

### **Outsourcing City of Bryant's IT Services Vs. No Other Solution**

#### **STATEMENT OF POSITION AND ANALYSIS BY MAYOR DABBS:**

Bryant, AR; April 25, 2013: The **January 2011, we had** a crippled, dysfunctional, yet fully funded information technology and communication infrastructure, without the proper knowledge of resources to adequately meet the city's needs. **April 2013, we have** a highly functioning IT and communication infrastructure, major projects completed every quarter since the 4th quarter of 2011 and plans to continue on this path in the future all within our means and budget. The city of Bryant should continue to outsource its IT services. We get a higher quality end product, affordable solutions to meet the department's needs, and we are exceeding the standards set by State Legislative Audit.

The Bryant City Council has been reluctant to approve the contract that would establish our outsourced IT services on an annual basis. I could understand this 18 months ago as we moved forward cautiously with a wait and see approach. But now, the verdict is in, what we are doing is working. We are saving money across every department, we are much more efficient, and the IT needs of every department are being met with even greater improvements for the future. Members of council also voiced another concern that was worthy of consideration regarding the importance of having IT employees in order to have more than one person with the knowledge of the IT infrastructure and security to access our network in the unlikely event the contractor was no longer willing or available to work for the city. After consulting with representatives from the State Legislative Audit regarding this matter you can rest assured we are exceeding the security standards and disaster recovery standards they expect government to meet. And this issue is not a concern since we now have a sound IT network it would be seamless to hire another contractor to do the same job.

Now it is time to make an annual commitment to a proven solution in order to continue moving the city forward. We are well on our way to having a local government in which other cities look to as an example of how municipalities can best meet the citizens needs in the 21st century, while utilizing available technology within our limited budgets.

Many people are asking, “Why is there so much controversy over an issue that is working so well for the city?”

In January of this year the Bryant city council approved a budget funding a contract in which to meet the IT needs of the city, but failed to approve the terms of the annual contract that would insure we can continue to save money, be efficient, and meet the IT needs of the city. Yet for the past 5 months they have simply renewed last year’s contract for 30 more days.

Professional companies that consult and provide services to any company on an ongoing basis charge a per hour fee or they are given a standard annual contract. That contract is reconsidered and amended as needed on an annual basis. Often an RFP or RFQ is submitted to insure the organization is receiving the best service for the price. Which has been done. The current local company we have been using for a year and a half started with the assumption they would be given an annual contract in the near future, therefore they gave the city a great rate, have under promised and over delivered, and have waited patiently through the political muck. But that is coming to an end if the Bryant City Council does not approve an annual contract as we do to conduct business with other private professionals such as our engineering firm we contract with on an annual basis.

I am grateful we have not yet had to halt any IT projects and we have been able to carry on month to month but this will not continue to work long term. Without an annual contract our current rate of \$75/hr for professional IT services will rise to the standard industry rate of \$150/hr. The number of hours compensated on the cities behalf will be reduced to zero. And our costs for special IT projects will increase significantly when they are bid out separately, and be more in line with the industry standards. When we had an IT department within the city of Bryant it cost the taxpayers \$130,000 annually just in payroll, no projects. We are currently outsourcing for a rate that is a 30% savings to the taxpayers and getting a better service on our day to day IT needs and IT projects included as a bonus. In addition to that cost savings we have eliminated the need to consider expanding our administrative payroll because we are more efficient and capable of doing more work with less payroll.

Have you ever thought the private sector can do it better and cheaper than government? Well you’re absolutely right. The way to do this is to contract the job on an annual basis. The contract gives room for the city to get out of the contract if for any reason the contractor stopped meeting the terms of the contract during the contract period.

At the end of 2012 each department laid out what their needs were for 2013. (See list below) Currently, if this contract is approved, most if not all of these will be completed under the proposed contract in 2013. Upcoming projects for 2013 that we are either in

the middle of now or are planning to do later in the year include but are not limited to the 911 rebuild "required by law we complete this year" (outsourcing this one project would more than cost the city 30% of the 12 month contract) overseeing and troubleshooting our upcoming AMI meter reading system, overseeing and troubleshooting the new Springbrook software. This project is a 10 month transition as it is the city's financial management software and will yield many benefits to the citizens once completed. This software conversion requires a strong network support in order to make the transition go smoothly.

## **POLICE**

Complete upgrade to dispatch and 911 this is underway as of 4/2013 to be completed by June.

LaserFiche setup and implementation (this will be an ongoing project for 2013) underway and going well

Expand our use of PTS and or search for a new Report software.

Video surveillance tie ends to dispatch from Bishop Park and the Water Dept.

Intranet setup and implementation.

Look at enhancing our mobile access and connection.

Look at possibly implementing Version APN service.

Secure WIFI connect for our digiticket writers.

Set up for our Cyber Crimes investigations.

## **FIRE**

Have dispatch information be pushed to the fire trucks just like it is pushed to the police cars in the field

Find a way for us to use the firehouse software we already have through some device to do the pre plans and inspections and other work in the field and have that data pushed to the database wireless.

Bring Back paging system through overhead speakers at Central. (not emergency paging. Just in house "Battalion Chief, you're needed in the conference room." for example)

Find a device and a way for prefire plans and other info can be pushed to all fire apparatus as it is entered in and updated.

A smart phone for the Battalion Chiefs with wireless hotspot capability so the Battalion Chief's vehicle and the Chief's vehicle can have Internet when needed.

Bringing on board a drawing program that is compatible with Firehouse software

## **WATER/WASTEWATER**

Establish connectivity in new bldg and install workstations

Implementation of New Meter System

More customers accessing online account access

## **GENERAL**

Springbrook software Implementation

Laserfiche implemented.

Financial information available 24/7 to Departments for better budget management.

Implementation of the records retention policy which is pending legal's recommendation to council for approval. Once approved Laserfiche expertise and Operating the Scanner will be a short term need in order to insure all departments are capable of proper implementation for record retention.

In-house training citywide to insure we are utilizing all technology to the best of our ability and creating the most efficient local government we possibly can.

Update all printer contracts throughout the city as they all will come due in June of 2013

## **CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Two smart phones for Wi-Fi hotspots and Three Chrome books so we can access the internet in the field and utilize the I-Worq software to receive and enter inspections, complaints and issue citations as needed. We will be canceling the data plan on the Motorola Xoom tablets and using the Iphones to connect by Wi-Fi. This will create a cost savings to the city.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

Intranet (training and meeting to discuss Intranet)

Scanner in HR Generalist and/or Director's Offices

Improve applications to print in only 3-4 pages instead of 13 pages from the website

Laserfiche implementation

## **ANIMAL CONTROL**

Scanning ability

Permanent solution for copier/fax that is coming up for renewal in 2013

Software solutions (iWorq application)

Smart devices or portable laptops for all officers to access software in real time in the field

Video security in public areas

Panic button/burglary alarm

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

2 customer kiosk to login and rent rooms and purchase memberships and pay for classes and programs

2 fully functioning cash registers at the front desk and 1 at the pool front desk

4-5 menu display monitors

Stronger wireless public access

New Audio/Video systems in the meeting rooms

Sound system in the pool and bathhouse

iPads with card square for better event management

Outdoor Parks Wi-Fi transmitter  
Security camera access on our phones  
Upgraded design software for in house flyers (Adobe Photoshop)  
Few facility loaner laptops for presentations or events  
1 wireless lapel mic system  
2 large meeting room in-room menu displays  
2 Drop-down projection screens for downstairs meeting rooms  
Small Lighting System

## **LEGAL**

Tablet or portable computer with access to Laserfiche and other archived records of the City during council meetings and public meetings. Also this device should have access to Westlaw for research, if necessary, during those meetings.  
Printer/scanner/fax in assistant's office networked and operable.

Some of these requests will depend on available funding and as we move throughout the year we will get as much completed as possible for each department. This many projects large and small are only feasible if we have an employee or two capable of managing all of them and recommending the products that best meet our needs at the best price or contracting with a company to oversee and direct meeting the IT needs of the departments. As I said before all efforts have been exhausted to do this in house and the manner in which we have met these needs for the past 18 months is working wonderfully. When I reached out with RFP's and RFQ's no other company even came close to meeting the service to cost ratio our current local contractor is meeting.

Please contact your alderman and encourage them to support moving the city forward, put politics aside and do what is best for the city.

The last question your alderman should consider before casting this vote is, "how is saving money, being more efficient, and meeting the needs of the city departments a bad thing?"