

# *City of Brisbane*

## *Agenda Report*

To: City Council via City Manager  
From: Betsy Cooper, Deputy Finance Director  
Subject: Financial Software Consultant  
Date: May 20, 2013

### **Purpose:**

To create a budget for financial software replacement.

### **Recommendation:**

Create a budget in 2013/14 for a financial software consultant.

### **Background:**

The City of Brisbane has had our current software for over 15 years. The software company (Corbin Willits) is no longer updating the system except for the basic necessities. This indicates the software may be dying. The first step in replacing the software is to do needs assessment which an RFP is based on.

### **Discussion:**

The City purchased its current financial software in 1998 from CWS – MOM software. It has worked well for us over the years. However, it is from a small company with no foreseeable updates and we are concerned about the shrinking customer base. We know several cities have moved on from MOM and more are looking. The company's current emphasis appears to be Native American Tribes.

As we look for more flexibility in our accounting system, we will be limited by MOM. Our chart of account numbers have the capability of four identifiers where more robust software has many more. We believe a more robust software would provide us with a method to break out the costs of our programs while also maintaining our records in a way that assists our reporting to the state and to our auditors.

Our Deputy Finance Director is planning on retiring at the end of 2015. She came to us from CWS and is key to keeping the software running smoothly. With her software installation and training background, it would be advantageous to transition with her assistance.

Best practices for purchasing software has several steps. One of the prime steps is determining the requirements necessary for the software to function the way we want. Ideally, this is more than just

the finance department and IT. We would want software that provides the information that city council, city manager, planning, public works, and all other departments need to best serve the city. We also need to determine if we want to migrate to Cloud computing and look at the variations and costs compared to buying the software and running it in house.

After the needs assessment is completed, a request for proposals (RFP) can be issued. Hopefully, the needs assessment identifies the software level that would best serve us. These levels are usually defined as Tiers with Tier 1 being Enterprise software such as Oracle and SAP down to Tier 5 which is referred to as the Shrink Wrap Market. RFPs are sent to firms in the targeted tier.

Once the proposals are received and reviewed, the top vendors are invited to do a product demo. The best demos are when the client provides the data and the vendor puts that data through their system. Vendors prefer to show their data with all the embellishments.

The next steps include negotiation for the purchase price, the implementation, any data conversion, training and ongoing maintenance. Most of these costs are determined by the modules purchased.

Staff has done several RFPs but has not performed any wide-scale needs assessments. We would like to hire a consultant for that step of the process.

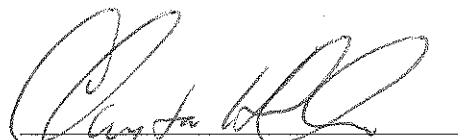
**Fiscal Impact:**

The cost of a new system is estimated at about \$200,000 which would include the cost of a consultant to help determine our needs and select a system. Staff has placed \$30,000 in the 2013/14 budget for a consultant to help with our needs assessment.

**Measure of Success**

Stable software from a reputable company that will allow multiple variety of reporting.

  
Deputy Finance Director  
Betsy Cooper

  
City Manager  
Clay Holstine