



Committee Report

To:	Warden McQueen and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	July 9th, 2020
Subject / Report No:	ITR-CW-02-20
Title:	Long Term Care Server Hardware Replacements
Prepared by:	Jody MacEachern, Senior Manager of Information Technology; Evan Davis, Technology and Infrastructure Manager
Reviewed by:	Kevin Wepler, Director of Corporate Services Mike Alguire, Purchasing Manager Jennifer Cornell, Director of Long-Term Care
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	None
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented;

Recommendation

1. That report ITR-CW-02-20 regarding Long Term Care server hardware replacements be received, and
2. That staff proceed with the purchase of Dell VxRail server hardware for each of the three long-term care homes for a total cost of \$145,000 (including the non-refundable portion of HST), and
3. That the unbudgeted increase in the project cost of \$67,000 be funded from the IT Infrastructure Reserve.

Executive Summary

The 2020 budget included \$78,000 to replace the server hardware in each of the County's three long-term care homes. This budget estimate was to replace a single host server at each site with limited redundancy, similar to the hardware configuration currently being used at each site.

Knowing how critical this hardware is to each of the sites and the need for licensing to run multiple operating systems over a single physical host server, staff reviewed the scope and the budget for this project. This resulted in a recommended solution that would replace servers at all three sites that would provide full onsite resiliency, capacity for additional virtual machine growth, enable inter-site failover, and would include vendor support. Staff recommended the project be deferred to 2021 in the 2021-2030 10 year capital forecast at an increased budgeted cost of \$210,000.

Significant incentives are now being offered from the vendor Dell and staff are now recommending proceeding with the planned server hardware at each of the County's three long-term care homes in

2020, at a total cost of \$145,000, including the non-refundable portion of HST. An additional \$67,000 over the funding included in the 2020 budget would be required but would be \$65,000 less than the \$210,000 included in the 2021-2030 10 year capital forecast. Staff is recommending that the additional \$67,000 required for this project to proceed in 2020 be funded from the IT Infrastructure Reserve.

Background and Discussion

Grey County Information Technology has been transformed over the past two years through the continued support of County Council. For the first time in the department's history, all major network hardware is accounted for in 10-year capital forecasts that plan on component replacements aligned with industry standard hardware lifespans and vendor support. Council has supported strong investments in IT Technology recently, including refreshing the core server hardware and installing advanced firewalls for network security.

County IT services are largely hosted and delivered from the main data center at the County administration building. However, each of the County's three long-term care homes runs services locally. These include technology solutions that are unique to the home (e.g. Nurse call and resident elopement systems), as well as hardware to create redundancy in critical systems allowing homes to run their business requirements independently of the County's main data center.

In 2019, Grey County Information Technology assessed the impacts of disruption to County services across the organization. Long-Term Care described their operations in 8 broad categories, three of which were among the most critical services offered by the County (Resident Care, Communication, and Staffing) with little tolerance for disruptions lasting more than four hours without risk to resident health and safety. These services include: the nurse call notification system, resident elopement systems, and basic network functionality such as internet access and telephony.

Grey County IT staff are seeking Council's approval to proceed with a replacement of the server hardware at each of the long-term care homes. This project was originally planned for 2020; however, the project, when re-examined, was significantly more expensive than originally budgeted. The project estimate was a simple like-for-like hardware replacement that did not account for software licensing costs. Further, the original project did not allow for any redundancy in the hardware that would allow for uninterrupted service for maintenance windows and even a wide array of common hardware problems. This type of design is common in critical systems and similar to the County's administration data center.

Staff postponed the project and included it in 2021 capital project plan reflecting the change in design and associated cost with a five-year useful life. Staff requests to now proceed with the project in 2020 based on the significant incentive being offered from Dell. Staff intend to continue using Dell hardware for server implementations. It is the same technology that was implemented in the main County data center (2018) allowing for seamless integration and management. A separate hardware solution would decrease staff effort required to manage the hardware, as well as add additional software and licensing costs. The new hardware would also alleviate considerable staff effort in maintenance and operations, as the current hardware has needed (and continues to need) a significant amount of effort to keep stable, operational, and compatible with other network components.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

None

Financial and Resource Implications

The total project cost, including the non-refundable portion of HST, is \$145,000. The 2020 budget had included \$78,000. Staff propose the additional funding of \$67,000 for this project be funded from the IT Infrastructure Reserve. In developing a solution, Dell was willing to discount the project by \$65,000 if it was to proceed in 2020. Pursuing this hardware purchase in 2020 will provide the County with cost savings of approximately \$65,000 as compared to the re-budgeted cost of \$210,000 that had been included in the 2021-2030 10 Year Capital Forecast.

Subsequent capital forecasts will be revised to reflect the timing and reserve balance of this project. The cost of future replacements is accurate in the plans previously presented to Council.

County staff plan to purchase this hardware under the existing OEMC purchases, as with previous purchases. OEMC provides group negotiated prices for technology solutions to the education sector and the broader public sector.

Relevant Consultation

Internal IT and Finance staff

External (list)

Appendices and Attachments

None