

MINUTES
Approved by the Committee
Ad Hoc Committee on Legislative Technology
Friday, May 19, 2023
10:00 A.M.
WW17
Boise, Idaho

Chairman Ricks called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM; a silent roll call was taken.

Committee Members in Attendance: Senators Doug Ricks and Kevin Cook; Representatives Megan Blanksma, David Cannon, and Chris Mathias. Legislative Services Office (LSO) Staff in Attendance: Soren Jacobsen, Jeff McFarland, Chad Sherfick, Sean Boyer, and Glenn Harris.

2023 Session Recap

Glenn Harris verbally presented a recap of the 2023 session highlighting improvements made since the 2022 session. The main improvement focused on increasing the efficiency of the public testimony process for both remote and in person participants. During the most recent session, some committees encountered issues with using the Presentation Controller Application for Testimony. Mr. Harris discussed the cause and referred to the IT report. When reviewing the report, a request was made by the committee for the report to be modified and revisited at the next committee meeting. Mr. Harris also reviewed hearing room hardware problems, and session training activities.

Committee Room Discussion

Mr. Harris opened discussion about Committee rooms. Committee members discussed their experiences with the sound systems and the public testimony application in committee rooms and expressed recommendations for improvement.

Office 365 E-mail Cloud Migration & Email Management

Mr. Harris then directed the conversation to Office 365 email migration. The consensus from committee members was that the migration was successful and working well for Legislators. The committee discussed spam management strategies and expressed concern about ITS staffs' access to Legislators' emails. Jeff McFarland explained that LSO IT staff can audit the email filter to report on what legislative email message tracking information has been viewed and what email contents have been read. The committee agreed to the solution of having LSO Staff audit the email filter once every quarter and monthly during the legislative sessions. The results of those audits will be shared with the Technology Committee.

Hardware Request Accommodations

Mr. Harris referred to the current policy in place which states that legislators will be supplied with a docking station and a single monitor up to 24" in size. Committee members mentioned how nice it is to work with multiple monitors. However, the committee agreed that the legislature should not alter the allotted monitor amount and that a 24" monitor is large enough. An exception to policy may be appropriate in special cases.

Committee Room Presentation Laptops

Soren Jacobsen discussed current issues with committee hearing rooms. Mr. Jacobsen highlighted presentation laptops and how they need to remain connected to the room to ensure efficiency when different parties use the space. He explained that when a presentation laptop is disconnected LSO IT staff have to reconnect the laptop before the presentation capabilities can be used in the room. The committee expressed concern about the security of the laptops. Possible solutions were discussed including locking up presentation computers with only mouse, keyboard, and USB access.

The committee requested a review of capitol usage guidelines pertaining to presentation laptops to ensure it addresses presentation laptop usage and requested that LSO IT staff present three possible solutions to mitigate the risk of presentation laptops getting disconnected at the next meeting.

Cable TV System

Mr. Harris updated the committee on the capitol cable television connectivity. Mr. Harris explained that Sparklight did some work on the cable television system during the session that may have modified the signal strength. With this modification it is uncertain whether improvements will need to be made or not. The comments from the committee were that while the in-house cable is nice to have, it is not necessary.

2024 & 2025 Budget Proposals

The Committee reviewed the 2024 Legislative Technology Budget. The use of Zoom vs. Microsoft Teams was discussed since the legislature owns both software. Mr. Harris explained that the Public Testimony Application was written using the Zoom API and was developed when the legislature's version of Office 365 did not contain Microsoft Teams. At the time of development, Zoom was chosen due to the capabilities of its API and the reliability of the platform. It appears that Zoom is still the best choice for the Public Testimony Application. LSO IT staff was asked to see if it could save money by licensing Zoom through the state's enterprise contract.

Representative Blanksma made a motion to approve the FY2024 budget without the line item to replace the presentation laptops with minicomputers, Senator Cook seconded, and the motion passed by voice vote. When the FY2025 budget was mentioned the committee decided to table approving that budget until next committee meeting.

Miscellaneous Announcements & Adjournment

There being no additional business, the committee adjourned at 11:49 AM.