

NORTH DAKOTA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Minutes of the

LEGISLATOR COMPUTER REPLACEMENT TASK FORCE

Wednesday, February 27, 2008
Roughrider Room, State Capitol
Bismarck, North Dakota

Representative Bob Martinson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members present: Representatives Bob Martinson, Lee Kaldor, Jim Kasper, Bob Skarphol, Blair Thoreson; Senator Rich Wardner

Members absent: Representative Pam Guleson; Senators Ray Holmberg, Larry J. Robinson, Tom Seymour

Others present: See attached [appendix](#)

NOTEBOOK SPECIFICATIONS

Chairman Martinson recognized the assistant director for a review of the specifications request for notebook computers. The assistant director said the specifications developed with the assistance of Mr. Patrick Forster, IT Procurement, Information Technology Department, were:

- Intel Core 2 Duo T7500 (2.2 gigahertz) processor.
- Windows Vista Business 32-bit operating system.
- 2-gigabytes (2 x 1 gigabytes) memory; and an alternate proposal for 4-gigabytes (2 x 2 gigabytes) memory.
- 160-gigabytes disk space.
- DVD+/-RW drive.
- USB 2.0 (4 ports).
- At least 256 megabytes of discrete video memory.
- Wireless 802.11a/b/g/n.
- Bluetooth enabled.
- Camera.
- 15.4-inch screen; and an alternate proposal for a 17-inch screen.
- Dual pointing devices - Touchpad and pointstick.
- An alternate proposal for a docking station for each notebook computer.

The proposal also must include:

- A description of keyboard quality to reduce sound of keying.
- A description of the warranty included with machine, and a description and the cost of any extended warranty.
- A description of the type of support available in Bismarck.
- A description and the cost of a proposed carrying case.

The assistant director said specific invitations for presenting proposals to provide 177 notebook computers to the Legislative Council office by June 30, 2008, were sent to Mr. Jeffrey Goletz and Ms. April Johnson, Dell Marketing, Austin, Texas; Ms. Linda Keys, Fireside Office Solutions, Bismarck; Mr. Michael J. Kelly, DakTech, Fargo; Mr. Loren Mendel, High Plains Technology, Sioux Falls; and Mr. Larry Sanders, Best Buy for Business, Richfield, Minnesota.

Chairman Martinson opened the meeting for presentation of proposals.

NOTEBOOK PROPOSALS

Dell

The assistant director explained the communications with Dell. The assistant director reviewed the proposal submitted by Ms. Janice Harpaul, Regional Proposal Manager, Dell Marketing LP, and Mr. Charles Patterson, Sales Representative. A copy of the proposal is on file in the Legislative Council office.

Mr. Charles Patterson joined the meeting through conference call. He reviewed the proposal. The proposal included two different models of Dell notebooks: the Dell Latitude D830, 15.4-inch screen, 2GB memory at \$1,081.95; Dell Latitude D830, 15.4-inch screen, 4GB memory at \$1,169.62; Dell Precision M6300, 17-inch screen, 2GB memory at \$1,292.81; and the Dell Precision M6300, 17-inch screen, 4GB memory at \$1,382.31. The proposal also included an option for a docking station at \$59.52 per unit and an option for a Quickcam Pro 9000 Web Camera at \$71.19 per unit.

In response to a question from Representative Kaldor, Mr. Patterson said the hard drive speed is 7200 rpm.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Mr. Patterson said the Windows Vista Business operating system is preinstalled. He said he saw no missing requirements as long as the notebook's use would focus on business purposes rather than entertainment purposes.

Fireside Office Solutions

Ms. Keys presented the proposal from Fireside Office Solutions. Ms. Keys introduced Mr. Dan Vondrachek, Fireside Office Solutions. Mr. Vondrachek said Fireside is an authorized

HP service center, and provides a three-year warranty under which Fireside will pick up the notebook from the Capitol.

Ms. Keys said HP computers are serviced locally in Bismarck, Grand Forks, Fargo, Williston, and Dickinson. She said HP computers also can be serviced worldwide. She said a three-year warranty is standard. She said onsite service is available as an option, but it is easier to work on notebook computers on a workbench at the shop. She said an accidental damage warranty is available as an option.

Ms. Keys described the main advantages of the HP-- the way it is built and the security features.

Ms. Keys said Fireside is locally owned, serving the area for over 25 years, with sister stores in Grand Forks and Minot. She said Fireside has 40 employees in Bismarck and a technology staff with 290 years of combined experience.

Ms. Keys said Fireside also is a certified Microsoft, Cisco, Symantec, and Kyocera partner. She said Fireside also works with the state WSCA contract.

Ms. Keys reviewed the proposal. A copy of the proposal is on file in the Legislative Council office. The proposal included three different models: the HP 8510p, 15.4-inch screen, 2GB memory at \$1,166.05; the HP 8710p, 17-inch screen, 2GB memory at \$1,199.40; and the HP 6710b, 15.4-inch screen, 2GB memory at \$1,043.41. The proposal also included an option for a 2GB upgrade to 4GB at \$69 per unit, an option for a docking station at \$99 per unit, and an option for a Logitech QuickCam Pro camera at \$75 per unit. She said the HP 8510p meets the specifications and is the state standard model. She said the HP 6710p has a 15.4-inch screen but is a little lighter and not quite as robust as the other two models. She said the notebooks have a 5400 rpm speed hard drive.

Representative Skarphol requested a price quote for a 7200 rpm hard drive. He also requested information on the additional weight for an ultra-capacity battery. Mr. Jeff Christopherson, Solutions Engineer, HP, joined the meeting through a conference call. He said the ultra-capacity battery weighs an additional pound. He said a normal battery lasts 12 to 18 months. He said it would be better to let the battery drain down rather than leaving the notebook plugged into an electrical outlet.

In response to a question from Representative Kaldor, Mr. Christopherson said the system comes with an 8-cell battery, which would last 5 to 5.5 hours. He said an ultra-capacity battery would last approximately 10 hours. He said 90 percent of a battery would be charged within 90 minutes.

Ms. Keys said the proposal does not include an integrated camera, but does include a Logitech QuickCam Pro camera, which is a better camera than what is usually integrated in a notebook computer. The camera is auto focus and automatically adjusts to light conditions.

Ms. Keys said the HP 8710p includes a T7300 2.0 processor because a T7500 2.2 processor is not

available on that model nor does the HP 8710p have the 801.11n wireless.

Ms. Keys said the HP 6710b is a business caliber model, not as robust as the 8510p or 8710p.

In response to a question from Representative Kasper, Ms. Keys said the optional warranties are already discounted. She said the optional warranties are computer-specific, rather than purchasing a few warranties that could apply to any of the notebooks.

Mr. Christopherson, through a PowerPoint presentation, described the value and reliability features of an HP notebook. He said the security features of HP notebooks include BIOS configuration, signons, drive encryption, disk sanitizer, and drive locks. He said a privacy filter is available for all notebooks.

In response to a question from Representative Thoreson, Mr. Christopherson said the spill-resistant keyboard is a seal that works best when the keyboard is turned upside down quickly after a liquid is spilled on the keyboard.

DakTech

Mr. Kelly said DakTech is an 18-year-old North Dakota company located in Fargo. He said DakTech provides a three-year products and accidental warranty on PlaidBook notebooks.

Mr. Kelly presented the proposal. A copy of the proposal is on file in the Legislative Council office. The proposal included two different models: the PlaidBook SR31V, 15.4-inch screen, 2GB memory at \$1,299 or 4GB memory at \$1,360; and the PlaidBook SR41V, 17-inch screen, 2GB memory at \$1,659 or 4GB memory at \$1,720. The proposal also included an option for a docking station at \$61 per unit.

Mr. Kelly said the SR31V includes all the features requested.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Mr. Kelly said the proposed notebooks have 5400 rpm speed hard drives, but 7200 rpm speed hard drives could be installed for an additional \$29 per unit.

In response to a question from Representative Kasper, Mr. Kelly said the camera is integrated in all PlaidBook notebooks, but a stand-alone camera could also be added.

In response to a question from Representative Kasper, Mr. Kelly said the proposal includes two additional notebooks that can be "hot swapped" for a notebook that requires service. He said DakTech pays shipping costs both ways if a notebook requires service in Fargo.

In response to a question from Representative Kasper, Mr. Kelly said the battery life approximates four hours. He said batteries come with a one-year warranty. He suggested that if a notebook is always plugged into an electrical outlet, the battery be removed to preserve battery life.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Mr. Kelly said delivery could be staged, and it typically takes one week from the order to delivery.

Mr. John Dvorak, Legislative Council, said the preference is that all notebooks be manufactured and delivered at the same time so that there is less chance of different hardware or cards or drives being installed. With this assurance of the same hardware and software installation at the factory, he said, it is easier to ghost/image the notebooks at the same time. Under the ghosting/imaging process, he said, one notebook is established as the prime notebook, the image is made of that notebook, and the image is then applied to all the other notebooks. He said it takes about 1.5 hours to image a notebook. He said setting up the prime notebook is labor-intensive.

High Plains Technology, Inc.

Mr. Mendel presented the proposal for Lenovo notebook computers.

Mr. Mendel pointed out that the notebooks currently used by legislators are approximately eight years old and emphasized the continued use of a notebook computer of that age indicates reliability. He said most industry experts rank the Lenovo ThinkPad notebook the highest for reliability.

Mr. Mendel said the R series model meets the specifications (with the integrated camera), and the T series model meets the specifications but without the integrated camera. He said he is waiting for the factory representative to provide specific pricing for the proposed notebook and apologized for not having the specific pricing at this time.

Mr. Mendel said what makes a battery fail is the number of cycles of unplugging the computer. He said if the main use is traveling, he would suggest using an additional battery or a larger-cell battery.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Mr. Mendel said the machines on display have 5400 rpm speed hard drives. He said the components are identical from machine to machine, regardless of when replaced.

Best Buy for Business

Mr. Chris Hanes, Customer Experience Manager, Best Buy for Business, Bismarck, introduced Mr. Justin Fricke of the Geek Squad of Best Buy, Bismarck. Mr. Hanes described HP mobile workstations and presented the proposal. A copy of the HP Mobile Workstations presentation and the proposal are on file in the Legislative Council office. The proposal included one model: the HP 8510p, 15.4-inch screen, and 2 GB memory at \$1,340 or 4 GB memory for \$1,409. The proposal also included an option for next business day hardware support with accidental damage protection for \$159 per unit; and an option for a docking station for \$130 per unit. He said the service plan does cover battery life.

Mr. Hanes said the proposed notebook does not include an integrated camera.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Mr. Hanes said Best Buy proposed HP rather than other models because HP best meets the specifications requested.

Discussion

Representative Skarphol said over the luncheon recess members generally agreed that the notebooks should include a 17-inch screen, 4GB memory, and a 7200 rpm speed hard drive; and an integrated camera is not necessary. Ms. Keys said she would not be able to quote a price for the 7200 rpm speed hard drive because that may require a different configuration of the notebook.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Mr. Kelly and Ms. Keys said the price for the docking stations applies regardless of the number of units purchased.

In response to a question from Representative Kasper, Ms. Keys said an 802.11n wireless standard is not available on the HP 8710p. Mr. Duane Schell, Unified Communications, Information Technology Department (ITD), said the n wireless standard is new, and the basic difference among the a/b/g and the a/b/g/n standard is speed. He said the Capitol is being upgraded to the g standard.

In response to a question from Representative Martinson, Mr. Schell said the difference in speed between 802.11g and 802.11n is 54 megabits per second versus 300 to 600 megabits per second.

In response to a question from Senator Robinson, Ms. Keys said the service provided by Fireside would depend on the type of service not provided by the Legislative Council staff. She said her goal would be to partner with the Legislative Council staff to work out arrangements on handling software-related and hardware-related issues. Mr. Dvorak said the problems he works with on notebooks include diagnosing software problems over the telephone and working on a computer in the Legislative Council office. If hardware such as a drive is the problem, he said, the drive is replaced and software reinstalled at the Legislative Council office.

In response to a question from Representative Thoreson, Mr. Patterson said 160GB disk space is more than adequate if data is stored but may not be adequate for storing substantial video or photographs.

In response to a question from Representative Kasper, Mr. Patterson said 802.11n will generally give three times the speed and twice the distance. He said removing the n standard will reduce the Dell per unit price by approximately \$20.

Representative Kasper inquired about the ability of Fireside to provide a 7200 rpm hard drive and an 802.11n wireless standard. Ms. Keys said the hard drive is available but she cannot provide a price without hearing from HP as to how the notebook can be configured.

It was moved by Representative Skarphol, seconded by Representative Kaldor, and carried on a roll call vote that the task force recommend the HP 8710p notebook computer as proposed by Fireside Office Solutions if the notebook is reconfigured with a 7200 rpm speed hard drive and with an 802.11n wireless standard at a price that does not exceed the next lowest-priced

proposal (\$1,382.31). Representatives Martinson, Kaldor, and Skarphol and Senators Robinson and Wardner voted "aye." Representatives Kasper and Thoreson voted "nay."

SMARTPHONES

Chairman Martinson recognized Ms. Katie Aljets, Business Account Executive, Verizon Wireless, for a demonstration of the BlackBerry smartphone and how this device could be used by legislators.

Ms. Aljets said the reason people choose smartphones is to stay in touch while away from the office and to establish private, secure communication with staff and clients.

Ms. Aljets said with a smartphone, the user can access multiple e-mail accounts and get real-time updates for calendar, contacts, and tasks. She said a smartphone is basically a mobile computer to get through firewalls.

Mr. Aljets described the features of the BlackBerry 8830 World Edition Smartphone and the BlackBerry Pearl 8130 Smartphone.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Ms. Aljets said the Verizon price for the BlackBerry 8830 is \$39.95 through March 1 under the WSCA agreement. She said this price is for the state agency to purchase the device. She said the 450-minute voice plan and unlimited data plan is about \$65 per month; the 900-minute voice plan and unlimited data plan is about \$85 per month; and the 1,350-minute voice plan and unlimited data plan is about \$95 per month. Mr. Schell said the ITD charge for the BlackBerry Enterprise Server has been a \$150 setup fee per device and \$17 per month service fee for continued usage and maintenance based on 130 BlackBerry users. He said the number of users has increased to 170 BlackBerry users which would allow the rates to be reduced to an \$80 setup fee charge and \$6 per month service fee. He said there are approximately 20 to 30 Windows mobile device users.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Ms. Aljets said it is possible to give password and ID information to the BlackBerry Internet service and consequently access state e-mail without involving ITD's BlackBerry Enterprise Server. She said if the device obtaining access through the BlackBerry Internet service is lost, this could result in unauthorized access to state e-mail.

In response to a question from Senator Robinson, Ms. Aljets said she is aware of Pennsylvania legislators considering BlackBerry devices. Representative Thoreson said he is aware of a number of states where legislators are using BlackBerry devices.

In response to a question from Representative Kasper, Mr. Schell said the state has contracts with Verizon, Sprint, and Alltel. He said all three vendors use the WSCA contract.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Mr. Schell said there is no policy requiring

access to state e-mail be through ITD's BlackBerry Enterprise Server, but that is the preferred method.

COMMITTEE ROOM TECHNOLOGY

The assistant director said at the last meeting of the task force, the Legislative Council staff was requested to obtain an estimate for installing two flatscreens in each committee room. He said he contacted Mr. Steve Butts, AVI Audiovisual, Bismarck, and Mr. Butts toured each committee room with the idea of which type of video product would work well in the specific room. He said Mr. Butts suggested installation of two flat panels in the Red River, Medora/Great Plains, Fort Union, Peace Garden, and Fort Totten Rooms. He said Mr. Butts suggested SMART Boards be installed in the Sakakawea, Missouri River, Lewis and Clark, Fort Lincoln, and Roosevelt Park Rooms. He referred to a proposal by Mr. Butts to install two ceiling-mounted Samsung 42-inch plasma screens, speakers, amplifier, and wiring for \$5,143; and to install a SMART Board 680i with projector and wiring for \$5,584. A copy of the proposal is on file in the Legislative Council office.

In response to a question from Representative Thoreson, the assistant director said the Brynhild Haugland Room has a large recessed screen and is wired for network connections but does not have a ceiling-mounted projector.

DISCUSSION

Representative Skarphol said the Legislative Management Committee should review the guidelines for legislators using smartphones.

It was moved by Representative Thoreson and seconded by Representative Kasper that the smartphone devices be viewed as a means of providing services to legislators. Representative Kaldor said he would like to see more specifics to the motion. He said a pilot project was used in the past to review use of notebook computers. He said maybe a pilot project could provide smartphones to a few legislators for use in developing more information for a decision during the 2009 legislative session. Representative Thoreson agreed that the review of use of smartphones should be for the purpose of determining how smartphones can be used to improve service to legislators and service by legislators.

Representative Skarphol said the task force could make a recommendation as to use of smartphones by legislators. He said care should be taken to ensure that there is no appearance of receiving something that is not appropriate for public officials to receive. He asked about the effect of a legislator personally buying a smartphone and obtaining access to the state e-mail system. Ms. Lisa Feldner, Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Department, said before a BlackBerry is given access to the state system, the BlackBerry would be wiped clean and the necessary security software installed.

Representative Kaldor said he would like specifics about costs. Ms. Feldner said she would try to get a copy of any policy followed in South Dakota for legislators who purchase their own smartphones.

NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING

Chairman Martinson asked about the need for another meeting. Representative Kasper suggested another meeting to discuss smartboards and flatscreens in committee rooms as well as receive information on guidelines for use of smartphones.

No further business appearing, Chairman Martinson adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m.

Jay E. Buringrud
Assistant Director

Jim W. Smith
Director

ATTACH:1