Pierce County

Information Technology Department

LINDA J. GERULL
Director

615 South 9th Street, Room 300
Tacoma, Washington 98405-4666
(253) 798-7476 • FAX (253) 798-6622

July 17, 2013

EMAILED LETTER

Vonnie Diseth
CIO/Director
Information Services Division (ISD)
Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

Dear Vonnie,

As we discussed on July 16th, Pierce County notified AOC of the decision to complete 6 of the SCDX data exchanges and put a hold on the development of the additional 60 web services. Once the 6 data exchanges are put into production (Pierce work is complete) this will represent a third of the civil and probation cases which are the highest volume of cases. These exchanges do not include criminal, domestic violence or judgments. During our discussion, I shared with you the rationale for the decision and background on the Technology Investment Board. The following is a summary of our discussion:

A. There were many conversations between the Pierce County IT team and AOC IT team in 2011 to architect the Superior Court Data Exchanges (SCDX). Pierce started development in July 2012.

B. The March 2, 2012, SCDX project status identified 10 data exchanges to be built first with increment 2 and 3 adding up to 31 exchanges. The number of exchanges has increased to 66.

C. The March 2, 2012, SCDX project timeline shows increment 1 exchanges to be built in 4-6 weeks and all exchanges completed by January 2013. The County and AOC have worked 12 months to complete 6 exchanges that are waiting to go into production.

D. A review of the development team's meeting notes shows that there have been unanticipated problems and the schedule did not include the time to modify the business logic in SCOMIS/JIS for an automated business processes once data is exchanged:

   a. Early in the project, the team identified differences that exist between how Pierce handles civil case processing and what was expected from the exchange data input, with respect to work and data flow sequences.

   b. Problem with docket scheduling delayed testing and caused AOC to adjust the programming.

   c. Team proceeded with data exchanges for Docket and File Civil Case (Non Well Identified persons). This was going well until the backend system automatically generated files instead of using county files – duplicate documents has blocked progress.

Pierce County
Information Technology

Technology Investment Board Charter

Version 1.0 – 4/24/13
Approved by:

Pat McCarthy, Pierce County Executive

May 2, 2013
Date

Mission/Purpose

Pierce County uses a governing body named the Technology Investment Board (TIB) to strategically approve and prioritize IT investments with the greatest business value, within funding and resource limitations, to best meet the County's values and goals in serving our constituents today and into the future.

Goals

- Ensure Pierce County's limited technology investments (monetary and staffing resources) are expended with strategic intent to meet Pierce County's published values and goals (see Attachment A).
- Review proposals from all Pierce County departments/branches with enterprise and citizen points of view, making transparent decisions that are fair to all departments/branches, regardless of their branch.
- Ensure technology investment priorities are ranked using business value benefits and alignment with County strategic goals.
- Ensure technology investments consider portfolio management best practices so spending and development efforts expand innovative capabilities and potential ROI while reducing investment overlaps.
- Avoid ineffective technology investments that increase support costs unnecessarily.
- Ensure use of common systems unless compelling business case for alternate solution exists.
- Avoid vertical solutions that meet only limited needs of one function or department/branch.
- Avoid duplication of systems, data and functions by consolidating and sharing technology solutions wherever possible.
- Promote enterprise projects that encourage multi-department/branch approaches to common issues.
- Seek out potential savings by "quantity buying".
- Promote technologies that are innovative and create new best practices in government.

Scope

The TIB will review and approve/deny all requests for IT investments by County departments/branches that meet any of the following criteria:

- System costs, defined to include acquisition, development, implementation, operation and maintenance, exceeds more than $50,000 in one calendar year or $100,000 over 5 years.
- Estimated use of IT Department resources exceeds 120 hours.
- Projected use of funding department/branch resources exceeds 120 hours.
- Investment includes acquisition of external technology contractor/consultant.
- Investment is an exception to standard products supported by IT Department.
- Department/Branch requests for a new IT support FTE or re-classification of existing IT support position (includes department/branch technology positions: Business Analyst, Computer Support Specialist, and GIS Specialist positions).
- Investment is deemed important enough by the IT Director to be reviewed by TIB.

Authority

The need for and the business value of the TIB is to provide countywide prioritization and investment planning for technology in the County. In 2011, the County Council Performance Audit committee commissioned a review of IT governance, cost allocation and service delivery. The results of the review were finding and recommendations that are based on the TIB's role in decision-making (see Appendix B). The recommendations give authority to the Board to take a holistic view of technology and ensure that legacy systems, new systems and staffing operate in a consolidated, economical and efficient manner.

Specifically:

1. The TIB has the authority to approve or deny moving forward on any Pierce County information technology investments that meet any of the above criteria.
2. The TIB has the authority to direct priority changes to approved technology investment schedules that better meet County strategies and associated public services.
3. The Information Technology Department retains solution architecture and technology standard setting authority.
4. The TIB can return department/branch submissions asking for additional information and/or analysis, to consider alternatives or request business process re-engineering before approving a proposal.

Membership

- IT Department Director (Chair)
- Pierce County Executive
- Pierce County Deputy Executive
- Pierce County Budget and Finance Director
- Pierce County Council Chair or designee
- Pierce County Executive Director of Justice Services

Roles and Responsibilities

- Departments/Branches

  Work with IT Department to fully scope technology requests and develop project proposals with accompanying cost benefit analysis to present to TIB.

- IT Department
  - Architect and engineer supportable, cost efficient, innovative and sustainable solutions.
  - Assist departments/branches in developing project proposals and cost benefit analysis.
  - Maintain County's Technology Portfolio and associated support requirements including a continual campaign to eliminate expensive, ineffective and redundant systems.
  - Practice proactive Capacity Management to ensure effective support for maintaining existing Technology Portfolio with optimized resources available for portfolio growth.

- Technology Investment Board
  - Meet at least quarterly (or for specific special needs) to review and discuss each department/branch project proposals presented to TIB.
  - Approve/Deny proposals or ask for additional information.
  - Prioritize approved investments as needed.
  - Change project schedules to meet emergent needs when applicable.

- Budget and Finance
  - Support departments/branches in finding funding for approved project proposals.

Decision Making Process

The Information Technology Department's IT Governance program supports an IT Investment Request process that prepares and presents IT investment proposals to the Technology Investment Board for approval. Investment requests are researched, engineered and estimated by IT and have obtained department/branch head approval to proceed prior to Technology Investment Board presentation. Many good ideas come forth for technology investment consideration. The IT Investment Request process uses the Technology Investment Board to maximize value of the larger investments within limited resources.

Records

TIB agendas, presented investment information and decision records will be maintained by the Information Technology Department on a web site on the County Intranet and kept in accordance with applicable Washington State records retention laws.

Appendix A - Key County References

County Values

- Integrity – Open, ethical, honest and fair in all we do and words and deeds match up
- Teamwork – cooperative effort by a group or team
- Respect – show regard or consideration for someone's rights or opinions, a variety of cultures/lifestyles
- Innovation – thinking outside the box – trying better ways to accomplish a goal
- Public Service – focus on providing the customer service and acting as good stewards of public resources

County Goals

A. Financial Stewardship

- Prioritize, align and manage all of the county's financial resources to achieve the county's vision in an efficient, effective, and sustainable manner.

B. Talent Management

- Attract, deploy, develop and retain a diverse and talented workforce to continually deliver innovative and responsive services.

C. Service Delivery System

- Identify and optimize processes, tools and teams to deliver high quality and efficient services.

D. Public Service

- Understand our customers' and stakeholders' needs and expectations and enthusiastically deliver essential county services.

E. Livable Community

- Through innovative leadership and services, continuously improve the sustainability and quality of life in Pierce County.

Appendix B - Moss Adams 2012 Performance Audit Excerpt

3.2 Finding: The approach to County IT governance is the primary responsibility of the newly formed IT Investment Board.

- The IT Investment Board is slated to be the primary IT governance body for the County. The current approach includes meeting quarterly, when relevant, to address a comprehensive agenda. The group is planning to operate like most management committees. The role of the Board will be critical to decision making, but is considered only one part of the governance (i.e., other components include policy, process, stakeholder iteration, etc.).

- Previous to IT governance changes in 2011, other groups were involved, including various committee participation in the prioritization of IT projects. If such committees continue, the relationships between groups will require close examination. In the past, these committees have expressed frustration that some work efforts have been duplicated in terms of justification and project prioritization. Prior IT governance efforts, including the implementation of the ITC, have had limited success at establishing sustained and meaningful involvement of various departments in IT investment decision making, making their primary contributions in policy development. Notable exceptions to this have been committees; for example, the ITAP Oversight Committee, used to oversee network investment funding, cost allocation and service delivery; or the S&J Committee, which was used to identify priorities for specific application development teams.

- **Recommendation**: Formally define IT governance to involve other stakeholder groups including relative authorities, relationships, and reporting. To work effectively, governance must recognize multiple parties and the relationships between them. Aside from the Investment Board, the Council, Executive, Director of Information Technology, and Directors should be recognized. Authorities and reporting relationships of each party should be formally addressed. Formal definitions should include IT governance authorities, logistics, duties, and scope. These roles should be documented in a charter. We recommend that relevant stakeholder parties be established, trained, and operated to help oversee IT progress and performance from their respective charters. This effort should begin immediately.