




August 15, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Board of Trustees

FROM: Jim Murdaugh, President 

SUBJECT: Authorization to Replace the College's Telephone Systems

Item Description

This item requests that the District Board of Trustees authorize the College to enter into a contract with Hayes e-Government Resources, Inc. to replace the telephone systems that are presently in use at the College. The contract will be for a hosted system and will include all hardware, software, professional services and any other costs associated with the procurement, installation and maintenance of a new telephone system. The contract will be for an initial term of not more than 8 years with optional renewal terms and at a cost of no more than \$300,000 per year for the initial term.

Overview and Background

There are presently two telephone systems in use at the College. The main system is an Avaya Definty G3r (originally sold by AT&T) that was purchased by the College in 1999 and that supports all campus phones other than the classroom phones. However, this model first came to market in 1992 and was based on core technology developed in the 1970s. So the technology is quite old, the system is well past its useful life, and Avaya ended support for critical components in 2010. We now have what Avaya calls "best effort" support and our support vendor has told us that there are key components of the system that, if they fail, cannot be replaced as no replacement parts are available on the secondary market. The second phone system, supporting the classroom telephones, is a Cisco Call Manager voice over IP (VoIP) system that was procured in 2008. The system is already past its useful life: as of 2014 we no longer receive any software updates and as of October 31, 2016 we will not have any support for the hardware. These systems provide critical life and safety communication services to staff and faculty offices, classrooms, elevators, "blue light" and other emergency phones, and many other locations across the College's 7 locations. Failure of either system can put individuals and the College at risk of not being able to communicate in a time of emergency.

To help the College understand the various options available to us with respect to replacing or upgrading the telephone systems, we engaged the services of two consulting firms. The first is the Gartner Group, an IT advisory firm that has provided the College with invaluable advice on a number of other major technology endeavors, such as the procurement of Workday. The second consultant that we engaged was Geoff Tritsch, a Principal with

Vantage Technology Consulting Group of Concord, MA. Vantage does not sell any products, nor do they sell any installation or professional services. They provide advice on telecommunications systems and help with the procurement and contracting process. And Geoff, in particular, has advised hundreds of Colleges across the country on the procurement of telephone systems.

A number of things became clear from talking with our consultants. First, that we must replace our present systems as soon as possible due to end of life and end of support concerns. Second, that it will be financially and technologically advantageous to consolidate all of our phones into a single telephone system. Third, that there are essentially two paths that we can take: upgrading our existing system with Avaya in order to leverage some of our existing investment (such as licensing credits) or doing what is called a "forklift" upgrade and replace the systems with one from another vendor. And fourth, the two vendors that TCC should focus on are Avaya and Cisco as they represent the two best technology options given our infrastructure, experiences and size (they are both "Leaders" in Gartner's 2016 Magic Quadrant for Unified Communications).

For the past three months IT has been actively engaged in determining our telecommunications needs and examining options from both Avaya and Cisco. We have had meetings at TCC to determine current and emerging needs, seen demonstrations of a variety of offerings from each vendor, met with and spoken to clients of each vendor, met with the companies who resell each technology (as neither Avaya nor Cisco sell directly to businesses), and received pricing from both vendors. As a result, we have determined that an Avaya Aura telephone system hosted off-site at, and managed by Hayes e-Government Resources, Inc., a local Tallahassee technology company, will best meet the needs of the College.

While the catalyst for replacing the College's telephone systems was the end-of-life and end-of-support of our present systems, we seized the opportunity to architect a new system that will meet our diverse and ever evolving communications needs. The ability to provide a secure and stable communications system for our 7 locations was at the heart of our new system design. The Hayes hosted system will be housed in redundant data centers, capable of surviving a category 3 hurricane, located across the state and is "survivable" such that if any one of our seven locations has a problem with their phone system the other locations will still function. We also addressed the needs of the campus Police Department to provide the ability for them to use the speakers in the new phones to communicate with large numbers of classrooms and offices in a time of emergency.

In addition to meeting critical telecommunications needs of our 7 locations the new system will also provide essential technology for new services, the integration of existing services, and a platform for future services. One such new service that the system will support are the needs of the new Student Affairs call center. The Aura system will provide the technology backbone required to provide a significantly enhanced experience for our students, including the capability to provide two-way communications with students using more than just voice communications. The new system also offers robust mobile capabilities, integration with Office365 and other systems such as Workday and our new campus-wide help request system.

Our goal is to go to contract in August so that we can implement the necessary technology for the new Student Affairs call center by November, 2016 and that the College be fully cut over to the new system by January 1, 2017.

Past Actions by the Board

None

Funding/Financial Implications

This item is a part of the College's 2016-17 Technology Plan and will be procured per FDOE Rule 6A-14.0734(2)(g) for IT purchases. The source of funding will be the TCC operating budget.

In addition to partnering with TCC to determine the best solution to meet our technology needs, Hayes has also partnered with the College to create a financing plan that will meet our funding needs. The final pricing will need to be based on a more detailed analysis of the specific number and locations of phone lines needed, types of software licensing, quality of the campus data network and a number of other options and will need to be done by TCC in conjunction with both Avaya and Hayes. We are actively engaged in this process and plan to have a final price by the end of August. However, Hayes has provided a tiered, "will not exceed" quotation to the College. The structure of the tiered pricing is such that the College will not need any additional funds this fiscal year. Hayes will take our existing funding, used to support the old Avaya system, and apply those funds towards the new system. The annual cost then ramps up over the next 3 years to reach a maximum yearly cost of \$300K in year 4. The cost stays at \$300K per year for 4 years until year 8, when it drops to \$216K per year (reflecting the ongoing yearly cost of maintenance, training, programming, support, upgrades, etc.). This authorization request will be sufficient to cover the "will not exceed" quote that we have received from Hayes.

Staff Resource

Bret Ingerman

Recommended Action

Authorize the College to enter into a contract with Hayes e-Government Resources, Inc. to replace the telephone systems that are presently in use at the College. The contract will be for a hosted system and will include all hardware, software, professional services and any other costs associated with the procurement, installation and maintenance of a new telephone system. The contract will be for an initial term of not more than 8 years with optional renewal terms and at a cost of no more that \$300,000 per year for the initial term.