



Date: July 9, 2003

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: RECREATION SOFTWARE RENEWAL

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

The Park Board Strategic Plan, under the section Technological Support, sets out the action “to facilitate permit processing and recreation program participation, using internet and telephone technologies.”

Currently, the Park Board and its partner Community Associations use five different software vendor packages to manage activity registration, memberships, facility booking, photo identification and revenue handling. While these systems meet the majority of our current requirements, the following factors led us to plan for future needs and look at our software upgrade path and options:

Internet registration. This option is already available in other municipalities including North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Surrey and Richmond. Increasingly our customers expect that this service option will be available in Vancouver.

Long term viability of our software solution. Both of our main software packages - RecWare and ProApp - are discontinued versions of the vendors’ software. ProApp has announced support for our current version of the Point of Sale software will be discontinued after January 2005.

The potential for integration. Combining registration, memberships, point of sale, facility booking and photo ID in a single system would eliminate the need for error prone duplicate entry and maximize our ability to retrieve data.

On March 10, 2003, the Board received an information report outlining this project.

DISCUSSION

In the spring of 2002, the desirability of offering internet registration was raised at an Association President’s meeting. Agreement was reached to develop a process to review the available options. A steering committee consisting of representatives from recreation staff user groups and management, information technology staff, and Association board members developed the terms of reference for the

investigation which outlined the scope, guiding principles, deliverables project risks and timeline for the committee.

The goal for the project was “to identify and endorse a recreation systems solution that best meets the needs of the Vancouver Park Board and all Community Centre Associations”, and was endorsed by the Association Presidents at their meeting of March 7, 2002.

Consultation Activities

The project team has made considerable efforts to involve Associations and staff groups in the process, including expanding the initial project time line to allow for these consultations. These activities included:

- providing regular project updates at Association Presidents’ meetings
- software demonstrations for Association Presidents by the short-listed vendors
- attending meetings of programmers, facility clerks and recreation coordinators to update them on the project and receive feedback
- Community Association representatives on the Steering Committee spoke to many of the individual Presidents to solicit their input.

As we move forward, the team has begun meeting with individual staff and Association groups to answer their questions and receive feedback on a site by site basis. In addition, our recreation software analyst will be giving demonstrations of the new system to these groups.

Selection of Vendor

A market scan identified 8 potential systems. Further examination through a Request for Information (RFI) and product demonstrations narrowed the field to two candidates - The Active Network (software package Safari), and Telus Enterprise Solutions (software package BookIt).

Detailed requirements were developed by recreation and IT staff based on capabilities of current systems, meetings with recreation staff groups, feedback from Association Presidents, and research into capabilities of current software in the market.

Based on these criteria, a Request for Proposal (RFP) was developed and sent to the two vendors. The responses were evaluated against the weighted criteria.

Safari came out ahead in all categories of our evaluation.

Safari meets 100% of our detailed requirements in the area of internet activity registration, one of the key drivers for this project.

Safari has significant strengths in the area of integration. All functions are accessible from a single application / single sign-on, and all functions are integrated. This addresses one of our key objectives and would give us the potential to reduce from five different systems to one.

Safari is strong in the area of usability. It has many built-in features that will save staff time in processing

registrations or booking.

Safari has a good track record of being implemented in 7 municipalities with more than 50 concurrent users. Safari references were positive. Many customers noted that support improved when they upgraded from RecWare Pro to Safari. The vendor supplied a good, detailed implementation plan.

Included in our detailed requirements were:

- Separation of Park Board and Association funds and taxes
- Handling affiliated Association memberships
- Additional features to enforce password changes and length of passwords
- Instructor gross pay and profit loss reporting on a course level

These will require functional enhancements prior to full implementation. As the Safari vendor has worked with us in the past to implement this feature in our existing RecWare Pro software, they have a good understanding of our requirements.

Based on this review, the project steering committee supported a recommendation that Safari was the preferred product.

Project Cost and Cost Sharing

This recommendation, plus the following cost sharing proposal, was presented to the Community Association Presidents at their meeting on June 5, 2003.

Staff negotiated overall pricing parameters with the vendor to meet our project budget. The agreed upon parameters are that the cost of the three pilot sites and all custom enhancements would total \$150,000.

A centrally located database server and a web server will be required to support the system. The initial estimate for each of these servers, including software is \$25,000 each, for a total of \$50,000.

The cost for the full rollout to the remaining sites is \$315,000 for software and services. So the total project cost for the servers, and the pilot and rollout phases is \$515,000.

The Park Board 2003 - 2005 Capital Plan included an amount of \$300,000 for information systems. \$200,000 is allocated for the recreation software project, with the remaining \$100,000 allocated for an upgraded golf tee time booking system.

The on-going support cost will start at \$15,000 per year, plus an additional \$2,500 per site up to a maximum of \$50,000 per year. This maximum will be reached after implementation at 14 sites.

Park Board and Association share of costs

Based on an assessment of revenues and the present distribution of computers to support that revenue, a cost sharing split of 60% Association and 40% Park Board was arrived at.

The Park Board capital funding of \$200,000 covers the cost of the basic infrastructure (servers) and the initial pilot and customizations, and would represent approximately 39% of the total cost.

The cost of \$315,000 would represent the Association share of approximately 61% to complete the rollout. This cost would be phased-in as each Association comes onto the system.

Division of Association share

The steering committee considered several models of sharing the cost between sites. One model considered was an equal division of cost - that would work out to \$15,000 per site. However, the model that was most supported was one that grouped the sites into tiers, and then had a graduated cost model applied. This was based on the premise that larger sites typically had more computers, more programmers and would process more revenue, and would generally have a greater ability to pay. The costs in this model range from \$11,500 for the lowest tier to \$19,000 for the highest.

Yearly maintenance for the system, once fully implemented, would be \$50,000 per year, of which the Park Board share would be \$20,000 and each Association's share would be approximately \$1,450.

The costs for internet payment and replacing existing cash drawers and slip printers will be investigated prior to and during the pilot phase, and will be shared by the parties in a similar arrangement.

Touch Tone Registration software will be included by the vendor, once we reach a rollout level of 14 sites. Additional hardware and telephone lines required to support this will be investigated at a later date.

Pilot Sites

An expression of interest for pilot sites went out in February 2003. Five Associations responded - Grandview, Kerrisdale, Kitsilano, Killarney, and Riley Park. Based on the criteria established for the pilot, staff have selected and received agreement from Trout Lake (Grandview) and Kerrisdale as the two community centre Association sites. The third pilot site will be the Stanley District field booking and special events areas.

The objectives of the pilot include the following:

- Test the operation of the standard Safari software plus customizations in our computer and network environment
- Gain an operational understanding of internet registration and revenue distribution
- Develop a site implementation blue print that can be used to streamline the rollout to additional sites
- Start building in-house expertise for installation and training on the system
- Feedback on customer interest and participation level for internet registration

A pilot review committee is being formed to ensure that the pilot objectives are clearly defined and measurable, in order to maximize the success of the pilot. This committee will include members of the core project team along with staff and Association representatives from the pilot sites, and will report out to the staff and Association groups as a whole.

Implementation Time Line

Timing of the deliverables are proposed by the vendor as follows:

| | |
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| July 31, 2003 | Contract signed |
| Sept 15, 2003 | Gross Pay Profit Loss statement of work mutually agreed |
| Oct 2003 | Install Safari at 3 pilot sites |
| Winter 2003 | First pilot season |
| Spring 2004 | Second pilot season |
| Apr 15, 2004 | Gross Pay Profit Loss version 1.0 delivered |
| July, 2004 | Testing of Gross Pay Profit Loss complete |
| | Pilot site report completed |
| | Rollout Phase begins |

While the project goal is to implement the system at all of our sites, the nature of our joint operating agreements and cost-sharing arrangements dictate that each Association will decide if and when to buy into the new system.

From discussions with staff and Association groups, we understand there are different levels of interest and financial readiness amongst the sites. Upon successful pilot completion, we expect there will be approximately 5 to 6 Associations interested in being early adopters of the system. We also expect there are a larger number of other Associations that may wait to see the benefits demonstrated at that first group of sites before buying in. Finally, we understand that there are one or two sites that at this point remain unconvinced of the merits of moving forward from their current operation. Based on this, our initial expectations are that this will be a 3 year rollout with substantial completion by the end of 2006.

SUMMARY

With considerable efforts in planning, this project is now ready to proceed to pilot implementation. The Safari software from the Active Network will enable the Park Board and its partner Community Associations to begin offering internet registration and standardize on a single, integrated system, using up-to-date supported software technology.

Prepared by Corporate Services
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