

Late item E-8



TOWN OF HARRISON
VILLAGE OF HARRISON
ALFRED F. SULLA, JR. MUNICIPAL BUILDING
1 HEINEMAN PLACE
HARRISON, NEW YORK 10528



Telephone: (914) 670-3000

TO: Ronald W. Belmont, Supervisor
Members of the Town Board

FROM: Michael Piccini

DATE: March 9, 2012

RE: Web Based Software

Request by Coordinator of Computer Services, Michael Piccini, to purchase web based information management software to meet new state mandates for the Open Meetings Law. Funding of \$7450.00 for 3 annual payments is available in the 2007 Data Processing Capital Budget, Account 07DP05. In the fourth year the payment will decrease to an annual fee of \$3950.00 and will be placed in the operating budget. Further request upon approval, the Supervisor be authorized to enter into an agreement with Virtual Towns and Schools. Further request that the Supervisor, upon review of the Law Department, accept and sign the agreement.

Respectfully Submitted,

Handwritten signature of Michael Piccini in black ink.

Michael Piccini

Coordinator of Computer Services



2/29/2012

Virtual Towns & Schools Website Services Proposal
Town/Village of Harrison, NY

One-Time Expenses

Phase 1: Website Design

- One Day for Onsite Strategic Design Meeting
- Create Site Homepage Design & Layout
- Create Subpage Design & Layout
- Modify Design with Client Input until Approved

Phase 2: Site Implementation

- Identify Global Navigation, Cascading Navigation & Related Links
- Implement Design within VTS Content Management System
- Create Department/Board Home Pages
- Load VTS Departmental "Best Practices"

Phase 3: Content Development *

- One Day of Onsite Department Planning Meetings
- Implementation of Department-Specific Requested Modules
- Migrate All Existing Web Pages as Identified by Client *
- Create All New Pages to Support New Content Developed by Client

Phase 4: User Training

- Two Days of On-Site User Training Sessions, including Separate Sessions for Site Administrators and Department Users

Phase 5: Website Deployment

- Final Site Review and Link Checking
- Install & Activate Related Modules
- DNS Activities
- Assistance in Marketing Your New Site to the Community

Total Project Cost: (Year 1 - \$3,500; Year 2 - \$3,500; Year 3 - \$3,500)

\$10,500

* Excludes Archived/Historic Web Pages not Visible to VTS on Current Site

Keeping You Ahead of Rising Expectations

Annual Expenses *

Hosting

- Secure Hosting in Time Warner Data Center
- Shared Web/SQL Server
- Redundant ISP
- 24/7 Monitored Facility
- Redundant Power Supplies with Backup Generator
- Daily Backups
- 99.999% Uptime
- Intrusion Detection & Prevention

Support

- 24/7 Emergency Support
- 6 Designated Supported Users
- Unlimited User Support, 9 am to 5 pm, Monday – Friday
- Personnel Dedicated Solely to User Support
- Same Day Response (24 Hour Window)
- Online Training Documentation
- Monthly User Tutorials

CMS Application & Modules

- Annual CMS Usage License
- Periodic CMS Upgrades
- Core Drupal Upgrades, as Applicable
- Periodic Module Upgrades
- Install Service Patches, as Applicable

Total Annual Cost:
(6 Designated Supported Users)

\$3,950

Cost per Each Additional Supported User: \$150 per year

* Annual expense is a 12 month charge commencing on initial GO Live date; expense may be pro-rated to match fiscal year, if desired.

Current Clients in Westchester County

- Town/Village of Mount Kisco
- Town of Somers
- Village of Briarcliff Manor
- Village of Croton-on-Hudson
- Village of Elmsford
- Village of Hastings-on-Hudson
- Village of Mamaroneck
- Village of Pleasantville
- Village of Port Chester
- Village of Tarrytown

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12:52 AM, Mar. 12, 2012 | Comments

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Written by CARA MATTHEWS

ALBANY — Imagine not having to file a Freedom of Information request for records that are available under the state disclosure laws.

FILED UNDER

News New York

That's what Robert Freeman, executive director of the state Committee on Open Government, envisions as the next step for New York's Sunshine Laws. State and local governments should be "pro-active" in posting information that is available and of public interest on their websites — without the public having to formally request it, he said.

Legislation to accomplish this is one of a handful of freedom-of-information and open-meetings bills that have sponsors in the state Assembly and Senate this year.

On LoHud.com View an interactive graphic and learn how you can access public records.

Robert Freeman, the executive director of the state Committee on Open Government, will be live in the Gannett Albany Bureau studio at 12:30 p.m. today. Watch live at www.livestream.com/gannettnewyork

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Records law lacks power to compel

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"The thrust of the bill involves what the world has come to call pro-active disclosure, which in my opinion is certainly a trend, and it's a trend that will continue even in the absence of a law requiring it," he said.

Governments would save money because they wouldn't receive as many FOIL requests, he said.

Another bill with support in both houses would require the terms of proposed collective-bargaining agreements to be made public.

In the executive branch, Gov. Andrew Cuomo has put in place some measures to fulfill his campaign promise of making state government "more transparent and accountable." But his administration has also been criticized for negotiating key issues behind closed doors.

The Committee on Open Government's 2011 annual report lauds Cuomo for developing "CitizenConnects," an electronic town hall that helps and encourages the public to get involved in state government and share their ideas through emails, Web "chats" and

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Eastchester St. Patrick's Day parade 2012



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attending government meetings. The website provides information on the governor's events, but hasn't been updated since August.

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- Update: Distraught woman located at Kakiat County Park in Ramapo 2

Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, D-Scarsdale, has a bill in the current session that would authorize courts to award attorneys' fees to an agency when a person or entity loses a bid to block disclosure.

Sen. Stephen Saland, R-Poughkeepsie, is sponsoring the attorney's fees bill with Paulin.

Paulin has a separate bill that would expand the definition of public bodies subject to the Open Meetings Law to include committees created by the executive branch. The Senate sponsor is Bill Perkins, D-Manhattan.

Paulin said she has carried the bill for several years and it has been difficult to get support for it.

"I think there's a concern that too many bodies would be open," she said, as well as a "fear of the public and the exposure."

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Effective February 2, 2012: Disclosure of Records Scheduled for Discussion at Open Meetings

Members of the public have on many occasions complained that they cannot fully understand discussions among members of public bodies, even though the discussions occur in public. For example, a board member might refer to the second paragraph of page 3 of a record without disclosing its content prior to the meeting. Although the public has the right to be present, the ability to understand or contribute to the decision-making process may be minimal and frustrating.

Effective February 2, 2012, a new section 103(e) is added to the Open Meetings Law. The purpose of the legislation is simple: those interested in the work of public bodies should have the ability, within reasonable limitations, to see the records scheduled to be discussed during open meetings prior to the meetings. The language of the amendment appears in the text of the Open Meetings Law.

The amendment addresses two types of records: first, those that are required to be made available pursuant to FOIL; and second, proposed resolutions, law, rules, regulations, policies or amendments thereto. When either is scheduled to be discussed during an open meeting, the law requires that they be made available to the public, to the extent practicable, either prior to or at the meeting.

To comply with the new provisions, copies of records must be made available to the public prior to or at the meeting for a reasonable fee, or by posting them online prior to the meeting. The amendment authorizes an agency to determine when and what may be "practicable" in making records available.

It is important to stress that the amendment involves an effort to take advantage of today's information technology to promote transparency and citizens' participation in government, and to reduce waste. If the agency in which a public body functions (i.e., a state department, a county, city, town, village or school district) "maintains a regularly and routinely updated website and utilizes a high speed internet connection," the records described above that are scheduled to be discussed in public "shall be posted on the website to the extent practicable as determined by the agency..."

Posting records online can reduce an agency's costs associated with requests made under FOIL. Staff does not have spend time retrieving paper records, photocopying the records, or carrying out the administrative tasks involved with charging fees for copies.

The phrase quoted twice in section 103(e), "to the extent practicable as determined by the agency", is intended to ensure that the amendment is implemented reasonably and without undue burden or cost to an agency. Many units of government are small and lack information technology resources or the knowledge or expertise to implement the new provision. If that is so, and they do not have the ability to give effect to the amendment with reasonable effort, they are not required to do so. In recognition of fiscal realities, the new provision specifies that an agency "may, but shall not be required to, expend additional moneys to implement the provisions of this subdivision."

In the "News" section of this website, there is a link to a report prepared for the Committee on Open Government that may be especially useful to governmental entities that have neither the resources nor the expertise to give effect to the amendment. Entitled "Evaluating the Importance of Technology and the Role of Information Providers within Local Governments in New York", the report offers guidance that may enable those entities to gain the knowledge and resources needed to do so at minimal cost.

It is emphasized that the potential obligation to make records available on request or online is limited to records that are "scheduled to be the subject of a discussion" during an open meeting. If there is a basis for conducting an executive session, a portion of a meeting that may be closed, records scheduled to be discussed during the executive session would not be required to be disclosed. Further, if, for example, a proposed policy offered by the head of an agency, a mayor, a town supervisor or a superintendent of schools was preceded by recommendations or opinions expressed by staff or members of a public body, those recommendations, opinions or similar materials fall outside the coverage of the amendment and (may but) need not be disclosed [see FOIL, section 87(2)(g)].

Through the disclosure of records scheduled to be discussed during open meetings, the public can gain the ability to better understand and appreciate the issues faced by government. Interested and civic-minded citizens can offer information and points of view that can assist in improving the operation of government to the benefit of our communities.