

NORTH DAKOTA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Minutes of the

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 24, 2003
Teleconference Meeting
Roughrider Room, State Capitol
Bismarck, North Dakota

Senator Larry Robinson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m.

Members present: Senators Larry Robinson, Randel Christmann, Tom Seymour; Representatives Eliot Glassheim, Keith Kempenich, Bob Skarphol, Ken Svedjan

Members present by conference call: Senators Randy A. Schobinger, Rich Wardner; Representatives Robin Weisz, Lonny Winrich

Member absent: Chief Information Officer Curtis L. Wolfe

Others present: See attached appendix

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ORGANIZATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Chairman Robinson called on Mr. Scott Kost, Techwise Solutions LLC, Fargo, who provided comments on Techwise Solutions LLC's proposal for providing the committee with assistance in the preparation of the request for proposals, consultant selection, and consultant monitoring for the information technology organizational and management studies. A copy of the proposal is on file in the Legislative Council office. Mr. Kost said Techwise Solutions LLC is interested in acting as the consultant manager for the committee and assisting with the establishment of an efficient and effective information technology system for the state. He said Techwise Solutions LLC is uniquely positioned to complete the responsibilities for the following reasons:

- It has demonstrated the ability to successfully lead similar projects, including management of the Information Technology Department's request for proposals process for the enterprise resource planning system initiative, commonly known as the ConnectND project.
- It has a strong team with extensive experience in both the public and private sector.
- It can leverage its strong understanding of the complexities of organizational studies through its experiences in completing similar engagements within government, financial, and health care industries.

- It has developed a plan to complete the consultant manager responsibilities within the established guidelines, timeframes, and budget.

Mr. Kost said if selected, Techwise Solutions LLC would guarantee committee satisfaction with its work, and if the committee did not agree with its work, Techwise Solutions LLC would require no payment for services.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan, Mr. Kost said Techwise Solutions LLC has no preconceived notions regarding the committee's information technology organizational and management studies.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan regarding any biases relating to the committee's studies, Mr. Kost said Techwise Solutions LLC would provide unbiased and objective support to the committee's studies.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan regarding the content of the committee's studies, Mr. Kost said Techwise Solutions LLC has a good understanding of the items to be reviewed and identified in the committee's studies. He said Techwise Solutions LLC would recommend clarifying a few of the items in the committee's request for proposals for the studies.

In response to a question from Representative Skarphol, Mr. Kost said state agencies will have to be shown how services will be more efficient and effective for their active participation in the committee's studies.

In response to a question from Representative Winrich, Mr. Kost said Techwise Solutions LLC does not view the provisions of Section 13 of 2003 House Bill No. 1505 as constricting the studies to reviewing strictly centralized or decentralized information technology structures.

Chairman Robinson called on Mr. Robert Pope, Nexus Innovations, Inc., Bismarck, who provided comments on Nexus Innovations, Inc.'s, proposal for providing the committee with assistance in the preparation of the request for proposals, consultant selection, and consultant monitoring for the information technology organizational and management studies. A copy of the proposal is on file in the Legislative

Council office. Mr. Pope said Nexus Innovations, Inc., is highly qualified to provide the committee with assistance for the information technology studies for the following reasons:

- It has a strong historical knowledge of information technology in the state of North Dakota.
- It has a clear understanding of legislative goals and executive branch organization.
- It possesses strategic thinking capabilities.
- It has an ability to provide ongoing knowledge retention for the legislative process.
- It has established trust and strong communications skills.
- It has the ability to present large amounts of complex information in a condensed format.
- It possesses a proven track record.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan, Mr. Pope said Nexus Innovations, Inc., has no preconceived notions regarding the committee's information technology organizational and management studies.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan regarding any biases relating to the committee's studies, Mr. Pope said Nexus Innovations, Inc., would provide consultant manager responsibilities to the committee in a manner that is unbiased and objective.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan, Mr. Pope said Nexus Innovations, Inc., has a good understanding of the legislation directing the committee's studies.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan regarding the consultant manager responsibilities, Mr. Pope said Nexus Innovations, Inc., is experienced and comfortable in working with and monitoring large consulting firms.

In response to a question from Representative Winrich, Mr. Pope said the proposal from Nexus Innovations, Inc., includes a projected cost based on actual hours worked on the project, not to exceed \$30,000, including any necessary travel costs.

Chairman Robinson called on Mr. Jim Gienger, Enterprise Solutions, Inc., Bismarck, who provided comments on Enterprise Solutions, Inc.'s, proposal for providing the committee with assistance in the preparation of the request for proposals, consultant selection, and consultant monitoring for the information technology organizational and management studies. A copy of the proposal is on file in the Legislative Council office. Mr. Gienger highlighted the project approach included in the proposal, including reviewing the draft request for proposals, finalizing the list of potential consultants, providing assistance with questions from potential consultants, reviewing and evaluating proposals, recommending finalists to the committee, and monitoring progress of the selected consultant. He said 2003 House Bill No. 1505 provides for completion of the information technology studies by October 1, 2003; however, Enterprise

Solutions, Inc.'s, proposal includes a project timeline that provides for completion of the studies during the fourth quarter of calendar year 2003.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan regarding the proposed project timeline, Mr. Gienger said a more realistic completion date may be November or December 2003.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan regarding the content of the committee's studies, Mr. Gienger said Enterprise Solutions, Inc., has a good understanding of the items to be reviewed and identified in the committee's studies. He said a few of the items may need to be clarified in the committee's request for proposals for the studies.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan regarding the consultant manager responsibilities, Mr. Gienger said Enterprise Solutions, Inc., is experienced and comfortable in working with and monitoring large consulting firms.

In response to a question from Representative Svedjan, Mr. Gienger said Enterprise Solutions, Inc., has no preconceived notions regarding the committee's studies.

The committee recessed at 11:00 a.m. and reconvened at 4:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND STAFF DIRECTIVES

Chairman Robinson called on all committee members to provide comments regarding the three prospective consultants--Techwise Solutions LLC, Nexus Innovations, Inc., and Enterprise Solutions, Inc.--proposals for providing the committee with consultant manager responsibilities.

Representative Kempenich said all three prospective consultants have positive qualities; however, he favors Techwise Solutions LLC due to its state government and global work experiences.

Senator Christmann said he would support all three prospective consultants; however, he favors Enterprise Solutions, Inc., due to its diverse work experiences.

Representative Svedjan said he rates the prospective consultants as follows: Techwise Solutions LLC, Nexus Innovations, Inc., and Enterprise Solutions, Inc. He said he is troubled by Enterprise Solutions, Inc.'s, apparent willingness to not adhere to the information technology studies October 1, 2003, deadline. He said he felt Techwise Solutions LLC responded positively to questions relating to objectivity and bias, and Techwise Solutions LLC would work well with the selected consultant.

Representative Skarphol said he favors either Techwise Solutions LLC or Nexus Innovations, Inc. He said he likes the "energy" shown by Techwise Solutions LLC, and Nexus Innovations, Inc., attendance at interim Information Technology Committee meetings is a strength.

Representative Glassheim said all three prospective consultants would be capable of performing the consultant manager responsibilities; however, he favors Enterprise Solutions, Inc., due to its willingness to speak honestly about the information technology studies' time schedule.

Senator Seymour said he favors Techwise Solutions LLC due to its emphasis on a team approach to providing the consultant manager responsibilities.

Representative Winrich said all three prospective consultants have positive qualities; however, he favors Enterprise Solutions, Inc., due to its bid price and its proposed project timeline.

Senator Schobinger said he rates the prospective consultants as follows: Enterprise Solutions, Inc., Nexus Innovations, Inc., and Techwise Solutions LLC. He said he was impressed with Enterprise Solutions, Inc.'s, honesty.

Representative Weisz said he rates the prospective consultants as follows: Techwise Solutions LLC, Nexus Innovations, Inc., and Enterprise Solutions, Inc. He said Techwise Solutions LLC seemed to have the best understanding of the direction of the Legislative Assembly.

Senator Wardner said he favors Enterprise Solutions, Inc., due to its diverse work experiences.

Senator Robinson said all three prospective consultants would be capable of performing the consultant manager responsibilities; however, he favors Techwise Solutions LLC due to its energy, broad prior work experiences, and understanding of the committee's studies.

Senator Wardner said he would support Techwise Solutions LLC due to its diverse work experiences and its emphasis on a team approach to providing the consultant manager responsibilities.

Representative Skarphol said he has been impressed with Techwise Solutions LLC's participation in the state's enterprise resource planning system initiative.

It was moved by Senator Wardner, seconded by Representative Kempenich, and carried on a roll call vote that the Information Technology Committee recommend to the chairman of the Legislative Council the selection of Techwise

Solutions LLC as the consultant manager for the committee's information technology organizational and management studies.

Senator Schobinger said he would not be able to support the motion due to Techwise Solutions LLC's comments relating to no payment for services if the committee did not agree with its work.

In response to a question from Representative Glassheim, Chairman Robinson said Mr. Kost will be the primary contact for Techwise Solutions LLC.

Senators Robinson, Christmann, Seymour, and Wardner and Representatives Glassheim, Kempenich, Skarphol, Svedjan, and Weisz voted "aye." Senator Schobinger and Representative Winrich voted "nay."

Mr. Jim W. Smith, Legislative Budget Analyst and Auditor, said the Legislative Council staff will notify Techwise Solutions LLC of the committee's recommendation and will work with the chairman of the Legislative Council and Techwise Solutions LLC on a contract for consultant manager responsibilities.

In response to a question from the legislative budget analyst and auditor, Chairman Robinson said the Legislative Council staff and the consultant manager may receive committee comments regarding the development of the request for proposals for the committee's studies via e-mail.

Chairman Robinson said the committee's next scheduled meeting will be on Tuesday, August 5, 2003, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

The committee adjourned subject to the call of the chair at 4:40 p.m.

Roxanne Woeste
Fiscal Analyst

Jim W. Smith
Legislative Budget Analyst and Auditor

ATTACH:1