

**MINUTES  
of the  
FIFTH MEETING  
of the  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**September 23, 2005  
New Mexico State University Satellite Campus  
Albuquerque**

The fifth meeting of the Information Technology (IT) Oversight Committee for the 2005 interim was called to order by Representative Debbie A. Rodella, chair, at 9:45 a.m. on September 23, 2005 at the New Mexico State University satellite campus in Albuquerque.

**Present**

Rep. Debbie A. Rodella, chair  
Rep. Janice E. Arnold-Jones  
Sen. Vernon D. Asbill  
Sen. Richard C. Martinez  
Rep. Thomas C. Taylor  
Rep. Richard D. Vigil

**Absent**

Sen. John Arthur Smith, vice chair  
Sen. Linda M. Lopez  
Sen. William H. Payne  
Rep. Luciano "Lucky" Varela

**Advisory Members**

Sen. Rod Adair  
Rep. Ted Hobbs

Sen. Mark Boitano  
Sen. Pete Campos  
Rep. Richard P. Cheney  
Sen. Carlos R. Cisneros  
Rep. Justine Fox-Young  
Sen. Phil A. Griego  
Sen. Gerald Ortiz y Pino  
Rep. Jeannette O. Wallace

**Staff**

Amy Chavez  
Kathleen Dexter

**Guests**

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Copies of all handouts and written testimony are in the meeting file.

**Instructional Television (ITV) Network — Status of Distance Learning**

Jeff Harris, principal of Harris and Associates, gave a presentation on the state's current infrastructure for ITV in rural areas. While there are several regional distance learning consortia that connect rural school districts, there is not yet a unified system that allows districts to share resources and courses. The New Mexico Council for Higher Education Computing/Communication Service (CHECS) has opened its network to include public school districts for this purpose, and Mr. Harris stated that 50 percent of the districts would be connected to CHECS-Net by the end of 2006. He noted that there is currently no coordination among districts and there is a shortage of content. On questioning from the committee, he stated that:

- while web-based courses charge tuition and may be taken by any student, ITV courses are free but are bound by school district jurisdictions;
- the internet is a poor platform for online learning because of congestion, slow transmission speeds and lack of content control;
- the director of the Rural Education Division of the Public Education Department has acknowledged a need for someone to coordinate content on CHECS-Net; and
- school districts that have not joined CHECS-Net may not have the money to make necessary technical upgrades, may not see a need to do so or may not be aware that the network exists.

### **Distance Education**

Teresa Rowilson, Ph.D., distance education program coordinator at New Mexico State University (NMSU), and Juanita Mendoza-Hannan, Ph.D., NMSU assistant director of distance education, gave a presentation on NMSU's on-line degree and certification programs. Enrollment in on-line degree programs nearly doubled in the first year after their inception in 2002, and enrollment is projected for the current school year at approximately 2,500 students. The alternative licensure program in special education has been a notable success; since it was first offered three years ago, the number of special education teachers working in the state who are not fully certified has dropped from more than 500 to approximately 50. Further funding is needed to develop a prerequisite course for students who lack basic computer skills, as well as funding to allow supervisors to travel to participating school districts to meet with students. On questioning from the committee, the presenters stated that:

- some NMSU faculty members are concerned that on-line courses could eliminate the need for a campus, and that they should not be available to local students; and
- safeguards are integrated into the on-line courses to reduce the possibility that work submitted by a student is actually done by a third party.

### **University of New Mexico (UNM) High-Speed Network Update**

William Adkins, UNM chief information officer (CIO), John McIver, UNM associate vice president for research and economic development, Barney Maccabe, director of the UNM Center for High-Performance Computing, and Gary Bauerschmidt, UNM associate director of computer and information resources and technology, gave an update on the UNM high-speed network. The network handles data from a variety of systems, including email, point of sale, energy management, telephone, health, financial, student and human resource systems. It is also

linked to other networks within the state such as CHECS-Net and NM GigaPop and to the national high-speed network Lambda Rail. On questioning from the committee, the presenters, who were joined by Charlie Marquez, lobbyist for Qwest, and Bob Tacker, director of information services at New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, stated that:

- one obstacle to a statewide high-speed network is the lack of fiber infrastructure in rural areas of the state; Qwest is currently negotiating with UNM on this matter;
- networks are designed with loops for rerouting data in the event of a disaster;
- the financial and student modules of the Banner system at UNM have been fully implemented with only minor problems reported by users, and the human resources module will be implemented soon;
- NM GigaPop has been extended to Cuba in Sandoval County; and
- CHECS-Net is installing an east-west loop from Farmington to Roswell.

### **Committee Business**

On motion duly made, seconded and adopted without objection, minutes from the July 27 and August 24 meetings were approved as written.

### **Information Technology Updates — Public Education Department (PED) and Higher Education Department (HED)**

Robert Piro, CIO for PED, and Veronica Chavez-Neuman, CIO for HED, gave updates on IT initiatives in their respective departments. PED is currently reviewing six proposals it received for its student teacher accountability reporting system (STARS), and the project has been reviewed by both the Office of the CIO (OCIO) and the IT Commission. Pilot projects are under way for a new PED chart of accounts; a licensure upgrade system is in development; a student identification system has been expanded to include schools run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and a request for proposals will soon be released for a transportation management system. As a new department, HED has just begun to identify IT priorities, including facilitating IT coordination and consolidation among higher education institutions, implementing systems for delivering higher education to communities throughout the state, strengthening campus-based IT infrastructure and applying innovative technology within the department. Higher education IT funding requests for fiscal year 2007 total \$14.8 million and are focused on improving infrastructure. On questioning from the committee, the presenters stated that:

- the initial implementation of STARS will not include the parental interaction module, but this feature is being considered for subsequent versions;
- PED received \$6.6 million for STARS but needs \$40 million to complete the project;
- the PED student identification system does not use social security numbers;
- a unified "K-20" education IT system will eliminate duplication between public schools and higher education and allow for longitudinal student tracking; and
- technical support is lacking in some small school districts because their systems and architecture are different from those in other districts.

### **Department of Public Safety (DPS) — IT Update**

Stephen Tapke, DPS acting CIO, Roxanne Knight, DPS deputy secretary, and Major Randall Bertram, DPS head of special operations, gave a presentation on four IT projects at DPS, including network stabilization, state police district rewiring, computer-aided dispatch (CAD) and automated fingerprint identification. Network stabilization was completed in August, and the other three projects have received OCIO certification. On questioning from the committee, the presenters, who were joined by John Martinez, communications director for the General Services Department (GSD), stated that:

- DPS and the Homeland Security Department are working to facilitate communications across agencies that use different systems, and GSD is upgrading its communications dispatch center;
- there are zones within the state where police cannot maintain radio contact; these zones need to be prioritized before new towers are installed;
- the new dispatch system gives two recommendations for incident response: which car is responsible for the area and which car is closest to the incident;
- San Juan County has its own dispatch system separate from the statewide system based in Santa Fe, and the two systems do not communicate with each other; and
- DPS has received funding for CAD systems in all vehicles, though none have been purchased or installed this year; all vehicles will be equipped by January.

### **Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) — IT Update**

Aurora Sanchez, IT performance auditor, gave an update on IT audits in progress at LFC. She is working with the OCIO to improve IT reporting regarding risks and the use of base IT budgets and has completed project validations on the retirement system in the Public Employees Retirement Association and the E-911 system in the Department of Finance and Administration. All agency IT funding requests — 46 requests totaling approximately \$68 million — are currently under review, and a comprehensive DPS audit will be complete in October, with findings to be presented to the LFC in November. In response to a question posed at a prior committee meeting, Ms. Sanchez reported that open IT positions at the Retiree Health Care Authority have not yet been filled, including that of the IT director. On questioning from the committee, Ms. Sanchez, who was joined by Roy Soto, state CIO, stated that:

- counties are primarily spending their E-911 funding on equipment and do not have a plan for interoperability; the E-911 project has not yet gone through the OCIO and IT Commission certification process; and
- the secretary of state's office conducted a mock election to test its voter registration and electronic management system, and it was successful despite slowdowns in some counties.

### **IT Commission and OCIO Updates**

Carroll Cagle, chair of the IT Commission, and Mr. Soto presented a summary of actions taken to certify the e-Learning, EVitals, EDSS and WIC projects at the Department of Health (DOH); the ITS project at the Department of Transportation; and the tri-agency collaborative employment tax data platform project at the Taxation and Revenue Department. The commission is certifying projects with an emphasis on data sharing and is working to make agencies aware of collaboration opportunities. On questioning from the committee, the presenters, who were joined by Bob Mayer, CIO for DOH, stated that:

- the EDSS system is for disease surveillance and watches only those diseases named by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
- the Homeland Security Department is participating in a national effort to supply surplus IT equipment to agencies and schools affected by Hurricane Katrina;
- no representatives from the e-mercado project have met with the OCIO, nor was this project certified by the IT Commission; and
- the IT Commission needs to be making recommendations prior to funding rather than certifying projects after the fact.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.