

Electronic Voting Subcommittee Meeting Minutes for October 7, 2014

The meeting came to order at 7:37 pm with Dave Bernstein (chair), Beth Klein, Larry Krakauer, Alan Reiss, Don Schuler, and Jonathan Sieber in attendance.

Dave Bernstein was appointed Secretary pro tem,

There was no Initial Public Comment.

Minutes of the 2014-09-18 ELVIS meeting were unanimously approved with two corrections:

1. PowerCom's RF-2 keypad's 1, 2, and 3 buttons can optionally be mapped to submit "yes", "no", and "clear"
2. While PowerCom requires 30 days notice to reserve equipment for Town Meeting, the number of handsets required can be specified closer to the meeting date.

Agenda item: Review technical responses to Wayland's Electronic Voting Services RFP and recommend a supplier

Alan

- Comments on PowerCom
 - their system is better than OTI's system of 3 years ago
 - they don't currently separate handset IDs from voter IDs, but say they can do so
 - not convinced they will provide faster response times
 - not convinced they understand our "roster transfer" speed concerns
 - initially stated that "any keypad can talk to any receiver", but later questioning revealed this not to be true
 - RF-2 handset (identical to what OTI now provides) has not been programmed to continue display the vote (per requirement 5.d); RF-3 handset is claimed to do this.
 - no in-state presence or warehouse
 - declined to offer references
 - glossy brochure contains errors; doesn't inspire confidence regarding attention to detail
- Net: PowerCom is not ahead of OTI, and there is a lot that is unproven.

Don

- based on their track record, OTI can do it
- PowerCom could probably do it, but need a real test to be sure
- Ok with the smaller RF-3 handset; it might be less expensive

Jon

- PowerCom did not follow up by providing a description of their communication protocol, as requested
- PowerCom has more control over their software than OTI because it's not tied to PowerPoint
- Concerned that OTI is not monotonically improving
- OTI is lower risk
- Separation of name and handset ID is not critical so long as voting records are deleted after each vote

Beth

- PowerCom did not respond to our request for references
- Prefers the larger PowerCom handset (RF-2)
- OTI has other customers in Massachusetts

Larry

- Prefers smaller PowerCom handset (RF-3)
- DSI is probably better at roster transfer
- DSI personnel have a communications or language issue: there are spelling and grammatical errors in their documentation, and they could be difficult to work with
- OTI is much lower risk
- The PowerCom demo left lots of open issues

Alan

- A serious security investigation after reviewing OTI's communications protocol and security mechanism led to the requirement to implement an audit

Dave

- OTI is acceptable
- PowerCom is not acceptable, because their system doesn't currently meet the requirements
 - Audit capability not demonstrated (requirement 2d)
 - Ability to expunge records after each vote (requirement 5j)

- There may be additional issues of which we aren't yet aware because Powercom didn't send us the requested technical documentation of their communication protocol
- We should find a way to allow candidate suppliers to "test" their systems in a real Town Meeting

Alan

- PowerCom is not acceptable
- Sees the benefit of developing multiple suppliers, and lies the idea of testing in a real Town Meeting

Larry

- It's just not that hard, but PowerCom didn't do it

Don

- OTI is the safe choice
- Without a demonstration in a real Town Meeting, PowerCom is high risk

Jon

- PowerCom is not yet acceptable
- In the absence of references, PowerCom is too high a risk

Beth

- Prefers OTI

Jon: willing to work with both OTI and PowerCom to help them improve

Larry

- OTI is acceptable
- PowerCom is not acceptable

Motion "In its current state, as demonstrated at our last meeting, PowerCom is not acceptable. OTI is acceptable" passed unanimously.

Discussion of the need to increase the number of viable Electronic Voting System suppliers

- Continue to support other towns in their adoption of Electronic Voting for Town Meeting
- Can Wayland Town Meeting be used as a “lab”?
- Actively engage with other vendors
- Invite the Town Administrator to brainstorm with us at next ELVIS meeting in ~4 weeks

There was no Final Public Comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 pm.