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DEPARTMENT OF
DATA MANAGEMENT

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June 12, 1990

Budget and Finance Committee
Sacramento, California 95814

Honorable Members in Session:

Subject: Report Back on Data Management
Master Plan/Training and Microcomputer
Support Issues

SUMMARY

During the Data Management Automation Master Plan presentation, automation use training was presented as an area of concern for the City. Feedback through interviews for the Master Plan elevated a sensitivity to the exponential growth of quality training needs for City staff. Training, however, is one component of a larger issue in the City - that of microcomputer use and support which is discussed in this report.

Committeemembers Ferris and Robey had questions and opinions as to responsibilities for training and sources of classes which also will be addressed in this report.

BACKGROUND

As the City's accelerating base of microcomputers has grown from 68 in 1985 to over 635 in 1990, demands are exceeding current levels of service:

- There is not enough training offered
- Classes need to be more tailored.
- There is not enough equipment in the City's training facility

- The City training facility is too small
- There is a wide variety of microcomputers installed in the City causing support issues (approximately 45)
- There is different word processing, spreadsheet and database software used by various Departments
- A "hands on" demonstration prior to purchase of software and hardware is needed
- Basic usage questions, many due to inadequate training, are fielded by Data Management's 4.75 Departmental Analysts.
- Use of microcomputers goes beyond basic word processing and is growing more complex.
- Networking of microcomputers is requiring more support and increased skills.

Since July 1987 the City has utilized an outside MBE training service for word processing, spreadsheet and other microcomputer software at City facilities. The classes cost approximately \$20 and are at least one-fourth the cost of Adult Education and other local class offerings.

As microcomputer users have grown more sophisticated and comfortable with the technology, they have become more vocal on their expectations versus services delivered. Complaints on a training instructor's abilities, teaching materials and lack of equipment are being received on the current class arrangements. Because Data Management is responsible for coordination and occasional provision of personalized automation training, the inadequacies of the training in the City were defined so that long term solutions for a maximized return on investment might be achieved. The initial investment in our microcomputer "solution" may turn out to include a value added fee for training, but the benefits of a skilled productive workforce will far outweigh the cost.

In 1989 the City's MBE vendor for microcomputers and related software declared bankruptcy and closed the business leaving the City with invalid warranties on equipment, non-functioning equipment and incomplete orders. Purchasing workload due to this disruption of service has been laborious requiring obtaining a

bid on each computer, printer, etc.. Because of a desire to simplify the process of acquiring microcomputers yet maintain continuity and City oriented services, over the last year Data Management has been grappling with a "one stop shopping" concept to accommodate the growth and needs of automation. By no means is Data Management attempting to usurp responsibilities from the Personnel Department, by providing a solution for the automation training needs. At the point that Personnel is ready to take on all training needs we will assist in that effort.

ANALYSIS

During 1989-90 Data Management defined a framework for accommodating the microcomputer revolution with minimum growth in staff:

- Standardize on hardware and software
- Utilizing a "one stop shopping" concept, obtain an arrangement with a vendor that could:
 1. Sell the City industry standard hardware and software
 2. Provide training for those purchased items
 3. Provide warranty and repair services for purchases
 4. Provide a hot line service for the basic questions
 5. Provide needed service stability

Because the State of California has such an arrangement with a local vendor, the City formally approached the State in March regarding the utilization of those services. The State has declined such an arrangement due to it's interpretation of contract language with the vendor.

Although outside, varied adult education classes are not part of a "one stop" solution, several sources were checked. Software release incompatibility (i.e., we use Wordperfect 5.1 Jan Juan School District teaches 4.1), class size and selection limitations, lack of convenience in location and hours are all drawbacks which do not benefit our concepts of tailoring, standardization, continuity and applicability. Thus, in looking for a bundled approach, Data Management and Purchasing are

recommending that the City adopt an integrated and value added philosophy and that the City seek bids for a "one stop" vendor who can provide us microcomputers, related equipment, software, technical support and training.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

There are no policy considerations at this time.

MBE/WBE EFFORTS

MBE/WBE bids and proposals will be encouraged.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Data Management Department recommends going out with a Request for Proposal for "bundled", one-stop shopping, training services, hot line software support and purchases of standard microcomputers in the City.

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara C. Weaver
Director, Data Management

Recommendation Approved:



Jack R. Crist
Deputy City Manager

Contact Person to
Answer Questions:

June 19, 1990

Barbara Weaver