

## TRANSPARENCY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 16, 2010

Attendance: Senator Wayne Niederhauser, Representative Ken Sumsion, John Reidhead, John Nixon, Ken Peterson for (Stephen Fletcher), Troy Caserta for (Val Peterson) Scott Smith (via phone), Randy Merrill (absent/excused), Jonathan Ball (absent/excused), Ken Montague (absent/excused)

1. Welcome: John welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. Review of January 19, 2010 Meeting Minutes:

There was a delay in reviewing the minutes until there was a full quorum for a vote.

(Later during the meeting, once a quorum was present, there was a motion to approve the minutes, it was seconded and passed unanimously.)

3. Update on Website Status

- a) Usage statistics. Michael Rice, Utah Interactive.

Michael Rice reported on the last ten months. He said there have been around 18,000 visitors to the site and there has been a 37% bounce rate. Those are the amount of people who came to the site and immediately left. Michael said we have had about 11,000 people who have explored the website and the time that people spend on the website has been increasing. The average time people spend on the site is eight minutes. The time was higher two months ago. The daily visits for weekdays over the last six weeks average fifty visits per day. Friday the visits drop off and on the weekends there are fewer visits a day.

Michael showed a graph of where the users to the site were coming from. During the last six weeks about 20% of the users were from within the state's network. The remaining 81% were from other networks like Quest, Comcast, UVN, etc.

Michael stated that there have been eleven Excel downloads during the last 3 1/2 months. And the average size of the download is 3,000 records.

Senator Niederhauser commented that some of the Appropriations Sub-Committee Chairs were using the Transparency Website during their appropriations meetings. They commented that it was a great tool for them.

- b) Website inquiries.

Brenda reported that there had been one email since the last meeting and they were asking about grants.

4. Reports on Progress & Issues from Participating Entity Groups:

John stated that two of the participating entity groups were not present at the meeting. They are School Districts, Dr. Randy Merrill and Transit Districts, Ken Montague.

Troy Caserta reported on Higher Ed and their progress. He said that there had not been a lot of changes since the last meeting and that all of Higher Ed. was progressing. He will be contacting UCAT about their progress, but other than that all the rest of Higher Ed. are on course to be in compliance and will be ready by the May deadline.

Troy stated that there was the exception for CEU at the last meeting. During the 4 month transition merging with USU, they are closer than they had planned and will comply with their deadline.

Scott Smith from Charter Schools explained some of the difficulties that charter schools were having converting documents from an Excel spreadsheet or Quick Books to what is required. Mr. Smith reiterated that all the charter schools want to comply and none of them want to be exempt. He said they feel they are looking at a week or longer worth of work to convert their files.

Senator Niederhauser commented that he did work with two charter schools and one management company in Davis County. He said Darrell Swensen has worked with these charter schools and the management organization. They were working off their spreadsheets and were going to add some columns. Senator Niederhauser made some inquiries on the time it would take a typical charter school to convert their files. He said that it would take around 18 hours a year. He said Gavin Hutchinson said it would take 2 to 2 1/2 hrs per quarter to update their files.

Brenda Lee said that Darrell was meeting with Gavin Hutchinson from the management company to discuss the new table look-up that automatically populates the data. They feel this new procedure will streamline the effort.

Darrell Swensen reported that John Hagen from the Renaissance Academy in Lehi, UT has taken the template and developed a look-up feature in Excel. Where they originally had to manually populate and put in data, there is a way to map the information and it would automatically go to the part of the table that was already set up and then it would populate the information. Darrell extended it and automated the entire spreadsheet, so when the data is copied in and the look-up feature has been set up, then it populates the entire spreadsheet. He said there is a one time set-up, once the set up is completed it would take only a few minutes to enter the data.

Darrell said that he will meet with Gavin Hutchinson and show him this feature. He said that it has been fast to get the spreadsheet and then get a file ready to upload at the schools he has met with.

Scott Smith asked to have a summary of the meetings or to be included in the emails for all the charter schools.

Brenda Lee said that she would inform Mr. Smith of the meetings.

John Reidhead stated that Darrell had made a lot of progress in Quickbooks and for Peachtree users in charter schools.

Scott Smith said that his concern is the small schools that don't have the staff to get the files ready or upload them. He is appreciative of the efforts to make the process easier for everyone to comply.

Brenda reiterated that those schools under the 1 million dollar budget by rule do not have to comply this year.

Scott Smith stated that they are trying to have all the schools comply this year. They would like all Charter Schools set-up, and set at the same standard if possible.

5. Update from Finance on Outreach to 2010 Participating Entities.

a) Summary Status

Brenda Lee showed a spreadsheet with statistics that detailed each entity and where they are at in the process of being ready to go live in May.

School Districts:

Brenda reported that there are 41 school districts and they have been in contact with all 41 of them and know what their plans are. Most of them plan on using the State's website. There are 2 districts that would like to use their own website.

Brenda said that there are 31 files submitted from school districts, the next step is to get them loaded on the test website and look at them online.

#### Charter Schools:

Brenda reported that 76 charter schools have been in contact with Finance to let them know what their plans are. Four schools or 6% want to use their own website, 74% want to use our website. Of those 74%, 78% are working on the file and they have received 32% of the files to review. The next step will be to get them on the test website and look at them online too.

#### Higher Ed.:

Brenda said Higher Ed. is doing well on its own. Troy Caserta is helping with Higher Ed. and they have had a few files on the test site. She would like more test files loaded to the test website within the next few weeks so they can look at it online.

Troy Caserta reported that all the schools were resubmitting and he thought that most all of the schools would be ready by the May deadline. He said he would follow up with UCAT to have them put their files online. Some of them have the same issues as Charter Schools.

Darrell Swensen said that he has met with Mountainland, Southwest, Davis, Ogden, and Weber ACT's. He said that Bridgerland may have a problem with their old computer technology. They are not sure they can get data off of their system into a file. He said that Uintah Basin ATC uses the State Office of Education FIS system which the programming has already been done.

Troy would like Higher Ed. to upload early, but it will be up to the schools individually if they submit early.

Brenda Lee would like a test file as soon as possible from all the schools so they can look at them and make sure they can be loaded and that there are not any technical issues.

Troy said that 6 of the 9 schools are ready and one has an exemption, CEU, which will be rolled onto Utah State University.

John Reidhead said that Bridgerland would have to submit something to the Board to evaluate it. They may have to have a special exemption because their system is so outdated.

Representative Sumsion asked what their system was.

Darrell stated that their system was an AS400 IBM mini computer. Darrell suggested they could use a third party software tool that they can put on to their system that would give them the ability to get the information into an Excel format. From there they would be able to get the information on the website.

#### Transit Districts:

Brenda reported that there are two transit districts and UTA is already on the test website and the file looks great. They have met with Cache Valley and they are working on theirs. They hope to see a test file soon.

Brenda and Darrell met with them and showed them how quickly it could be done. They are willing to work with them about their concerns.

#### b) Entities to use own website

Brenda reported that North Summit School District made a proposal for acceptance in using their website, rather than the State's website. Brenda said they would like to include on their website an F16 report, she showed this report to the Board and said it looked like summary data at a high level, but it did not meet the criteria that is required for the website. Another report they wanted to include on their website is a check journal. The report does not show all of their expenditures. It does show vendor names and numbers, account numbers and descriptions. On the check journal it shows payments, detail, check numbers, and dates. She said it could be searched in the PDF search. Brenda said that there is some good information in

their proposal, but it is not in the format they are used to seeing on the State's website. On the salary page it shows most of the required information. They show name, gender, title, hourly rate, and benefits. This would be a spreadsheet, and you could search it with Excel.

Darrell Swensen explained that it looked similar to the Great Plains software account reports. Tooele and Davis have as well. If they have the ability export into Excel, he would be able to help them with an automated spreadsheet that could be loaded to the state's website.

Brenda said they would try and meet with them and get them to use the State's website.

Representative Sumsion asked about the salary reporting dates of schools and the other entities

Brenda said that schools are on the school year calendar which is the same fiscal year that payroll reporting is done for the state.

Brenda asked for the Board's direction on the matter of North Summit School District using their own website.

John Reidhead would like guidance from the Board on what the expectation would be for these schools who want to use their own website. Will they need to have the basic minimum that would be expected if they were on the state website? As we evaluate these sites and bring them back to the Board, what are the expectations?

Senator Niederhauser feels that what Finance has done to make this process easier for some of the entities, it is more economical for them to use the state's site. He would encourage the Board member that deals with these school districts to get with them and have them look at the site. He said there is no way they can duplicate what has been done on the state website.

Brenda stated that Provo School District has a lot of good information. They have looked at their website and they are not sure if they will use their own or the State's site.

Brenda showed Provo's website, they have their summary report, their annual budget and their CAFR.

Scott Smith asked about the amount of time and expense they estimate it would take these entities to get ready and upload to the State's system.

Darrell said that most school districts have a database computer system and it would require a programmer to develop an extraction program to set up the files. Once they are set up, there is very little maintenance to keep their system up to date. They would be able to run their reports every few months and feed them into the system.

Darrell feels that a programmer would be able to accomplish this in a month or two. Depending on their resources and the amount of time the programmer has to commit to the project. He said that when he met with Davis and Weber and their IT staff, they felt it would be cost effective to use the State's website because of the ongoing costs of the maintenance of a website. They felt the time on the front end would be better than the cost of maintaining their own site.

Brenda Lee said that Provo feels like they have already been doing this, and want to know if they can use what they have.

Scott Smith wanted to know if most the districts used a similar kind of accounting or programming system.

Darrell stated that 25 of the districts use the State Office of Educations FIS financial system and the programmers have already done the extraction.

Scott Smith asked of the 15 districts left, do they use a similar program so they might be able to work together and use one programmer to do the work.

Darrell said that most of the 15 districts that are left have different programs.

Scott Smith feels that everyone should be on the State's website, where all the information is at one location.

John Reidhead said that would be a great goal, but the law allows them to use their own site if they meet the standards the Board requires. The State and Higher Ed. are required to use the State's site.

John feels that we do need to encourage all the entities to see the value of the State's site and participate with the entities that are using it. Having all the information in one location would be the best for the users.

John asked if they had the general guidance from the Board to work with all of the entities, to have them see the value it would be for them to use the State's website.

John said that it is harder for the large entities to get their files ready. And if they have private data it takes extra time to prepare that data to be put on the website.

Senator Niederhauser stated that when the option was given for entities to use their own website, they weren't sure how things were going to turn out with the State's website. But, thanks to the Division of Finance and Utah Interactive they have done a tremendous job with the State's site. If an entity uses their own website they will be closely monitored to make sure they provide the information that the taxpayers can get on the Transparency Website. And if they do not meet those requirements, there may be further legislation in the future that would require that.

The Senator feels that those entities that choose to use their own website need to look at what it will cost and what they can provide versus what can be done through the state website. They need to provide the same type of transparency that is provided on the State's transparency website.

John feels that they have been able to get some solutions for the smaller entities to make it easier for them to put their data on the State's site. John appreciates Darrell and his solutions to help the smaller entities.

Brenda Lee thanked Senator Niederhauser for his work on HB166, the Education Mandates Bill.

## 6. Proposed Website Modifications

Utah Interactive Show of Proposed Website Modifications:

Michael Rice showed a picture of the current view of the website. He said if you wanted to switch from an organization view to a category view, you would click in the drop down box and select it and the panel would change. The new version would use tabs instead of a drop down box. The filter names would be stated on the tabs. The other change they're proposing is when you click on the name search; it would automatically show the names available in lists of 100. Limiting the search results to lists of 100 would greatly speed up the response time.

John said that the Division of Finance suggested the 100 names with the dollar amount at one time, instead of a longer list of vendors without the dollar amount. They felt if someone was searching, they would want to see what each vendor was being paid by a particular entity.

John made a motion to the Board to approve these changes that Finance and Utah Interactive would like to get in place.

Representative Sumsion seconded the motion.

The modifications were voted on by the Board and passed unanimously.

Brenda said that changes are part of the new data protection process that we are going to have in place. Where you can temporarily protect a vendor when they need to be and then unprotect them. Once these go into production they will have to reload all the data. This will have to be done before the new entities come on board. They are trying to automate more of the protection features.

7. Other Issues

Senator Niederhauser reported that there was a group from Slovakia that came looking for ways their country could be more transparent. Their citizens and government would like to see less corruption and fraud in their country.

John said they were impressed with our website.

Brenda said that they felt they may catch up in 20 years.

8. Public Comment

There were not any comments from the public.

9. Discuss next Board Meeting Date

Next Meeting: April 13, 2010

There was a motion to adjourn. It passed unanimously.