The Telephone System

BACKGROUND AND CURRENT STATUS
Purpose

• Following up on Trustee Barsema’s request for background on telephony

• Briefing to include
  • Background
  • Current state
  • Upcoming decisions
Background

• Phone system has had issues

• 2013 – lightning strike caused multi-day total loss of dial tone

• 2016 – NIU had four telephone outages between April and September
  • Primarily power related
  • Now in a “permanent” state of leasing outside power conditioning equipment

• Voice mail manufacturer is out of business.

• We have an expensive contract for maintenance and support ($230k/yr).
Current State

• Can’t buy phone systems like this anymore.
• No funds set aside to pay for refresh equipment, phones, or cabling.
• 6600 phones in 2015.
• 4400 phones in 2017.

• Phones also include:
  • elevator phones, blue light phones, various alarm lines
  • people with multiple offices, conference rooms, work spaces, residential spaces
Current State

• Features in our current system are limited for those who are in call centers
  • Admissions
  • Foundation
  • CGS
  • Service Desk
  • Benefits
  • Collections

• These groups need scheduling, analytics, screen pops, operator saver, work from home capability, and much more.
Current State

- IT Steering Committee looked at an early business case to replace SL100.
- Rejected due to cost circa 2015.
- DoIT was encouraged to find a way to upgrade for less.

- DoIT spent a year on planning and architecture then a year on an RFP
- RFP responses scored
- In technical demos with 7 vendors selling 4 major equipment brands
SIP Trunking
A Single Pipe to the Cloud

- Single IP link for voice/data
- Optimize use of WAN access by consolidating voice and data services
- Reduce PSTN interfaces for long-distance and local access
- Assign local telephone numbers to any ‘virtual location,’ independent of physical location
- Prepares for future SIP solutions
How it Works

Your Office IP Handsets connected via a Router

Private Network Ensures Call Quality

Cloud Hosted PBX Platform mirrored across Multiple Secure Data Centres

External Users connected via IP Handsets or Softphone Apps

Manage Call Flows, Users & Features easily Online

Calls delivered over PSTN network
Current State

• Yes, we expect to have visual voicemail.
• No, we don’t need to buy all VOIP phones. We can keep analog phones.
• Yes, we can go to wireless (WiFi) phones.
• Yes, we can have soft phones.
• No, we don’t have to change our phone numbers.
Upcoming Decisions

- Are any solutions feasible for NIU?
- Are the costs feasible?
- How many phones can NIU afford?
- How many IP phones should we buy?
- Should we only upgrade for “heavy” phone users?

- Decision path would include shared governance, IT Steering, and Cabinet and then ultimately a choice for the BOT to make in November/December.