

Joint Legislative Committee on Technology and Cybersecurity

Minutes of Meeting
2021 Interim
March 2, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Barry Ivey, interim chairman of the Joint Legislative Committee on Technology and Cybersecurity, called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. in House Committee Room 3, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

HOUSE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Barry Ivey, chairman
Representative Daryl Deshotel
Representative Kyle Green
Representative Richard Nelson
Representative Matthew Willard

HOUSE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

SENATE MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Mike Reese, vice chairman
Senator Stewart Cathey
Senator Barry Milligan
Senator Ed Price
Senator Gary Smith

SENATE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

HOUSE STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amy Pirtle, committee attorney
Zachary Gonzalez, central staff attorney
Robert Singletary, division director
Jennifer Watson, committee administrative
assistant

SENATE STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Monique Appeaning, committee legislative
fiscal analyst

**ADDITIONAL HOUSE ATTENDEES
PRESENT:**

Danny Leming, sergeant at arms
Faye Talbot, sergeant at arms

**ADDITIONAL SENATE ATTENDEES
PRESENT:**

Fate Mitchell, sergeant at arms

III. INTRODUCTIONS OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

At the request of Representative Ivey, committee members and staff introduced themselves.

IV. DISCUSSION OF ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Election of chairman and vice chairman

Senator Smith offered a motion to elect Representative Ivey as chairman. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Deshotel, Ivey, Nelson, and Willard, and Senators Cathey, Milligan, Price, Reese, and Smith voted yea.

Senator Price offered a motion to elect Senator Reese as vice chairman. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Ivey, Deshotel, Nelson, and Willard, and Senators Cathey, Milligan, Price, Reese, and Smith voted yea.

B. Consideration and adoption of committee rules

Senator Smith offered a motion to adopt the rules in accordance with Act No. 301 of the 2020 Regular Session that were prepared by staff. The rules, Exhibit A, are included in the committee records. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Ivey, Deshotel, Nelson, and Willard, and Senators Cathey, Milligan, Price, Reese, and Smith voted yea.

C. Discussion of committee's role

Representative Ivey referred to the legal authority of the committee outlined in a document labeled Exhibit B, which is included in committee records.

Representative Ivey said legislation was passed in regard to the Joint Legislative Committee on Technology and Cybersecurity. Act No. 301 of the 2020 Regular Session pertained to the duties and functions of the committee. House Concurrent Resolution No. 121 of the 2017 Regular Session created a process whereby alternative procurement methodologies could be approved. The committee may vet requests of the Department of Administration of a technical nature and send a report to the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget for final authorization.

D. Discussion of vision for committee

Representative Ivey stated that there was an absence of a long-term strategic vision for technology in Louisiana because it was hard to provide for continuity beyond term limits. He said technology affected every agency and department in government. A study commission was created by Representative Ivey years ago to provide for a technology audit. He stated that the Joint Legislative Committee on Technology and Cybersecurity can begin from existing efforts.

V. PRESENTATION BY THE OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (OTS)

Richard Howze, chief information officer, OTS, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA, 70802, (225) 342-0807, shared the mission, structure, accomplishments, and goals of OTS.

A. General overview of the roles and responsibilities of OTS

Neal Underwood, deputy chief information officer, OTS, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA, 70802, (225) 342-7105, presented the slideshow "OTS Overview", labeled Exhibit C, which is included in the committee records.

Mr. Underwood described the mission of OTS and addressed its funding and budget. He said OTS establishes purchase contracts, uses metered compliance, and uses a cost allocation model. OTS was created by House Concurrent Resolution No. 121 of the 2017 Regular Session. Mr. Underwood discussed state agencies that are under their scope of support and mentioned those not within the purview of OTS.

Representative Ivey asked Mr. Underwood to clarify his explanation of cost or efficiencies gained by the OTS. Mr. Underwood replied that OTS focused on actual technology costs, such as using electronic signatures versus wet-ink signatures for approvals.

Mr. Underwood described several OTS units including Agency Relationship Management, the customer service wing, and Applications and Data Management which manages outdated legacy technology that will be transitioned to cloud-based technology.

Senator Reese asked if, in the case of Workforce Commission, the decisions to modernize were board-driven or within the agency itself. Mr. Underwood replied that modernization for Workforce Commission began before OTS was created. Workforce Commission chose to use an outsource-hosted model. A private commercial information technology (IT) provider was built that supports the application. OTS provides support services so the company can gain access and provide security audits.

Mr. Underwood described the modern enterprise resource planning update for LaGov, the state's webhost platform. He said most state agencies should be on LaGov as it is scheduled to go live July 1, 2021. A component of the system is to enhance human resource performance and goals.

Representative Deshotel asked if OTS was migrating state agencies to Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI). Mr. Underwood replied OTS doesn't have a current initiative to move to VDI. Their service model operates more from an invoicing and billing perspective. Periodically, OTS runs simulations on VDI to review the cost-benefit perspective. OTS didn't inherit a single network but a patchwork

of fifty networks stitched together. Representative Deshotel said he believed there was an opportunity to utilize these services.

Senator Milligan asked how much was spent on layering in new hardware and if it was done on an annual basis or any kind of schedule. Mr. Underwood replied yes, the hardware was layered in. The general refresh cycle on a desktop is four years. The data center refreshes their equipment every five years. Doing so also matches the financial perspective. Federal compliance does not allow OTS to charge for capital expenditures. Senator Milligan asked what the cost was. Mr. Underwood said approximately \$10 million. Senator Milligan asked if this was done on a bid process. Mr. Underwood replied that bids were made for specific pieces or equipment, and OTS vetted multistate consortia contracts.

Senator Milligan stated that in 2021, Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards issued Proclamation 19 JBE due to a cyber attack on education. He ordered all state agencies or subagencies to take precautions to protect all hardware and software. Vendors that bid on hardware must be National Defense Authorization Act compliant under NDA 201-Section 889, not just the lowest bidder.

Mr. Underwood stated that the Data Center Operations Unit worked to provide that servers can run on an internal battery if the generator and electricity fail. The unit hosts over 40,000 email accounts and manages over 60,000 user accounts.

Mr. Underwood reviewed the End-User Computing Unit. He said that, in the past, single standalone systems supposed that in the event of failure, if the mainframe goes down, the disaster recovery plan would be to buy a new one and bring the system up from that. This project would take one to two months. The End User Computing Unit handled 14,100 calls a month and provided 24 / 7 support for agencies like state police and the Department of Corrections. Ten thousand OTS tickets were received monthly by the service desk and 75% of those calls were first-call resolved. There are 33,560 managed Windows devices and 4,160 managed network printers.

Mr. Underwood said the Production Support Services Unit of OTS included mail tracking. The unit provided customers direct postage discounts of up to 30% per letter, and parcel locker systems have reduced daily mail delivery points in Capital Park by more than 95%.

Mr. Underwood said the Project and Portfolio Management Unit assisted state agencies in project management areas like software-defined networking in a wide area network. The unit provided strategy, planning, and administration to projects and formulated near- and long-range strategies.

Mr. Underwood introduced the information security program, which was created by OTS. The program is responsible for information security policies, managing firewalls and antivirus programs, and ensuring agencies and entities are in federal compliance.

Senator Smith asked about internet accessibility in rural parishes. Mr. Underwood replied that connectivity was a challenge for rural motor vehicle offices and registrars of voters. OTS had a workable connection. OTS was doing its best with the technology and infrastructure that exists. Senator Smith asked what kind of efficiency and savings would be possible if OTS took over entities that were out of OTS's scope. Mr. Underwood answered most of them preferred IT services that answered directly to them. It was a business decision more than a model-based decision.

Representative Deshotel said OTS stated that they dealt with large vendors who did not mind sending equipment back to China, but that was incorrect. Dell, Lenovo, and HP, for example, took issue with this matter. He asked who OTS used for procedure services in rural areas. Mr. Underwood said OTS had statewide contracts for different categories of services that were regionally based. OTS had multiple regions and multiple contracts per region. If no one was available, the next provision of service was used. Sometimes OTS would put out a solicitation for services or providers. Representative Deshotel asked if that was an internal policy or a state procurement issue. He asked how legislators could help make the best services available in an area. Mr. Underwood replied it was difficult because of the state procurement model. Representative Deshotel asked what incentives OTS had to provide cheaper services. Mr. Underwood replied that his office answered to the governor's administration, which urged state dollar and customer efficiency. Representative Deshotel said OTS drove a large percentage of increase of expenditures for professional services in Louisiana. Mr. Underwood replied that OTS had more than 800 staff members, most of whom were operational.

Representative Ivey stated that he wanted to study the modernization of IT procurement law and how to enhance connectivity in rural areas.

Senator Cathey asked if the 800 employees were state employees. Mr. Underwood answered yes. Senator Cathey asked if privatizing and contracting outside the department had been researched. Mr. Underwood said IT studied this. Texas, Georgia, and Virginia were privatized. OTS determined this was not the best route because it didn't gain cost savings. Senator Cathey asked if OTS worked with the office of the secretary of state. Mr. Underwood replied that they did, but in a very limited manner. OTS did not touch voting machines. OTS helped with network connectivity.

B. General overview of the state of state information technology

See Section VI.

VI. DISCUSSION ON CYBERSECURITY

Representative Nelson offered a motion to enter executive session. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 7 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Ivey, Deshotel, Green, Nelson, and Willard and Senators Cathey and Smith voted yea.

Cybersecurity and a general overview of the state of state information technology were discussed in executive session in accordance with R.S. 42:18(A)(4) at 11:47 a.m.

The committee adjourned executive session at 12:43 p.m.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

The item below was discussed prior to **VI. DISCUSSION ON CYBERSECURITY**.

A. Consideration of meeting schedule

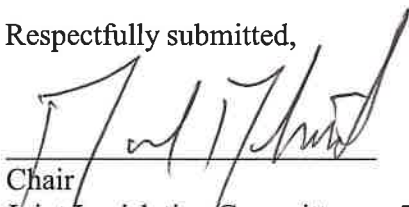
No action was taken on the monthly meeting schedule.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Deshotel offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 6 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Ivey, Deshotel, Green, and Nelson and Senators Cathey and Smith voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Chair
Joint Legislative Committee on Technology and Cybersecurity

Date approved: 02-25-25

The committee has acknowledged on 02-25-25, that these minutes were prepared in accordance with the rules of the House of Representatives.