

STATE BOARD OF LAND COMMISSIONERS

October 17, 2023

Regular Agenda

Subject

IT Modernization

Question Presented

Shall the Land Board approve the transfer of Department IT resources to the Office of Information Technology Services?

Background

The Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) was created in 2018 to increase efficiency in IT services across state agencies, enabling agencies to focus on their core missions rather than being IT providers. ITS provides dedicated IT services and state-of-the-art cybersecurity operations to promote consistent agency security. Currently, ITS is responsible for the IT support of 48 agencies in Idaho and over 8,500 users; services include but are not limited to Security Management, Networking, Telecommunications, Application, and Website hosting.

The Idaho Department of Lands (Department) has an IT staff of 16 full-time positions providing services including help desk, infrastructure management and support, and application development. The Department is a potential candidate for modernization in the 2025 fiscal year.

Discussion

The Department currently has two technical support staff to serve all of its 14 field offices throughout the state. Modernization will allow the Department to leverage ITS's existing field services, improving the speed of service.

Department infrastructure is becoming obsolete, and the Department has had trouble recruiting additional staff in this area. Currently, the Department has three infrastructure engineers to take care of over 125 servers (of which 73 need to be replaced), network equipment at each area office, VOIP phones, and Starlink for connectivity. ITS modernization will allow the Department to utilize the skilled staff of ITS to help remediate current issues, provide faster resolution of issues and lower the risk that the Department has within its environment.

As cybersecurity risks continue to become more prevalent, the Department has only one cybersecurity staff member ensuring the security of the Department's data and services. ITS has a much more robust toolset and the proper staffing to protect the State's data.

Modernization will allow the Department to benefit from the 24-hour monitoring that ITS has in place.

The Department's application development team provides better service and functionality than what ITS currently offers. ITS has acknowledged this and has assured the Department that its application development team will stay dedicated to the agency's needs until the development has been completed. ITS has also agreed for at least the first 12 months after modernization that the Department's application development team will stay onsite to ensure the business has access to the staff while application development continues.

Recommendation

Approve the transfer of Department IT resources to ITS in fiscal year 2025, with the following conditions:

- The Department and ITS enter into an agreement that provides certainty regarding support for Department IT needs.
- Service level agreements are adequate for support of special needs, such as during fire season.
- The Department's application development team will remain assigned to the existing project backlog for the next three years or until completed, if beyond three years.
- The Department will continue to receive a similar level of application development support beyond the three-year term.

Board Action