



AGENDA ITEM ANALYSIS

Project/Issue Name: 24-R-31 A Resolution of the City Council Authorizing the City Administrator to Negotiate and Execute an Agreement with Cherry Bekaert, LLP for the Provision of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Consulting Services as Part of the City's Initiative Known as Project Genesis.

Submitted By: Bob Ford | Finance Director

Date: July 16, 2024

Issue Statement

The City currently utilizes Tyler Technologies ("Tyler") as the core software platform of our ERP system. However, the City of Republic needs to redesign/restructure its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to an open API, user friendly, data rich, fully integrated software platform. Given the magnitude of this effort, hereafter referred to as Project Genesis, staff is recommending the City engage a consultant experienced in evaluating, designing, and implementing ERP systems to shepherd Project Genesis to completion.

1. To that end, the City prepared an ERP Consulting RFP to search for a team of seasoned professionals with a strong background in ERP initiatives, specifically skilled in comprehensive project management, process analysis, process improvement, needs identification, system access, security measures, requirement definition, RFP drafting, software selection guidance, contract negotiation, and implementation support.
2. The City received seventeen responses to our RFP, with pricing ranging from \$210K to \$2.1 million. From that list of seventeen, staff narrowed the list to four finalists,
3. Then, the team consisting of Bob Ford (Finance Director), Chris Crosby (IT Director), Josh Jones (Data Analytics) and Jake Jones (Finance Officer) interviewed the four finalists and have selected Cherry Bekaert, LLP as their ERP Consultant recommendation.

Discussion and/or Analysis

Today, Tyler performs three key functions for the City of Republic:

1. Payroll, with supporting employee database.
2. Financial management, including General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and Fixed Assets; and
3. Utility Billing, the billing engine for Water/Wastewater bills, represents approximately 25% of the City's total revenue.

Ancillary software tools that support the City on a day-to-day basis, which also need to integrate with our ERP include:

1. Questica, the City's Budget/Forecasting tool deployed in 2023.
2. NEOGov, Employee Navigator and Humanities are third party software tools that need to integrate into the Human Resources Information System.



3. Itron – meter data collection & reading, which needs to integrate into the Utility Billing module.

As discussed during the Project Genesis Workshop on June 18th, Tyler Software “does not play well with others” and is not an open platform that allows for automatic linking of data from third party applications to Tyler.

1. This became very apparent as we tried to link Questica to Tyler. While possible, it is not a real time link, is clunky and cumbersome, and requires a manual process to import or export data.
2. Additionally, the City has other software tools that have similar integration problems, such as Humanities that provides Time & Attendance data to the Payroll module for Parks & Recreation. Once again, significant manual interface is required to import the Humanities Time & Attendance data into Tyler’s Payroll Module.
3. Finally, reporting is marginal at best and extracting data to build meaningful KPIs, financial statements and other data analytics is limited.

ERP Consultant

All software systems deployed by the City will need review, including but not limited to HRIS/Payroll, Financial & Accounting Management, Utilities Billing and Meter Data Collection. Project Genesis will be divided into the following phases, and the consultant we engage will have demonstrated expertise in each:

1. Phase I – ERP Needs Assessment, Process Improvement & Change Management.
2. Phase II – Request for Proposal (RFP) Development Assistance and Selection Assistance.
3. Phase III – Implementation Project Management Services.

Phase I – ERP Needs Assessment. Process Improvements & Change Management.

The main objective of this phase is to determine the functional requirements to enhance operations, which will serve as input for the ERP system's RFP. Engaging different departments is vital to understanding existing processes, pinpointing improvements, and capturing detailed needs with an emphasis on industry-leading practices. Deliverables will include a detailed requirements document, process improvement suggestions, change management, a list of potential ERP systems, a cost estimate for the ideal ERP, and a proposed project outline and timeline. All expected commitments from the staff should be thoroughly detailed. Tasks include:

- **Analysis of Current Systems:** Review present ERP usage within various departments and explore how modern ERP systems can enhance operations.
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** Engage with personnel from departments such as Finance, Human Resources, IT, Police, Fire, Community Development, Social Services, Parks and Recreation, and others.
- **Process Examination:** Assess financial processes like general accounting, payroll, HR, and other essential operations. Highlight areas where modern ERP can provide improvements.
- **Integration Suggestions:** Propose integration with other enterprise tools to improve financial data management.
- **ERP Specification:** Draft detailed specifications for the future ERP system that aligns with the agency’s needs, promoting inter-departmental collaboration and efficient information exchange.
- **Product Assessment:** Offer reviews and recommendations on suitable products and modules.
- **Budgeting:** Deliver cost projections for the proposed ERP.
- **Project Roadmap:** Outline a clear project timeline and plan for smooth implementation.

Phase II – Request for Proposal (RFP) Development Assistance and Selection.



Once the Consultant understands how the City operates, what improvements the City should make to its current processes and how it will help to manage that change process, the Consultant will then shift gears to focus on what software solutions are available to meet those needs. Tasks include:

- **RFP Creation:** Draft an RFP document detailing the current environment, vision for the new ERP, detailed requirements, vendor response criteria, and evaluation benchmarks.
- **Collaboration:** Work with the City's Project Genesis team to refine the RFP, incorporating all feedback.
- **Vendor Shortlist:** Present a list of prominent ERP solution providers.
- **Vendor Interaction:** Guide the City in addressing vendor inquiries and drafting relevant addenda.
- **FAQ List:** Compile frequently asked questions with suggested responses.
- **Proposal Evaluation:** Lead the proposal assessment process, presenting key points for the review team.
- **Vendor Discussions:** If health guidelines allow, hold in-person discussions to review proposals and shortlist top contenders.
- **Demo Guide:** Draft a preliminary demo guide, refine post-review, and share with vendors before their presentations.
- **Oversee Vendor Demos:** Supervise vendor demonstrations.
- **Contract Negotiation Support:** Assist in finalizing contract discussions with the chosen vendor.

Phase III – Implementation Project Management Services.

Once the various software solutions have been identified, the Consultant will then shift to implementation. This phase is open-ended at this point since the actual tasks are dependent on the software solutions selected and what specific implementation expertise they will bring to the table. In general, tasks include:

- **Implementation Strategy:** Develop a detailed plan listing tasks, timeframes, and expected outcomes.
- **Vendor Coordination:** Work closely with the vendor to set clear expectations.
- **Contract Adherence:** Monitor the vendor's adherence to the contract.
- **Data Management:** Oversee data migration, transformation, and validation tasks.
- **Change Review:** Assess changes proposed by the City or the vendor during the project.
- **User Acceptance Testing:** Provide insights during this phase.
- **Progress Tracking:** Monitor progress against the timeline.
- **Training Oversight:** Identify areas requiring initial or refresher training for users.

Recommended Action

Staff recommend approval of engaging a third part ERP Consultant to aide the City in the execution of Project Genesis.