	Approved	Denied
Action taken *Postponed on*	*5/29/02*	
Other: *4/22/02 , to discuss after budget process*		
Verified by: *K Smithers*		

WASILLA CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

CM No. 02-19

TITLE: Award Of Professional Services Contract To Acumen Information Services, Inc. In The Amount Of $10,000 To Conduct A Records Management Assessment For The City Of Wasilla.

COUNCIL MEETING DATE: April 22, 2002

ADMINISTRATION INITIAL:

REQUESTED BY: K. Smithers, City Clerk

PREPARED BY: J. Newman, Deputy Clerk   Date Prepared: April 11, 2002

FISCAL IMPACT:
If yes, amount requested: $10,000   Account No.: 01.51.411.334.00

SUMMARY STATEMENT: This is the first phase of a long overdue citywide records management program. I believe that it is essential to establish a program that is based on Certified Records Management practices. Acumen Information Services is the only "Certified Records Management" consultant in State.

The assessment phase is intended to provide an accurate understanding of how the city manages its records and information, including the identification of records practices that create risk exposure. This assessment is a critical first step toward developing a finite understanding of our records requirements. All finding and recommendations provided will be based on Certified Records Management practices. Also during the assessment, we should anticipate the identification of a few "quick wins." Quick wins typically result in immediate cost savings, improved operating efficiencies, or decreases in information risk exposure.

~~STAFF~~ *CLERK'S* RECOMMENDED ACTION: Award Of Professional Services Contract To Acumen Information Services, Inc. In The Amount Of $10,000 To Conduct A Records Management Assessment For The City Of Wasilla.

Attachments: Records Management Project Plan by Acumen Information Services, Inc. April 2002
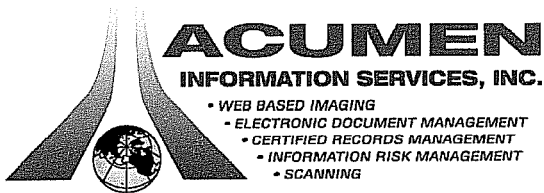
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CLERK'S OFFICE
CITY OF WASILLA

City of Wasilla

Records Management Project Plan

By

Acumen Information Services, Inc.

April 2002

Introduction

Acumen Information Services, Inc. was thankful to have the opportunity to meet with City of Wasilla (CW) officials concerning present Wasilla records management practices. During the sessions and working with the Clerks Office, we were able to develop a good understanding of the CW organizational structure and potential priorities for developing a new records management program. This effort included three seminar-type discussions, a physical walk-through of each department and individual discussion with approximately sixteen workers.

The results of this high-level review formed a meaningful foundation for the design and recommendation of this Records Management Project Plan. The plan contains a brief description of record system guidelines, and the components of the plan include: 1) assessment; 2) Record Coordinators and associated training; 3) one-time purge procedure; 4) formal records inventory; 5) records retention schedule; 6) policies & procedures; and, 7) audit procedure. A detailed timeline of activities and associated costs are provided at the end of this document.

Methodology

Acumen deploys Certified Record Management techniques for understanding records practices. These methods include a focus on information content while establishing an accurate understanding of each record's life cycle and assigning economic value using a "unit of measure" process. The unit of measure process enables Acumen to produce a fair estimate of economic value for all records. Equipped with this knowledge, organizations understand current exposures and opportunities created by their present practices.

Acumen promotes the use of collaborative decision-making with their clients in order to define areas for "quick wins," and to prioritize which file and record types should be captured and managed first due to economic, legal or regulatory shortfalls.

Based on a team approach between Acumen and the client, each phase of the total solution can be measured and understood by all participants, making records management a business commodity.

Components of the Project Plan

Record System Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to inform the City of Wasilla of the obligations typically found in a certified Records Management (CRM) program. As in most certifications (CPA, CPS, PE, etc.), there are specific criteria that must be satisfied in order to address the finite regulatory demands placed on the industry in question. While no specific "stamp of approval" is awarded to records system designs, key components listed within this guideline will promote control and accountabilities throughout the CW system. It is important to understand the components discussed herein are specific, measurable attributes for a total record keeping system. To the extent any major components of these guidelines are not implemented, a parallel in diminished system performance will result.

Background

This section discusses required areas of record system performance as viewed by the courts. The phrases listed below are deliberate and specific.

A record system must be:

Trustworthy. As evidenced through consistent and documented procedures, the trustworthiness of a record system should be capable of proving every aspect of the lifecycle of each record, inception to disposition.

Reliable. Through performance measurements and clearly defined procedures of how the record systems were designed or changed resulting in its present configuration.

Established as Normal Course of Business. The record system has been accepted as normal course of business for the company and approved through policy, procedure and by executive mandate.

Ownership. Every record or document type listed in the company's "Record Retention Guideline" has a corresponding "Owner" (Department and Position), along with a Tax and Legally approved retention period.

Training. Specific performance expectations and training have been provided to representatives from each organization relating to its record system processes and . procedures.

Audit. The company establishes a routine audit schedule, including third party auditors, to test the performance of every aspect of the record keeping system, and produces regular reports to management regarding findings.

To adhere to each requirement listed above, there will be a need to implement hands on functions by the newly created CW Records Coordinators (existing staff – additional job responsibility) to support a data gathering effort pertaining to the City of Wasilla's existing records practices. The following sections describe the project plan in a prioritized order.

▪ Assessment

The assessment phase is intended to provide an accurate understanding of how the CW manages its records and information, including the identification of records practices which create exposures. The assessment is a critical first step toward developing a finite understanding of the CW records requirements. All findings are documented including Acumen's associated recommendations. All recommendations are based on Certified Records Management practices.

Acumen will conduct an opening session presentation for those participating in the assessment phase. The intent of this session is to establish an understanding of the types of questions Acumen will ask, and the purpose for gathering the information. Emphasis on this session is to communicate how the assessment will be completed and who will participate. Acumen then interviews client representatives from designated work groups. Acumen's goal when producing an assessment is to partner with their clients to fully comprehend their operational needs, sensitivities, and goals of the organization.

During the assessment, the City of Wasilla should anticipate the identification of a few "quick wins." Quick wins typically result in immediate cost savings, improved operating efficiencies, or decreases in information risk exposures.

▪ Network of Records Coordinators and Training

City of Wasilla Records Coordinators will be recruited from existing staff at the individual task group or department level. They will be trained to assist their peers with procedures and hands-on record keeping practices.

The coordinators will train workers at every level on the use of the new records procedures. It is recommended that while departmental management should be aware of the procedures, management should designate two representatives from each department who will be thoroughly trained on the overall records management program. Generally, administrative personnel are selected. Initially, only one key records coordinator will be requested at the departmental level. Eventually, the second coordinator within each department will be trained to provide back-up and to further expand the communications and knowledge of the new CW records management policies and procedures.

A network of Records Coordinators will be scheduled to meet monthly to discuss problems and solutions to record management issues. They are also the

spokespersons for the records program and should inform the organization of any changes in policies or procedures. This network of Coordinators could be given incentives if their recommendations, which result in improvements that affect the overall operation of the City of Wasilla and its records management system.

▪ One-Time Purge Procedure

No business or government entity can absolutely guarantee their records will be admissible in court without question or dispute. There are no absolute steps an organization can take to guarantee their records are compliant. Nor are there systems for records destruction that guarantee that there cannot be claims against deliberate destruction of evidence. The result introduces a question; how can an organization purge unnecessary records and avoid claims of deliberate destruction of evidence? One-time record purges are generally accepted providing specific criteria are followed when implementing a formal Records Management program.

Following many years of actual tests within the courts and by following documented guidelines from the United States' most noted authorities in records retention, a system that demonstrates reasonable controls and accountabilities can position an organization to assume a proactive role in the One-Time Purge of unnecessary records.

By following five basic components, a business or government agency can enter into a One-Time Purge system with ultimate confidence and strength of position.

- Develop a Policy Statement
- Develop a Procedure
- Train Record Coordinators
- Create a Purge Inventory Form
- Develop an Audit Test Script

▪ Formal Records Inventory

Following the completion of the One-Time Purge, CW should anticipate the reduction of approximately 40 to 50% in the overall accumulation of records. Those records that are of unknown retention value or permanent in nature will be retained. Through the assignment of supplemental contract employees, over a period of months, all remaining records will be formally inventoried and indexed into a new records database. This will provide the CW, for the first time, a fully accurate understanding of the records at their disposal. Equipped with this database, each record will be investigated for its legal retention requirement. This will be accomplished off-site at Acumen corporate offices by loading the records database information into a custom retention system.

▪ Records Retention Schedule

Retention Schedules are the tools required for organizations to identify which records they have and how long they must be kept. These schedules enable an organization to destroy records in a uniform and timely manner while maintaining those records vital to the organizations operations. The content of the CW Records Retention Schedule will be based on three criteria:

- Federal Law
- State Statutes
- Records "owner's" priority

▪ Policies & Procedures

During the course of a purge, inventory, retention scheduling and vital records efforts, a great deal of knowledge will be gained concerning "how to" manage records at the individual employee workstation. Through observation, analysis, and with an understanding of CRM practices, polices and procedures will be developed for the CW. As the time frame for implementation of the new records management system approaches, recommendations are documented and provided to departmental management for review and approval.

Acumen recommends all CW records policies and procedures be encapsulated within a CW Intranet website. This will enable the automatic update of records policies and procedures while promoting the wide availability of records system information to each employee desktop at their request.

▪ Audit Procedures

Annual audits are used to measure performance against approved operating procedures. Test scripts are developed and assigned to a neutral third party to measure compliance with records polices and procedures. These steps provide management with reports and other tools, enabling them to make decisions regarding the overall records program based on qualified performance measures.

Test scripts identify key areas within the records program targeted for annualized performance measurements. These test scripts will enable an organization to audit its records program, measure its continued successes, and to make adjustments to the system design where needed.

City of Wasilla Project Plan

Timeline

Records Management Implementation Timeline

Phase I

- Implementation of Assessment and introductory session for CW's network of Records Coordinators.
- Submit draft assessment for review and redline.
- Submit final Assessment with recommendations.

Phase II

- Conduct a half-day Records coordinator training session on the One-time Purge procedure and form.
- Submit documented design for CW tax and legal review of a new One-Time Purge policy, procedure, training, form, and procedure.

Phase III

- High activity purge using two trained record temps. (The temps will supplement City Clerks Office on the records program through the end of FY 2003).

Phase IV

- Design polices, procedures, and forms and web site
- Records Dbase Development
- Purge continues

Phase V

- Train records coordinators on the formal inventory process. Implement using records temps as guides
- Determine electronic document needs, deploy an off-the-shelf solution on a pilot basis

Phase VI

- Merge formal inventory data into Retention Manger software, produce preliminary Retention Schedule

Phase VII

- System Roll-out for:
  - Policies
  - Procedures
  - Forms
  - Dbase
  - Website
- Scanning

Acumen Information Services, Inc.