Parkfairfax Technology Committee
Report for September 2012 Board of Directors Meeting
Submitted by Rick Fletcher (Chair)

Introductory Notes

This report covers mid July through early September 2012, with minutes from our regular meeting.

September 4, 2012: Technology Committee Regular Meeting (7 p.m.)

Executive Summary

At this meeting, the highlights were as follows (more details on each item in the minutes):

- *Electronic voting* – we discussed status of electronic voting issues at Parkfairfax.   Electronic voting involves types of issues: technical, and legal.
    - o   Legal: We discussed status of recommendations from legal counsel regarding electronic voting.   Virginia law governing it for condo associations changed in 2010 to add support for this voting alternative. Certain sections of our by-laws will probably need augmentation to support it.   But there do not appear to be insurmountable legal issues. Counsel is drafting a resolution for the Board's September 2012 meeting which makes recommendations for moving forward on electronic voting at Parkfairfax.
    - o Technical: Rick and Dave met with Fairlington's assistant general manager to get a current update on how electronic voting implementation has gone there.   The summary is that it has gone very well, using Votenet as the vendor and with many procedures in common with those that apply for Parkfairfax. There are some differences in Parkfairfax's voting procedures that would impact adding electronic voting her, no matter which vendor we choose.   Most of the impact of adding electronic voting looks to be changes to management procedures to handle both paper and electronic ballot data in accordance with by-laws.
- *GIS applications* – we discussed GIS software and GIS application scenarios again. We will continue to assess GIS software that could be used to produce maps for our website, given GIS data from the city and our own input of resource (i.e. lights, trees, buildings) locations. We will continue to identify/refine GIS application scenarios at Parkfairfax. Rick and Dave will aim to meet with a technical resource person at Fairlington to get a current update on GIS applications there.
- *Next regular Technology Committee meeting* – Tuesday, December 4, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. (committee voted to take a hiatus until that time; Alice and Rick will be out of town in October and November).

Minutes

1. Attending: Alice Cave (Board Liaison to Communications Committee and Technology Committee member), Dave Bush (Board Liaison to Technology Committee), Sarah Clark (Assistant General Manager), Rick Fletcher (Technology Committee Chair – moderator), and Jan Schrader (Communications and Technology committee member).

2. Electronic voting.

    a) Legal issues.

        - o Background.

            - ➢ At their July 2012 meeting, per the committee's request, the Board asked legal counsel to research and recommend solutions for any legal issues involving electronic voting.

            - ➢ Our goal in this request was to help electronic voting move forward.

- o Discussion.
  - ➢ Counsel responded with a memo to management on August 3, 2012.
  - ➢ The memo noted positive changes in Virginia condo association law two years ago, that support associations adding an electronic voting alternative.
  - ➢ The memo also identified a few areas of Parkfairfax by-laws that would need augmentation to support an electronic voting alternative.
  - ➢ Management asked counsel to draft a Board resolution on this by Sept. 11, 2012 such that it can be presented to the Board at their September 2012 meeting.
- o Next steps.
  - ➢ The committee thought this was very positive news – we will monitor progress on this.
  - ➢ Management will update committee on status of the resolution.
  - ➢ Meanwhile, the committee will continue to research technical issues for e-voting.
- b) Technical Issues.
  - o Background.
    - ➢ At our July meeting, the committee continued discussing technical issues related to finding an electronic voting solution for Parkfairfax.
    - ➢ Our next steps were to meet with Fairlington to discuss their e-voting implementation.
  - o Discussion.
    - ➢ We talked about the following issues:
      - ▪ <u>Meeting with Fairlington's assistant GM re their e-voting implementation</u>.
        - Dave and Rick met with the Fairlington assistant GM in late August.
        - Fairlington implemented an e-voting solution with Votenet (http://www.votenet.com/) a few years ago – it has gone very well.
        - We confirmed that the startup cost of a Votenet solution for Fairlington was about $5000 to $6000 (included vendor's base cost plus a few customizations), and ongoing cost is about $500 to $600 per year.
        - Fairlington had to deal with many of the same e-voting issues that Parkfairfax would need to address, including proxies, when adding e-voting as an alternative to paper ballots.
        - Parkfairfax will have a few issues that Fairlington did not need to address, including our current ability to allow owners to change their paper ballot votes multiple times.
        - Fairlington's major impacts from adding e-voting involved changing management's processes to support both paper and electronic ballots, and these changes were necessary regardless of the vendor chosen.
        - Votenet's e-voting solution works very reliably, given Fairlington's timely upload of eligible owner data to restrict who can vote for each ballot.
        - Fairlington's uploads include owner IDs/passwords for use by Votenet.
        - Fairlington requires that their election committee (equivalent) meet weekly during an election to coordinate paper vs. electronic voting, to ensure an owner can vote only once in the election, via either mode.

- The committee expects very similar things would be true at Parkfairfax, though how Parkfairfax does them must ensure we satisfy our by-laws and address any other concerns.
- Committee shared documentation obtained from Fairlington with Parkfairfax management, for their review and feedback.
- Parkfairfax management provided a copy of current paper voting procedures to the committee during today's meeting.
- Committee should follow up with Fairlington to get more information on their experience, process changes, and documentation they will share.

- Identifying Parkfairfax management process/data issues.
  - Based on our July meeting, and this meeting with Fairlington, committee discussed some probable process changes that management might encounter when adding support for electronic voting.
  - Parkfairfax management will need to coordinate electronic and paper voting, e.g. to ensure an owner could only vote once regardless of the voting mode – Parkfairfax, not the e-voting vendor, owns this process.
  - Parkfairfax management will need to create and upload data to the vendor in order to identify eligible voters.
  - Parkfairfax management will also need to make process changes that address any unique by-laws requirements, e.g. proxy signature witnessing, re-voting within the same election period, etc.
  - From what we learned from Parkfairfax management at our July meeting, we have data sources that could support these changes.
  - The cost of these process changes for Parkfairfax management, e.g. additional time and effort needed vs. current paper voting processes, must be considered as part of overall e-voting implementation costs.
  - All of this suggests that we need to consider probable process changes by Parkfairfax management more closely in the near future, to help assess impact and cost of adding an e-voting alternative here.
  - Specific process change details would depend on vendor we choose.

- Developing interfaces between vendor and management.
  - Details of these interfaces will depend on the electronic voting vendor we select, but we have refined some general issues here.
  - Owners will almost certainly have to log in to the electronic voting vendor's site separately in order to cast an electronic vote.
  - Parkfairfax management already uses data sources to identify which owners are eligible to vote by paper ballot – it is likely that management will need to upload this information to an e-voting vendor.
  - As part of the upload for each ballot, management may well need (as Fairlington does) to provide unique owner IDs and passwords for the vendor to use in their login authentication process.
  - Integration of an e-voting site within our website will very likely require developing a page on our site with a link to the e-voting site – owners would click the link, and be directed to an e-voting site login page.

- We will need to clarify impacts of electronic voting based on both current management processes that support paper voting, and any new processes that will be needed to support an electronic voting vendor.
  - What a first electronic voting implementation at Parkfairfax might provide.
    - Committee believes that a first implementation should provide limited proof of concept, e.g. a prototype that a subset of users can evaluate.
    - We can ensure this by requiring a prototype in an e-voting vendor RFP.
    - As legal issues involving electronic voting at Parkfairfax are resolved, e.g. per counsel's recommendation and Board action, we can refine related legal requirements and impact on management and vendors.
    - As general e-voting process changes for Parkfairfax management are documented, we will be in a good position to assess details of these process changes based on specific vendor RFP responses.
- Next steps.
  - Committee will continue research on electronic voting vendors, both Votenet and other vendors as appropriate, to follow up on prior research here.
  - Management may use and share Fairlington e-voting documentation provided by the committee, per their review of the documentation and judgment on how best to do this.
  - Rick and Dave will follow up with Fairlington re Fairlington's current electronic voting implementation, to obtain more information and documentation where feasible.
  - Committee will continue work with management to assess electronic voting impact on cost, contracts, changes to management processes, etc.
  - As a first step for that assessment, we recommend management begin documenting how their voting processes might change to support electronic voting re: data uploads to an e-voting vendor to identify eligible owners, ensuring an owner can vote only once regardless of paper/electronic mode, proxy signature witnessing issues, etc.
  - Committee will continue to treat all electronic voting project activities as research, until a) legal issues are resolved and b) Board votes to have committee proceed further with selecting an electronic voting vendor and working with management to develop the related data/processes/interfaces needed for a solution at Parkfairfax.

3. Applications of GIS.
   a) Background.
      - We had a brief discussion of GIS as follow-up to that in our July 2012 meeting.
      - Sarah confirmed that the City of Alexandria sells a complete set of GIS data for about $100, management hasn't purchased the data yet, a new 2012 version isn't out yet, we should wait on purchase for 2012 data to be available, and we expect 2012 data availability late this fall.
      - Committee reiterated our recommendation that management purchase the 2012 GIS data from the city, when those data are available.
      - Alexandria also recommends certain software to use with these GIS data.
      - Committee discussed meeting with Fairlington re their use of GIS.
   b) Discussion.
      - Dave and Rick have begun looking more closely at the ArcGIS software, and Jan will also be looking at this and other GIS software alternatives with us.
      - We have not yet met with Fairlington re their use of GIS.

- o Possible Parkfairfax GIS applications we discussed again involve locations/maps of
  - ➢ Settling buildings.
  - ➢ Washers and dryers.
  - ➢ Lighting.
  - ➢ Trees.
- o Committee confirmed the general GIS application scenario that we'd like to see GIS software support:
  - ➢ Import City of Alexandria's GIS data from purchased media.
  - ➢ Enable us to input locations of various resources (e.g. buildings, lights, trees, etc.).
  - ➢ Export maps of resources produced from these inputs, e.g. as HTML.
  - ➢ Enhance website (approved by WGG) to add these maps to our website.
- o Committee discussed need to better understand capabilities of GIS software with Alexandria's GIS data, to see how/if ArcGIS or other GIS software meets our needs.
- o Rick mentioned desirability of evaluating demo or free versions of GIS software.

c) Next steps.
- o Committee will continue research into GIS applications at Parkfairfax.
- o Rick and Dave will plan to arrange a meeting with Fairlington to discuss Fairlington's current GIS applications and experiences with them.
- o Rick, Dave, and Jan will continue research into GIS software.
- o Obtain demo version of ArcGIS for our evaluation (site offers free 30-day trial version).
- o Management will continue to monitor availability of 2012 GIS data for purchase.
- o We will all continue identifying and refining GIS application scenarios at Parkfairfax.

4. Decision on Next Regular Meeting
   a) Rick and Alice will be out of town during October and November.
   b) Committee voted to hold our next regular meeting on first Tuesday in December 2012.
   c) Any urgent committee business in the interim will be handled via email or phone communications.

5. Next Steps
   a) Committee will continue research into electronic voting at Parkfairfax, per above.
   b) Committee will continue research for GIS usage and applications at Parkfairfax, per above.
   c) Our next regular meeting is Tuesday, December 4, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
   d) Elaine should remove October and November 2012 meetings from the website calendar.

6. This meeting adjourned at about 7:45 p.m.