**October 13, 2020 Meeting - Seattle Community Technology Advisory Board**

Topics covered included: Address by CTO Saad Bashir; talk on King County Elections by Julie Wise, director, King County Elections

**This meeting was held:** October 13, 2020; 6:00-7:45 p.m., via Webex

**Attending:  (All via Webex)**

**Board Members:** Torgie Madison, John Krull, Rene Peters, Mark DeLoura, Camille Malonzo, Tyrone Grandison, Steven Maheshwary

**Public:** Julie Wise,Dorene Cornwell, Harte Daniels, Nicole Espy, Amaury Gallais, Valerie Craig, Karla, Susan, Andy Katz, Gyang, GH

**Staff:** Saad Bashir, Tracye Cantrell, David Keyes, Jonathan Porat, Delia Burke, Brenda Tate, Vinh Tang, Cass Magnuski

**26 In Attendance**

**Torgie Madison:   I think we are about ready to get started. Thank you, everyone, for joining. This is the October CTAB meeting. We have an excellent agenda for this month. So, to start things off as usual, we're going to approve the agenda for this month and the meeting minutes for last month. Can I get a motion from one of the board members to approve the September CTAB meeting minutes?**

**Rene Peters:**   I think that was Tyrone. But, yes, I will move to approve the September CTAB minutes.

**Torgie Madison:** And do we have a second?

**Camille Malonzo:**   I second it.

**Torgie Madison:**  Thank you. And all those in favor, please say, "Aye."  Are there any nays or abstentions? I don't hear any, so the motion passes. Do I have a motion to approve the October agenda?

**John Krull:**  I move to approve the October agenda.

**Torgie Madison:** Do I have a second?

**Steven Maheshwary:**  I'll second it.

**Torgie Madison:** All those in favor, please say, "Aye." Are there any nays or abstentions? I don't hear any, so with that, the motion passes. So we can move right along into the first agenda item that we have. We can catch up on introductions after we have heard from our CTO and the director of King County Elections. To start things off, we have Saad Bashir. And I hand the floor to you.

**ADDRESS FROM CTO SAAD BASHIR**

**Saad Bashir:**   Thank you very much, and thank you to the whole committee for giving me the time. I think the last time I was in front of you folks was back at the S&P Building. Today, I thought it would be a good idea for me to share with you some of the things that are keeping us busy beyond our day to day jobs; as well as report back to you on a couple of organizational changes we are making , as well as some of the metrics that we want to share with you that demonstrate how IT has been able to support the rest of the organization during this remote type of environment. And perhaps, what are the kinds of things that we are looking forward to for the future. So it will be a bit of a collection of different topics. I am happy to  go deep into any of the topics that may be of interest to you. But I will try to first cover and give you a flavor of the whole slide deck as quickly as I can. with that, you can go to the next slide, please?

Last year at this time, a few hundred of the IT colleagues were at the Seattle Center for two days. And we were in a very unique type of environment where we were networking and hearing from some of the global companies that are out there who had agreed to come and present to us and share with us what is going on within the world of technology. That was last year, and it was a fantastic hit. It's something that the private sector does quite a bit, to bring their employees together once a year. And we were, I think, one of the first public sector local governments to try that. Like I said, it was a big success. Despite all of the craziness of Covid, and the budget reductions and all of the distractions of the pandemic, we wanted to make sure that we continue the traditions. So, this year next week we are going to have our second annual learning conference. We again have speakers from all over. Given that it is a remote conference, we have been able to tap into certain speakers who otherwise would not have been able to come here in person. So, that has been good for us. I think the last time we checked, we had over a thousand different sessions that had already been registered for. It's going to be over a five-day period. It's going to have the CTO from Mattel, the toy company; from Tableau, and we will have speakers from Disney, and many other companies. And it's going to be available to all City of Seattle staff, which is again made possible because it is virtual. So, I just wanted to share that with you folks. My goal is that going forward, we are going to do these types of virtual sessions in a lot more recurring fashion. I would like to even open it up to our partners, and maybe eventually with folks who are on CTAB, as well. Sometimes, the speakers want to have some level of privacy, because maybe they want to share with us certain information that they don't want the general public to know. But I would say that is more the exception. So, you can look forward to, perhaps in the future, you may have the opportunity to participate in some of the sessions. Next slide, please, Jonathan?

One of the things that we have taken upon ourselves is how do we become more active in the local community, especially in the BIPOC demographic. We are looking for all of the various opportunities that exist. This is one that has already been launched, and we kicked it off this week. So, I am happy to report on it, but there are a few others that we are also working on. But this one, in particular, is the Seattle Promise program. You are probably familiar with it. It provides two years of education tuition for college. And we reached out to the coordinators of that program at Seattle Colleges, and validated the need that we believe existed just for those students to have work and get mentorship from industry folks. They launched that program a few days ago, and we have had some students already sign up so that they can be paired with mentors within Seattle IT. It's starting slowly, but we hope that we will be able to increase the size of the pool of work mentees and mentors and move the cohort onwards. We are trying to have 40 pairs of mentees and mentors to take part in a cohort until April of next year. Next slide?

This one is an internal organizational change that we have made, very invisible to the community, even to our local departments who we serve. This is basically taking an executive team that is of a certain size and shrinking it, consolidating a few divisions. And without going into the gritty details behind these boxes, I think the message that I want to share with you folks is that even before Covid, we knew that Seattle IT was being challenged in terms of the resources that we have. We have so many needs. We have such a huge legacy technology debt, so we were already on a path to figure out how we divert some of our existing budget to things where we need to modernize. Because of Covid, we, like every other department, have had to really dig deep. And so we're looking at a number of different tactics to reduce our cost footprint. At the same time, we are looking to protect certain areas of IT that we feel are so crucial to our future. And those would be things like modernization of certain technology assets; our talent development; money that we have available for our staff. So, what you see on this slide is one of those tactics, to shrink the executive column. Some of the other tactics that are also part of the budget book that was published a few days ago include attrition. We are looking at a significant number of people, who when they retire, we would give up their vacancies so that we can reduce our cost footprint. We are also looking at reducing our professional services that we have, giving up certain positions back to the City, as well. We are doing a number of things to come up with a decent sized reduction target that has been proposed in that budget.

If there is any blessing in disguise because of Covid, I think think this is probably going to be the highlight. The amount of attention that is now being put into the subject of digital equity, even though the City of Seattle, and my colleagues like David Keyes and others, they have been on this subject for many, many years. This is not alien to them. But Covid certainly has made us think a little bit more. We also work across various departments to see what kinds of things we can do to bridge the five percent gap that our metrics indicate. Five percent of Seattle households have trouble accessing internet, and that's really the foundational obstacle that prevents them from doing many other things. So, the Mayor put together various working groups. One of them was around digital equity. I'm chairing that group, along with Cuc Vu. She heads the Office of Immigrants and Refugees. And we are leading a cross-section of the City, and many ideas have come through that, things like a digital navigation program that was mentioned in the Internet for All report, and many other ideas. I think this topic deserves a presentation of its own, so we can take your through some of those ideas. One of them, for example, that is very exciting to me is the use of the LTE band that the feds were able to release at the beginning of this year, which is through CBRS. I think it's called Citizens Broadband Radio Systems. It's an LTE network that allows nonprofits and governments to provide data services to certain demographics in the community. So, that's one of many other ideas that we have. On this topic, if there are any questions, David Keyes, Tracye Cantrell, or Jonathan Porat can probably answer a few.

As you can see, I'm not going to read through them , but things like device ownership, and Wi-Fi coverage, all of those are elements of the proposal. I was able to present that, along with a couple of colleagues, to the Mayor's Office earlier this week. And we got very positive feedback. Some of these ideas, of course, are going to cost money. And I just shared with you that Seattle IT's budget, itself, is under a lot of pressure. We are actually shedding a lot of dollars. So, in order for us to do these things with decent skill, we are looking at some additional dollars. That is really right now a subject of discussion at City Hall, in terms of how some of these ideas, digital equity, and some of the other places the City wants to invest in, where is that money going to come from.

Maybe I should really have started with this and the following slide, but when Covid happened in March, and overnight, people were asked, instead of coming to the office, to just log in and start working as if nothing had changed. There were a few surprises, of course. One positive surprise was that our VPN infrastructure, even before my time, there had been a lot of behind the scenes investments that have been made. And those investments really started paying dividends when Covid  took place. Because the infrastructure didn't fail us. We were able to scale up, so that from a small number, like 340, we were able to go to 3,500 concurrent users. And that was a lot of pressure on the infrastructure, but it worked the way it was supposed to. Where we struggled in a big way was, as we started to get phone calls and service tickets -- because even though the VPN was installed on somebody's machine, they had never used it. So they didn't know where to go look for it. These were some basic things where people needed help. And our solution desk, which is our call center, got completely flooded. Even though we made a huge effort to manage that huge volume of calls that we were getting, it became clear to us that, given that Covid was not going away any time soon, people were still going to have lots of questions about technology, we made the decision for remotely training all City of Seattle employees on the use of technology. And as the numbers suggest, we have had, so far, 450-plus training sessions, which is a huge accomplishment, I think, given that we didn't hire a bunch of people to do that, it was a number of people within the IT team coming together to make that happen. And as a result, we have been able to train over 15,000 people. Of course, many of them have come multiple times to those sessions. That has been a blessing in disguise. There is a message that has been circulating on WhatsApp, and many of my friends were sending it to me to tease me a bit, because it said, "Covid is responsible for digital transformation." And that is so true. Because of Covid, we saw a huge uptick in the use of automation tools and electronic signatures. And I believe that those trends are not just a one-off. In fact, people have gotten hooked on how easy it is, for example, to do some of these things without actually talking with another human being. So our automation folks are terribly busy. They have a lot of work they have been asked to do by different departments. So they feel pretty good about that. And I have been observing my peers in the public sector in other parts of North America. And technology has been a huge issue, as those organizations have tried to become remote. And I would say that we are probably a handful of those public sector entities with our skill. For sure, we had a little bit of early pain, but we were able to make that transition as painless as possible.

Again, this just shows you how the numbers have skyrocketed in terms of the use of our collaboration tools. Another thing to mention: we did not have Microsoft Teams prior to Covid. We were all waiting for Webex, and Webex was going to happen some time over the summer of 2020. So, again, within a few days, the entire City was hooked up on MS Teams, and Webex was fast tracked. So now we have a range of different collaboration options. And again, all feedback is that people are really enjoying using that variety of tools. Is that the last slide, Jonathan?

Let me just close by saying to your folks--and I must have shared this before when I met with you folks--that the secret sauce behind Seattle IT becoming a best in class digital team is going to be the focus on investment in its people. I faced a huge amount of pressure to reduce the budget for IT on different fronts. And one of the places that I wanted to hold as firmly as possible was our training budget. And I'm happy to report to this group that we were able to do exactly that. We did not touch the training budget at all, and it will continue to be provided as best of talent development tools that are out there to our staff. And that continues to be a work in progress. We have made a lot of improvements on that front, but it still is what is making us put all of our investments in. So, I'll stop here and am happy to take any questions.

**Rene Peters:**   Thank you so much for that presentation.

**David Keyes:**   Hey, Saad, I would echo that, as well.

**Steven Maheshwary:**  I just had a question about the Community Cellular Network. If you could share more about what it means and what you're working to support there.

**Saad Bashir:**  Sure. This is a small band within the LTE network. Back in 2012, I believe the nonprofit and the public sector and decided we need a little bit of that spectrum so we can use it. All governments are a little bit slow. It took them eight years to figure that out. But then, in January of this year, we were able to release that spectrum. And what that allows is for people who have LTE enabled cellphones, they can insert a SIM card in them, and they can start using that particular spectrum that exists within that particular geography. It would require us to put some hard infrastructure in different parts of the City where we feel the need is. It would require us to source those SIM cards that people would need to insert in their cellphones in order to start using that band of LTE network. This may sound really complicated, and maybe too technical, but it's actually not. We are lucky to have a local partner in the University of Washington, that has come forward to test this on a small basis so that we can see, touch and feel how this technology works. We're also very lucky that we have a very thriving radio shop within Seattle IT that understands the whole business of cellular and telecom extremely well. So, we're looking to use that internal expertise with the University of Washington. A couple of private sector firms have come forward. They are maybe looking to do some in-kind donation just to get this off the ground. So that is the kind of effort that would be required for us to make that happen. On a small scale and very quickly, we can activate this cellular network in various pockets of the City.

**Steven Maheshwary:**    Thanks, Saad. I think that's very interesting. I think Professor Kurtis Heimerl came and presented to CTAB about this very project. So, we would like to hear when this progresses.

**Harte Daniels:**  It sounds like you're well on your way, but if there are any further experts that you are interested in, the legal post-graduate school has done these types of tests under what they call HADR in our field experimentation. HADR is Humanitarian Aid in Disaster Response. When the 9.0 earthquake hits and your cellular providers go offline, as they did during Hurricane Sandy, what can you do with the SIMs and these rapidly introduced community cellular networks. So, there has been a lot of research there. Again, it's probably too late to the party because it sounds like you've already done it. But if you're interested in any of that, I could connect you to the commander of the Naval Post-Graduate School (unintelligible).

**Saad Bashir:**  Thank you for that. And I don't think that we are so far down the road that we wouldn't need a lot of expertise. So, I will keep that in mind, and as soon as we get the green light from the big bosses that this is something that they want us to go ahead and pilot, I am sure that through the University of Washington's network, and through the group that you have mentioned, we have a lot of local expertise that can make this happen. It would be a very cool thing to do because you might be the first City to use that CBRS for the digital equity work that we are looking to do. So that would certainly be good PR for the region, as well.

**Harte Daniels:** So, the field experimentation that I mentioned, those field experimentations would have been done by academics like UW, as well as other big tech companies. So, it's a combination of groups. And so there may be some additional people, but like I said, you would have to lead what kind of questions you would ask if you get an introduction to the Naval Post-Graduate School for that. I can do an email introduction for you, and you could take it from there.

**Saad Bashir:**  Okay, I will certainly let you know. Thank you for that offer.

**Harte Daniels:**  On that other topic that you mentioned for working with the community--oh, what did you call it? There was a program that you had for digital equity for community members....

**Saad Bashir:**   The digital navigation program. Maybe Jonathan, if you can go to that slide?

**Harte Daniels:** You might want to consider looking at some of the professional networks and organizations. I and the local chapter of Project Management Institute, which also includes work on (unintelligible). These are areas that, instead of introducing people at an entry level, we can mentor. It is part of our mission to help in the community on this type of things. We are many people who help people on an entry level to train them to be leaders, and thinkers. So, I can take a request to our board. There is also a group for computering human interaction, which allows you to look at people as UX and UR. So there are these professional units out there that could be of assistance. And also, if you wanted to connect into those professional groups. One last thing. On TMI, in order to become certified, everybody must pass an ethics exam, which includes people sensitive to culture. Cultural education is part of both the training and the examination. If you fail the part of your ethics exam, you fail your entire certification. So, I just wanted you to know that they would be really and truly in line with your digital equity for community members. And also, mentoring your internal team.

**Saad Bashir:**   Got it. Thank you.

**Torgie Madison:**  This is Torgie. I have one quick question on this site, that I wanted to ask about. I know that there are some budgetary pressures that you mentioned multiple times throughout the presentation. And I see here that your digital equity slide says (unintelligible) bolster ongoing digital equity initiatives and on the right side maps to provide grants through the Technology Matching Fund. The TMF is near and dear to CTAB's heart. I wonder if you anticipate an increase in funding due to the bolstering of the initiatives, or maybe a decrease because of the budgetary pressures. What can we expect going forward with the TMF?

**Saad Bashir:** They say sometimes the best defense is offense. And so before anybody could take any dollar away from the TMF, we talked about the many benefits of the TMF fund that it has created in the community. And we put a big ask in front of the folks who will be deciding on which areas of these things get money or not. We are certainly asking for more money to be invested in TMF. If anything, I am hoping it will be more, but I don't suspect that, especially the focus on digital equity is going to be reduced from where it stands today.

**Torgie Madison:**  Okay. Thank you. We perhaps have time for one more quick question, if anyone has one.

**Camille Malonzo**:   Can I ask a question? This is Camille. It's so great to see all of the great work despite all of the pressures and the general state of the world. So this is really great to see. My question is, as co-chair of the Privacy and Cyber Security Committee for CTAB, we saw that the privacy office recently released the summaries and reports for Group 3. We are definitely excited to get in there and gets some research, and provide our own, as well. We were discussing at our last committee meeting  about the surveillance and the process there. My question is can you tell us more about how the Surveillance Ordinance is going, and specifically, in the vein of equity, how the Group 3 process will be able to engage community members, a diversity of community members, to get involved with that public comment?

**Saad Bashir:**  Thank you, Camille. Those are great points. I'm going to talk about the last point first, which is about stakeholder consultation. I have observed that that has been a challenge with the whole Surveillance Ordinance to begin with. We have often found that a handful of people, the same handful of people--but the previous efforts to really diversify and get as many different perspectives as possible, it seems that we have tried, but we haven't really been able to create that interest, it seems. So, maybe we have to change our tactics in terms of having to go into certain areas of the community and bring the message to them so that they can provide us their feedback. That was what we all were talking about just prior to Covid: How do we change our stakeholder consultation tactics. Now, because of Covid, now we are looking at virtual ways of consultation. I think Ginger Armbruster, who is our Chief Privacy Officer, will be very open if there are any community groups that you feel we should do a webinar, do an online session, to share with them what Group 3 is all about, and collect their feedback in that manner. We're looking for those ideas. We are working closely with the Department of Neighborhoods, which has access to a whole bunch of community groups, to make sure that we reach out to a cross-section of those. But, I will be honest with you. Stakeholder consultation has been a challenge, and again, not because I think they're trying to keep it all secret. I think we really want to have more and more of peoples' perspectives show up at these sessions. I'm not sure if Ginger was here any time within the last little while, but if not, maybe, Tracye Cantrell, we can see if she can be added to your agenda in the near future, so she can talk about this in more detail.

Your earlier question was about how is the surveillance program going, right? I don't know if you are aware, but we did ask for an extension, and we were given one, so that now the timelines have sort of shifted, and gives us several more months ahead of us. What we also shared with Council, I'll share with you, as well. The Seattle IT privacy team is not able to do these surveillance assessments and all of the work that needs to happen, without participation of the businesses who are the actual users of the technologies. We set up the coordination mechanism and the templates mechanism, and we asked the right questions. And our challenge has been that, especially with all of the stuff that has happened around Black Lives Matter, and all of the pressure under which SPD is, one of the challenges we have is to get their interest. Not only their interest, but their time. Because they are so fragmented and distracted right now. So that has been a challenge for Ginger. I think if she was here, she would tell you that we are ready to go but we need our business partners to also carve out the time. I think that with the extension that we have, we would try to pry that time from SPD. But, again, I would encourage that you have Ginger maybe as early as next time when you meet. I don't know if Tracye Cantrell or Jonathan Porat have anything more to add on the surveillance program?

**Jonathan Porat:**   No, but we can definitely ask Ginger to present next time. I think that was a good summary. Just to add to that, there is a lot of requirements around the meetings and all of the individual outreach that needs to get done. As the public meetings app was amended to address Covid, and that was uncertain, that also contributed to that delay. Because we want to make sure that we're doing that in an inclusive way, and not just running ahead with virtual meetings or public meetings if those were not done inclusively and in a way sensitive to the groups that might mostly be affected. So, now that we've reconciled that, we have a great plan moving forward, I am glad that we can start publishing this, and we can meet the timelines that we've set for the extension.

**Camille Malonzo**:  That's awesome. Thank you so much for all of that work. It will be exciting to hear from Ginger. That would be great. Thank you so much for all of your work. It looks great.

**Saad Bashir:**  And we have already given Ginger Armbruster a heads up that CTAB would love to have her present. So, she knows about it.

**Torgie Madison:** Yes, and I think that is time. Thank you once again, Mr. Bashir, for coming and speaking with us. It's great to get an inside note to see what Seattle IT is doing, especially since the last meeting that you were at was the last physical meeting we had. Knowing what has changed in the current landscape is very informative, so thank you once again.

**Saad Bashir:** Wish us all the best in terms of the budget crunches that are ahead of us. Over the next three months, I think we'll have a much more with it picture of where Seattle IT stands moving forward. So, next time that I come, hopefully I'll come with some good news that all of that is behind us.

**Torgie Madison:** Maybe some time early next year. We usually applaud, but it's really awkward over a virtual meeting. So, we'll just type our applause for you.

**Saad Bashir:**  I enjoyed it. Thank you.

**Torgie Madison:** All right. With that, we can move straight onto our presentation with Julie Wise, director of King County Elections. I was sort of chatting with those people who were trickling in at the beginning. Camille mentioned during the setup about voting and the elections for this meeting. And literally, later that day, I was listening to NPR on October 6, and Julie Wise was on KUOW's The Record. And I thought, well, let's see if I can reach out and she was gracious enough to come on rather short notice. So, thank you for being here. I'm going to be presenting these, so I will frame that up.

**Julie Wise:**  Sounds good. Everyone, it's great to be with you this evening. Sorry, the cats and dogs and everyone wants to be fed at this time, so it will make it a little loud around here. But, it's lovely to be with you all. I am the elected director of King County Elections. Thank you for having me. And thanks for the work that you do. I know that we have both a Citizen Election Oversight Committee, as well as a Disability Advisory Committee for my department. So, I know from experience that they provide invaluable feedback, in addition, of course, to ensuring transparency and integrity in our work. So, thank you.

I have been serving in this position since 2015, but I have been at the department for 20 years. And we are just 20 days before the Presidential election--technically, 21. However you want to look at it. You can count the day or not, but it is right around the corner. Boy, does it feel like it. Tonight, I thought that what we would do is talk through a few things. First, just key information about what to expect in the weeks ahead, address some of those nasty rumors and misinformation that you've been hearing in the news about Vote By Mail, and obviously, talk a little bit about our various technology systems at King County Elections, that we use to make sure that our elections are both safe and secure. And finally, talk a little bit about what you can do. I always like to dole out assignments here about what you can do to help with democracy. And of course, I'm here if you have any questions.

Just tomorrow, ballots head outdoors. So, October 14, voters' pamphlets, too. Last week was the voters' pamphlet week for the Secretary of State's Office. You might have received a pretty green one from them. You are also going to receive a pretty blue one from us, and that will complete all of the information about the candidates and issues that are going to be on your ballot. Now, it is a big ballot. It's not just the President. It's not just the Governor. It is 18 inches front and back. We'll talk a little bit about getting a vote plan, but now is the time to figure out about those issues and about those races. We have seen the voter registration here in Washington State, so you have all the way until election day to get registered and also to update your address. We've got this Hit 90 icon that you're seeing on the screen right now, and that is a challenge that we issue to King County voters to hit 90 percent. We believe that our voters are up to that challenge. king County typically sees the top ten turnout statewide for the country. So Washington State is usually in the top ten for voter turnout. King County is right there as well. So we've been seeing about an 85 or 86 percent turnout in this election, but we think voters are going to turn out in record numbers. We are going to mail out ballots to regular voters, but we've already mailed out ballots to military and overseas and out of state voters, and have already received thousands back. Of course, election day is November 3, and we're going to finish up the election November 24. People would have until the day before to cure any signature challenge issues. So that's a little bit of a preview.

Let's talk about some of these issues that we're hearing in the news around vote by mail. The first is around USPS. One of the things I think is really important here in Washington State is that we've had a decade to form a really awesome relationship with the United States Postal Service partners here. And we feel very confident in the United States Post Office's ability to ensure that ballots get out to voters in a timely manner, and returned to us. That's not only because we meet with them every single day during the election cycle, and weekly or monthly outside of the election cycle. It's also because we're looking at the data. The data in the August primary showed us that voters, 99.6 percent of them, had their ballot within just those five days. We also are going to continue to watch that data. We're going to know, with an intelligent mail bar code that is on the ballot, on the envelope, as it goes to the voter, and as it makes its way back from the voter, that you can track -- we're going to track your ballot. What that does is help us provide information to you about where your ballot is at. It also helps when there is an issue, a delay. We're going to know when and where that is, and we're going to work with USPS to make sure that we expedite ballots. But I have been around at KUOW and a ton of events to really encourage voters to vote early. You really have no business having that ballot in your hand come November 3. There will be lines at drop boxes, and there will be lines at vote centers. Avoid that rush. Make sure that your voice is heard and vote early. One last note on the United States Postal Service: They deliver 433 million pieces of mail per day. Our 1.4 million ballots is really a drop in the bucket for the United States Postal Service when we look at that big picture there. But, have no fear. Voters have other options. We have drop boxes. In fact, we have 73 ballot drop boxes across King County. Next slide, please.

Look at that bullet. It is already out of date. We have 73 ballot drop boxes we continue to install, but we will be set at 73 going into this Presidential election. Those are permanent boxes across our county that are made of steel. They are over 1,000 lbs. They are made here locally in Puyallup by a company called Vote Armor that we've worked closely with to ensure that they are secure. You might notice that they have a quarter-inch slot, which makes it really hard to get anything through but a ballot into that slot. They're specifically designed, if you look at the actual structure, water pours off. But if the door is accidentally unlocked, it would just completely fall open. It wouldn't look like it's shut and secure when it's not. A slightly funny story is I love hosting tours, not in the pandemic, but normally I love to host a lot of tours at the facility so we can provide that transparency to government. A school bus came to drop off some students, and accidentally hit one of our drop boxes. I can tell you that the drop box and its contents were just fine. The bus was not. The bus was really messed up. And that's what we've seen in a couple if instances when we have had vehicles strike those drop boxes. Not that I encourage that or anything, but these are secured drop boxes that are emptied daily by my staff. And again, you can always track your ballot through the system. And the newest drop boxes that we've added are at South Seattle College, and the King County Library system and some of the Seattle Library systems have proven to be fantastic partners. So, we have two more King County Library system locations, Carnation and Black Diamond. That brings us to over 96 percent of our voters having a drop box within a three-mile radius of their homes. And when you look at urban, dense areas like Seattle, for example, that becomes even closer. So, I think it's 75 percent of Seattle voters have one within just a mile radius. Again, we are encouraging people to vote early for many reasons, especially because there's going to be nearly half a million people, our data says, that are all going to go out to those drop boxes on election day. It gets bananas out there. It's not fun, so don't do it. Also, really important is that if you vote early, your ballot is going to be counted and show in the election results on election night. So, if you get it in the week before election week, it will be in those first results. And those election night vote results are really meaningful and really important. The media might call the election over after that. We will keep counting until November 24, and we will count every single ballot that is eligible.

Key systems: We're about to get a little bit techy now. Three important things we want to call out to you guys. The first is the voter registration election management system, or what we call VoteWA. Now, that is a statewide system that is owned by the Secretary of State's Office. It was just implemented in 2019. And that system is really what voters use to register online, as well as file for office, get a replacement ballot, track your ballot, all those various things. Again, the Secretary of State manages this system. And what is allows for is this real time data sharing across the 39 counties in the State. So, when we moved to same day voter registration, we would register someone in Pierce County, they continue to go up the I-5 corridor, get registered in King County, vote, get registered in Snohomish County, and vote. This real time system doesn't allow for that. We're going to talk a little bit more about things the Secretary of State's Office does to ensure the safety of that system. But the next system to really call out is our tabulation system. The tabulation system is what actually scans and will ultimately count votes. Now this system is 100 percent not online. There are a lot of security details we talk about are really, actually physical ones, because you actually have to be physically on site to tamper with that data. We implemented our current system, which is a system called Clear Ballot, out of Boston. In 2017, a really exciting vendor that's really, I think, changed the game of elections equipment and elections technology. And then, finally, we have an online ballot marking program. Now this is a site we use for both our military and overseas voters, as well as our local voters who need a last minute replacement ballot. We can access your ballot online. We can't vote online, but we can print out the same ballot that was mailed to you. It takes a little bit of an arts and crafts project to prepare that, put it in an envelope, and then send it back to us like you would ordinarily do in either the mail or the drop box.

Securing your vote: We'll talk a little bit more about elections security. Election security is obviously paramount to retaining the public's trust in our voting system, and continue to make the wheels turn, right? It helps to protect our democracy and our institutions, and it ensures the privacy of your ballot. No one should know how you voted on a issue, who you voted for, or be able to tamper with your vote. I'm speaking to people who obviously know this, but election security is not a one-time job. It is not a one-time investment. It is a bucket of work that happens 24/7, 365, which we'll never stop working to fill. Please go to the next slide here, just for a little bit of national context.

We are in a very different place than when we were going into the 2016 Presidential election. On January 6, 2017, the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security designated election systems as critical infrastructure. Critical infrastructure at the DHS is established by the Patriot Act, and given to systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the United States that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination of those matters. So, I obviously think that this critically important, pun intended. Election systems meet that definition and must be secured to safeguard our nation's democratic process. Elections is the base of our democracy. What it also means is we have a lot of additional support and resources than we did in 2016. From new national monitoring systems to increased engagement from entities like the National Guard, which is a close partner with the Secretary of State's Office. So, I kind of break out the security in two different components, the physical security, paper ballots, which is a really great thing to have. When we are talking about security, you need paper copies to go back to. In fact, for this election, a federal election, we are going to keep all of those paper records for 22 months. So we can always go back to that. But that's also why our physical security is so important. We're going to being all of the ballots from the United States Postal Service, from the drop boxes, back to our election headquarters in Renton. And in those 100,000 square feet, we're going to process those ballots. So, we need to keep the building secure and safe.

So, a couple of things to know: We are very fortunate, and I know that. I know, compared to other election administrators across the country who do not have the luxury of a facility like I do, that was actually designed for processing vote by mail ballots. It has more than 50 security cameras across the building that are monitored 24 hours a day. We also have eight higher resolution web cameras that start living streaming when we start processing ballots, so that our voters and observers can watch us hard at work, to watch and ensure that the elections process is going accordingly, and to be able to have visibility. You know, you put your ballot into a drop box, you put your ballot into the mail, and you don't know what happens. This provides some transparency there, to actually see that process. Every single ballot is processed on our secure second floor. And that requires badge access to get on or off of. There are also two additional areas that require badge and biometric access, a finger print, to get into. And those are our secure ballot storage areas and our tabulation server room. And I am not joking here, but I'm not even allowed in there. I have no business being in the tabulation room. So, we have the physical security. I think really what's most important about the aspects of vote by mail, again, is that we've got a paper trail for all elections for all voters for all ballots. There is no electronic voting, memory cards, any of that, in King County or in Washington State. So, I will talk a little about cyber-security. In terms of cyber security, there are layers and layers of security in place to ensure that nobody is able to penetrate the systems. Again, the voter registration and the tabulation systems are entirely separate. So a breach in one would not impact the other. I'm very fortunate, I know, but we have dedicated cyber-security staff, permanent IT staff on site for elections, who work closely with the County IT, with the State cyber-security teams, and faculty. And I have my own IT director, and a whole team of IT experts. Even emails are monitored closely for threats and fishing attempts, and every attachment is scanned by security software. Every staff member undergoes annual cyber-security training, and are trained to be vigilant in both our cyber and physical security. It's very much a 'see something, say something' culture, as you can imagine at the elections office. We are also part of an election monitoring partnership with EI, which is Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center, which shares information about threats and issues nationally. I know we did talk a little bit earlier about concerns about a recent threat at the State level across the country. We have been meeting every single morning with the Secretary of State's Office in this election time, to get updates about that. They were able to actually enter into the election systems, but we are keeping in close contact with those partners.

Other County steps:  Email and mailboxes are scanning everything that comes in, from malware and viruses, and there's a lot of scrutiny that is given. There are a whole lot of other talking points there, but I think I will head on, as I see that it's past 7:00.

We also do audits, lots of audits. I'm really honored that I was the first person in the country to ask the Department of Homeland Security to come into a physical security audit. They had to compare us to other web sites, because they don't have any elections offices, as they just made it critical infrastructure. And I was the first in the State to ask the State's Auditor cyber-security team to come in and do a robust cyber-security audit about two years into this election. That's right. We start working on the Presidential election about two to three years beforehand. And then we have the Secretary of State's Office that comes in and does an audit review, as well.

And then quality control. We do lots of quality control. You can imagine all of the systems, right? We have a logic and accuracy test, before, during, after each election. We're going to do an actual hand recount of thousands of ballots to make sure that the tabulation system is reading both ballots and the voter's intent properly. We have official observers from both political parties. They will be everywhere. They will be on-site in our facility, watching the staff process ballots. They'll be out at drop boxes and our vote centers. We rely heavily on having our observers there, as well. And of course, web cameras for observation.

All right. I know I talk fast, but what can you do? Just encourage people to vote early, vote early. Everyone should have their ballot in their hand by October 19. I can't believe that that is just about a week away on Monday. If people don't have ballots in their hands, they should give our office a call at 296-VOTE, or head online. Track your ballot. Give yourself that reassurance that you know that it's on its way to you, and that we have got it in our hands and we are processing it at King County Elections. Help your friends and family to make a vote plan; educate on the issues now, and be ready to roll when you get your ballot in just a few days.

Thank you all very much again for having me. I appreciate the opportunity.

**Torgie Madison:** Oh my gosh, thank you so much. I hope I was keeping up okay on the slides. I think we can open this up to questions at this point. There's a lot of information in there. I will open it up to the public, by all means!

**Julie Wise:**   I see a couple in the chat. Should I start there?

**Torgie Madison:**   I think you answered one about online ballots. But, other than that, you can start with chat, for sure.

**Julie Wise:**   Absolutely. So, a lot of our voters with disabilities appreciate an online ballot marking program that we offer. We also have our vote centers that have accessible units there with adaptive equipment. Keypads, make the font larger, to be able to hear with talk devices as well. The messaging says before so that the JAWS reader before you access your ballot, you would be able to hear, and I believe it tells you what page (unintelligible).... Once you print out the material, whatever reading device you have, JAWS or whatnot, it would read actually, "sign on the second page." And we aren't worried that it's in the exact location. So people can use the online ballot marking program or come in in person. Our workers check for financial problems that would make them vulnerable to bribes. There are only five staff members who are allowed access to the tabulation server. And I'm not sure, to be honest with you, what credentials, what we're checking on their backgrounds. They have to be a team of two, and they are in a secure room that is just windows that provide access for all of us to view.

**Torgie Madison:**   It looks like we have a question from David Keyes, also in the chat, just now. He's asking if first time limited English-speaking voters, how that's been evolving.

**Julie Wise:**   Yes. For King County Elections, we provide all of our election materials in addition to English, in Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, and Spanish. And two of them, Vietnamese and Chinese languages, are required by the Department of Justice. But we would be providing materials in those languages, regardless. Here at King County, through the Council, we've taken proactive steps. So, we are providing, again, election materials in Spanish and Korean, as well. We're looking for a threshold of about 10,000 people that have identified through the census, or ACS that they speak English less than very well. And what we are doing in King County is not waiting for the Department of Justice to tell us that the census information that's a decade old tells us that. We are looking at being proactive at what information do we need, what does the data tell us from public health, what is the information from the school systems tell us; what does the court information tell us? So that we can get a better picture of all populations here in King County and provide the materials. We provide voter registration forms and election brochures in about 20 languages. If you contact our office, either in person or by phone, we will use an interpretation service of about 178 different languages, and all election material is produced in those five languages that I shared. And voters can sign up for those ballot materials in their preferred language, and every communication will be in that language. So, if we need to call you about a signature challenge issue, it's that language. If we need to mail you a letter, it's in language. Your ballot, your voter's pamphlet, etc. I think that we provide good services as far as full translation. But I think we can continue to look at our communities across King County, and see. I'm certain that there are additional languages that we need to be adding to provide that easy access to the ballot for voters.

**Torgie Madison:**   Fantastic. Thank you. I have a quick question, and it's about the critical infrastructure designation that you were describing earlier. Again, systems and assets, physical or virtual, etc. With that in mind, I'm sure you've been talking about this everywhere, will the removal of the high speed sorting machines from the U.S. Postal Service constitute critical infrastructure for Washington elections, since we are a vote by mail state?

**Julie Wise:**   That's a fantastic question.  I don't know if USPS has already designated in some way in those regards, but what I can say is that I am confident in our local USPS office here, in their ability to make sure where our mail is going. It's going to be expedited to our voters and back. I think there's a couple of thing like the official election mail indicia, the work that we've been doing for a decade, to make sure that the United States Postal Service recognizes how critically important it is to get ballots out to our voters, and to get them back to the elections office. I don't have concerns about equipment removal at the distribution centers or locations here in our region. But to answer your question, the answer is I don't know.

**Torgie Madison:** Okay, thank you. Are there any other questions?

**Rene Peters:**  This is Rene. I have a quick question on the volunteer opportunities which you talked about. I was sort of looking, and I know that you mentioned the designated observers by party that will be present at the drop boxes that you mentioned. Are there any other lower type of ways to help out? I tried to look up a position on my own, and all I could come up with was a 35-hour per week ride-a-long with the ballots picked up from the boxes. But, do you know if there are any other opportunities?

**Julie Wise:**   You know, I really think that we could do a better job of figuring out how to have more volunteers, but we hire union paid employees at King County Elections. So, they are all paid positions. And you're right. Some are jobs where we are looking at just a couple of dates. For example, vote centers are open just on Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday. So, it's really just kind of a three-day gig, and they are a little bit of long hours. So, we do offer some opportunities where there are not as big a commitment a month on in to work in our phone bank. But I do know that we have every person for this election, I think there are  like 600 applications that we still haven't gotten to yet. But we do offer varying, different ones. I bet those three-day jobs get filled quicker than those other positions. But, they are all paid union jobs at the elections, minus the Democratic and Republican King County parties that assign and designate observers for each of their parties. But, we should figure that out more. We tracked over the years -- we offer it to King County employees. King County employees can volunteer to close a drop box. We tried that with different community organizations and students, as well. We've tried a couple of different things. Because that's really where we could use help on election night at those 73 ballot drop boxes, to have help there with line management and stuff. But, to answer your question again, no. Sorry. Those part-time or smaller gigs might have been full already.

**Torgie Madison:** I want to be respectful of your time. We have one more question. It comes from a board member. Would you be willing to answer one more?

**Julie Wise:**   Yes, of course!

**Torgie Madison:** Thank you. This question comes from Mark DeLoura.

**Mark DeLoura:**  Hey, Julie. I just want to say thank you for all your hard work. It's got to be pretty satisfying coming up on the Presidential election after working on this for years. What I'm curious about is, as an expert on mail-in voting, whether you have had outreach from election groups around the U.S. to try and tap into your expertise? Or has it been pretty much quiet?

**Julie Wise:**   Mark, that's a fabulous question. I'm really thankful that Torgie hasn't left the questions up so that you guys can't see the under-eye bags here. I'm a little exhausted, but I'm so excited for December. No, I'm really excited for election day. I'm an election geek. And yes. Please let this be the tipping point for vote by mail. Please! One can wish and pray. I do. I think, Mark, to answer your question, at least 20 or 25 different jurisdictions across the country have reached out to us. And we created a document and a site for them to go to access things like Vote Armor in Puyallup. You will see that Orange County, California has the same boxes from Vote Armor in Puyallup. So, absolutely. We are here to lend a helping hand. We have worked very hard for vote by mail for a decade. We are recognized as a leader. It feels really egotistical to say that out loud at times, but we are recognized as a leader, and rightfully so. We have the most dedicated team of individuals that have strived to make vote by mail secure and accessible. If you can have elections that are both -- and it's a been a bit frustrating over the last few weeks. It's been a little bit exhausting. What are we going to wake up today to hear? But, I'm really excited and really proud of the work that we've done. And, yes, there are times when we've been asked for help, and we are there and ready to help. I think election administrators used to have to throw an election even if there's a tornado, or a hurricane coming down on you. Even in California, they maybe have two or three weeks notice before they have to run an election. So, election administrators have this. I wrote an article for the Seattle *Times,* an op-ed. You know, we've got this. We've got this as election administrators. The United State Postal Service has this. And voters have this. But, yes, we've heard from quite a few jurisdictions.

**Torgie Madison:**  Fantastic. That's really great to hear. The more knowledge we share, the better, so we are not reinventing the wheel in every county in every state. Thank you so much once again for your time. I know that we've run over. That's great for us, but I feel badly because I know you've been working so hard. Like you said, it's been a nightly thing for you, but hopefully soon, the end will come. So, I thank you once again, and to all who participated in the chat.

**Julie Wise:**   Thank you all. Happy voting! Have a great evening.

**Torgie Madison:** Thank you. All right, so let's change pace a little bit. I know that we've had a few people drop from the participants list at this point. Hopefully, Cass was able to capture some of those names from our participant list at the top of the meeting.

**Cass Magnuski:**   Got 'em.

**Torgie Madison:**  Let's change gears and go to a little slower paced activity here. Let's do some introductions. Let's start with the board members.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

**Torgie Madison:** So, I believe that captures everyone who is still here. We will have the other participants by name in the minutes, assuming they were captured from the participant list.  Let me just make sure there is nothing more. We can do some quick committee updates. I know that we're already at 7:25. Can we hear from John Krull of the Digital Equity Committee? Or Harte Daniels, or Dorene Cornwell?

**COMMITTEE UPDATES**

**Digital Equity Committee**

**John Krull:**  Sure. I'll go ahead and get started.  We've been busy. One of the first things is to thank the team. Everybody has really done a lot.

First, I want to update everybody. A couple of meetings ago, we were telling you we were waiting for a grant that we applied for. We did not get that. We were hoping that would be sort of a lifeblood for getting this project spearheaded. We didn't get that, but that's okay. We're shifting gears a little bit, looking at getting training for SHA. We are looking at how we can maybe support either SHA or some organizations to get TMF grants for telehealth. Vicki Yuki has been a big part of the committee. Also, she has been running the Digital Equity Learning Network. That has been meeting monthly. I couldn't find the information for the next meeting, but keep an eye out for that. That's a really great group that's working on Internet for All and other things. For Internet for All, I want to make sure that folks know about. There's going to be a Lunch and Learn with Sea.Citi on October 15, so in a couple of days. You can find that link by just searching for that. It's on Eventbrite. You can sign up and get involved with Internet for All and find out where we are with that. We're working with Star Center for technology access, so we started connecting with them as well as Westwood Heights Computer Center. To try to morph our digital equity and inclusion for seniors and telehealth with a lack of money but not a lack of effort. We're meeting monthly on the fourth Tuesday of the month, just like the other committees.

**Torgie Madison:**  Great, thank you. I'm sorry to hear about the grant not being approved. That must be pretty disappointing.

**David Keyes:**  I'll post a link to that Sea.Citi in the chat, or you can just look at Eventbrite and find it.

**John Krull:**  Thanks, David.

**Torgie Madison:** All right. Thank you. We can move on to the Privacy and Cyber-Security Committee. It took me pretty much the first year of chairing that committee to learn to say in in the right order. I totally feel you on that. Is there an update from Camille or Nicole?

**Cyber-Security Committee**

**Camille Malonzo:**  We met last September and it was a good meeting. We debriefed our panel, and found ways to improve our future panels, and just got together as a group to celebrate the work there. And then, we also spent, as I mentioned earlier, some time kind of scheming and thinking about what our action plan would be around the Surveillance Ordinance. I think for the next meeting, which will be the second Tuesday of the month, which will be soon. I don't have a calendar in front of me, but I think at that meeting we will also be following up the work there on the Surveillance Ordinance. Nicole, do you have anything to add?

**Nicole Espy:**  Yes, I think we also have ideas on other topics, and potential guests that would be definitely in 2021.

**Torgie Madison:** I think it was very interesting "volunteering" when Saad Bashir offered to bring Ginger Armbruster in next month. I think we'd be receptive to having ginger here next month. So, maybe if you could coordinate with Ginger and Jonathan Porat to see what Ginger's schedule is like, and maybe get her talk cued up? Is that something you would be willing to do?

**Camille Malonzo:**   Yes.

**Torgie Madison:**   Okay, that's great. Thank you. I think that brings us to the Smart Cities Committee. I don't see Tyler here, so I don't think we are going to get an update on the Smart Cities Committee this month. And that brings us to Public Comment. We can hold the floor open for any public comments or announcements. If you have something of that nature. I notice that David Keyes just announced the Sea.Citi Internet for All effort, so that totally counts. Please, if you have anything, you can bring it forward. Oh. The talks were just too informative. There's nothing left. If there is anything from board members, as well?

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Harte Daniels:**   Does David Keyes know the dates that the TMF starts?

**David Keyes:**  I think the question was, do you know the dates that the Technology Matching Fund grants start for this year's application cycle for 2021. I don't know the dates. It will likely be like we did last year, with the information coming out in November sometime for early in the year application cycle. But I don't have that. We'll send that out as soon as we have it.

**John Krull:**  I want to give kudos to Torgie and whoever else helped to set the agenda for today. I thought is was really awesome to have Seattle IT, and especially King County voting. Very timely and informative meeting.

**Torgie Madison:**  Thank you. That was definitely with huge help  from Jonathan Porat, as always; Rene, as always; and Camille for pushing the idea for someone from the elections. All right! I think, with that, just to wrap up: We heard an update on the pressures and changes from Covid-19 from Saad Bashir. Then we heard a very thorough explanation from Julie Wise, director of King County Elections. We had committee updates and public comments. Very good Q&A session. That was really engaging and I like all of the questions that came out. Next month, we should, hopefully, be hearing from Ginger Armbruster, the Chief Privacy Officer. And Rene Peters has been working very closely with the San Francisco Tech Council. This is an organization that has a lot of overlapping interests and goals for CTAB. He had this great idea to have a knowledge transfer and cooperation thing. So, they would come to our meetings and we would go to their meetings, just to see what each is doing. Keep that in mind for next month's agenda. The next meeting will be the last official business meeting for the board. I'm going to have an update on how we are going to handle the elections. And hopefully, we can manage private votes through a virtual meeting. I think I have a couple of ideas. Hopefully, I can work with Jonathan Porat. I'll send you an email, and to Rene, so that we can figure that out and get it to a good place for December. Also, committee chairs, committee leadership, keep in mind that we have a tradition of recapping the accomplishments of the committees during that December meeting. So, go back through the emails to remind yourself what the heck happened in February, which feels like five years ago. With that, thank you all for your time, and the meeting is adjourned.

**ADJOURNMENT**