



SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

Christopher S. Lewinski
Information Technology Director

February 12, 2016

Honorable Members of the Sheboygan County Board and
Adam Payne, County Administrator.

I am pleased to submit the 2015 Annual Report for the Sheboygan County Information Technology (IT) Department.

In my brief tenure with Sheboygan County— which began June 1, 2015— the IT Department has implemented a number of hardware and software systems that both enhance information security and improve workflow efficiency. Sheboygan County IT also continues to partner with and support other County departments in their endeavors, providing technical expertise and project management oversight. Lastly, the IT Department continues to provide a 24-hour help desk to all of Sheboygan County's technology users.

The future for Sheboygan County's technological and information resources is both bright and exciting. With the anticipated completion of the Sheboygan Ring of Fiber optic network in 2016, the County will be able to share information and access critical systems faster than ever before, serving its citizens efficiently and effectively. And a more proactive focus on information security ensures the County's valuable data assets will remain safeguarded amidst a rapidly changing cyber threat landscape.

I am proud of the work the Information Technology team has accomplished in the last year, and I appreciate the support of the County Administrator, Finance Committee and County Board as IT strives to support the County's mission and vision in the 21st Century.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher S. Lewinski". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light blue rectangular background.

Christopher S. Lewinski
Information Technology Director

Information Technology Department 2015 Annual Report

Mission Statement and Summary of Responsibilities

The mission of the Information Technology Department is to effectively and efficiently safeguard and account for the County's technological resources and to provide information technology service in support of all County departments.

The Information Technology (IT) Department provides assistance to County departments with a 24-hour help desk, and provides planning, management, and implementation services for the County's IT projects, systems, networks, and devices.

Goals and Objectives Achieved in 2015

1. Deployed a redundant pair of "next generation technology" firewalls, which replaced aged, unsupported equipment and greatly enhanced our ability to detect network intrusions.
2. Deployed a new, high capacity data backup server that provides for offsite storage of County data, which improves our ability to recover data files in the event of a loss or disaster.
3. Recruited and hired a new Business Analyst, Network Engineer, Information Technology Director and Network System Administrator.
4. Improved internet reliability and security at Rocky Knoll Health Care Facility by implementing redundant internet connections with seamless failover capabilities and a "next generation technology" firewall.
5. Developed a 2015 – 2019 Information Technology Master Plan.
6. Vendors were selected and contracts were awarded in support of the Sheboygan Ring of Fiber network project, and construction began on the underground network in October.
7. Enhanced the system security of the County's JD Edwards financial software system by strengthening security protocols for users accessing the system remotely.
8. Completed an internal HIPAA Security Risk Assessment to identify gaps in the County's compliance and develop an action plan for their remediation.

Budget

	2015 Budget	2015 Results	Variance
Revenues	\$2,163,630	\$2,178,689	\$15,058
Expenses	\$2,252,730	\$1,883,382	\$369,348

Overall, the IT Department had a positive variance of \$384,406 for 2015. This was primarily due to the decentralization of the Finance and IT departments, resulting in lower wage and benefit expenditures. Equipment maintenance expenses were also lower than anticipated.

\$85,119 of retained earnings was transferred to the capital outlay account for implementation of a new data backup server.

The IT Department was successful in achieving the 2016 budget target. Overall, the department had a 0.8% decrease in budgeted expenditures from 2015 to 2016. Most of the decrease is from reductions to equipment expense accounts.

Issues and Challenges Ahead

The challenges faced by the Sheboygan County Information Technology department in the years ahead are not unique, though this fact does not diminish their difficulty.

Unlike “consumer” (home) IT costs, commercial grade information technology costs will continue to escalate over time, as technology firms add new features to existing products to improve performance, security and reliability. Maintaining a consistent level of service with rising costs against a tight budget will be challenging and require Information Technology to consider alternative solutions to traditional ways of doing business, namely deploying applications and systems in the Cloud.

Information security is a perennial challenge, given the oppositional and sometimes contentious divide between security and user convenience. Unfortunately, cyber security threats become more complex, persistent and ubiquitous each day, making Information Technology’s job difficult, even just in keeping abreast of new and emerging threats. Additionally, securing the County’s information assets without negatively impacting user experience and efficiency will cost more, further exacerbating the budgetary challenges of Sheboygan County.

Perhaps the greatest challenge in the next few years is the explosive growth of data, particularly that emanating from the Sheriff’s Department. As high definition video becomes the communication medium of choice in law enforcement, the volume of data Information Technology is required to store, secure and back up is increasing at a near exponential rate. Again, the common thread with the other challenges is the rising costs to manage this data. Creative solutions and cloud storage will be essential to overcome this challenge in the next five years.

Lastly, maintaining the Information Technology department’s skill sets as technology so rapidly changes is an extremely important yet completely daunting task. Interestingly enough, the challenge here has less to do with budget and much more to do with time (or lack thereof). Put simply, as Information Technology staff members struggle to support myriad County information systems, finding even a few days out of the year to engage in training on a new or upcoming technology can be extremely problematic. Here too, creative solutions to address this widening training gap will be needed to keep our staff at least current in their knowledge, if not cutting edge.

Goals and Objectives for 2016

1. Complete the Ring of fiber optic network project by Fall 2016, to ensure highly reliable, highly redundant network connectivity between County facilities in the City of Sheboygan, as well as a high speed connection to the Internet.
2. Complete an independent, third party information security assessment by Fall 2016 to identify gaps in the County’s information technology infrastructure and security policy. From this assessment, a risk remediation/security action plan will be developed and implemented.
3. Complete the data center remodel project by July 2016 to decrease the data center’s footprint, thereby cutting cooling and power costs. At the same time, additional redundancies will ensure highly reliable, uninterrupted delivery of critical County systems and information resources.
4. Develop a new, more transparent IT budget allocation for other County departments by June 2016 that will be divided into itemized direct and indirect costs, and more commensurate with actual

services utilized.

5. Develop a plan, budget and timeline by November 2016 for the construction of a geographically-separated Sheboygan County Information Technology disaster recovery site at the Sheboygan County Detention Center. This will minimize, to the greatest extent possible, the potential significant loss of Sheboygan County data stemming from a natural disaster, fire or cyber-attack.
6. Develop and post a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new County-wide telephone system by December 2016. This will expedite the purchase and deployment of this system in early 2017, so as to replace the very aged and unreliable phone system in use by the County currently.