Minnesota Eligibility Technology System Executive Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Details

- March 3, 2017
- 1-3 p.m.
- Room 200, State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155

Participants

Voting Members

- Janet Goligowski, Stearns County – absent
- Deborah Huskins, Hennepin County – present
- Chuck Johnson, DHS - present
- Kari Koob, MNsure – present
- Nathan Moracco, DHS - present via phone
- Allison O'Toole, MNsure – present

Non-Voting Members

- Jesse Oman, MNIT – present
- Scott Peterson, MNIT – present

Guests

- Greg Poehling, MNIT
- Stephanie Grisell, MNsure

Agenda Items

Call to Order & Welcome

Chuck Johnson, DHS

Chuck Johnson, ESC Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Members introduced themselves.

Chuck noted that the role of the METS ESC is to ensure the IT support is in place to provide health care to Minnesotans. Despite any uncertainties that may exist at the state and federal level concerning the Affordable Care Act (ACA), this group will continue to focus on current law and system improvements.

Chuck reported that the ESC was canceling its March 24 meeting and instead moving its April meeting to April 11 in the Minnesota Senate Building, where it will live-streamed.

Administrative Items

MOTION: Deborah Huskins moved to approve the draft January 27 meeting minutes. Allison O'Toole seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

Budget Work Group Report

Jamin Johnson, MNIT Director of Enterprise Planning and Administration

Jamin Johnson, MNIT Director of Enterprise Planning and Administration, presented the Fiscal Year 2017 Quarter Two Financial Report.

Jamin focused his presentation on page three, the quarterly breakout of FY 2017. He recommended the committee treat this report as a cash-basis report. As such, there may be a delay as to when expenses are illustrated in the budget. He explained that the development carryover from FY 2016 will show some underspending in that area. The previous twelve months have illustrated growth, with the movement from development to operational.

Next, Jamin reviewed sections of the budget for the committee. He began with the development section, which he noted would decrease from year to year. He outlined the $1.3 million spent on state personnel, which will include an additional $5.5 million in encumbrances once they are designated on the budget. The $5.5 million is under budget, but not grossly under what was projected. IT vendor contracts will have a $2 million adjustment once IBM processes the payment. The operations section showed not too much variation on what was expected. Jamin indicated the IT staff augmentation line would be under budget, but MNIT would be reviewing it. The licensing, hardware, and maintenance spending were on track as expected.

Jamin indicated there were a few takeaways from the quarterly breakdown. From an operational breakdown, the budget is on track; however, there is underspending in development that MNIT is reviewing. The Budget Work Group thought about adding an encumbrance column to the chart; however, they believed it would be too difficult to explain.

Chuck expressed a point of clarification on the central charges columns. He wished to confirm the current numbers are a glitch and as costs come into DHS, those number will even out, matching the rest of the budget. Jamin confirmed this and verified as costs come in, the budget will change. Chuck recommended adding an encumbrance column which would provide more visibility about future expenses. Chuck and Jamin also discussed plans to have the Program Management Team (PMT) more involved in reviewing the budget so they can monitor spending and identify opportunities for use of unspent funds.

Chuck asked if, following the review of the development section, MNIT is on track to complete all expected work. Scott Peterson and Jamin specified the budget illustrates a

maturation and there is nothing in the MNIT roadmap that is being delayed or cancelled. Scott stated MNIT has all the necessary budget items in order to complete the IT roadmap as it stands.

Additionally, Chuck asked for guidance as to why there is underspending. Scott clarified that, as always, there is an issue as to how to best hire and train individuals. Scott met with Deputy Commissioner Jesse Oman about how to streamline the staff augmentation to correctly allocate resources so the process could be completed as quickly as possible.

In terms of underspending, Chuck asked for clarification as to the likely level of underspending and how could it affect projects in the future. Scott indicated any underspending could be applied to 2017 projects.

Allison noted that she appreciated the presentation and detailed explanation of the budget. She commented that at the end of the calendar year, MNsure's federal grants would expire. As such, the sooner the committee is able to understand where money needs to be allocated, the better. Scott added that the Budget Work Group is already discussing ways to be more visible in the future.

METS IT Program Status Update

Greg Poehling, Director of Program Management Division, MNIT Services @ DHS/MNsure

Greg Poehling of MNIT presented the ESC update.

Greg discussed the previous meeting's questions. He noted MNIT had prepared two project overview documents on the Cúram Upgrade project and the Org/Location Structure & Supervisor Workspace project.

Greg noted the previous meeting had included questions seeking clarification about the redesign of the METS-MMIS Interface and how this work differs from the ongoing Interface Improvements work. The redesign efforts are focused on redesigning the interface between the two systems, which includes updating event messages and moving to more efficient and scalable technology.

Greg also noted questions at the January meeting around Defects. Greg offered context for the PMT's strategic decision to allocate resources to defects in 2017. The nature of IT systems work is that defects almost always occur after work is deployed. Defects can lead to increased workload and workarounds, or create compliance issues. The PMT formed a Defect Project Team which is following a rigorous process to score and prioritize the defects that will be slotted into each release.

Greg also noted previous questions about work related to notices in 2017. The goal of notices work in 2017 is to continue making progress toward improved notice clarity, format and generation. Each release in 2017 includes notices work.

Greg also responded to a question in January about the impact of using DEED information as a source of verification at renewal time. Using DEED data to electronically verify income at renewal will most likely increase the autorenewal rate for public programs, which would reduce the number of renewal forms manually processed by workers. The implementation and policy requirements around the use of DEED data will be an important factor in the impact that using this data could have on increasing the autorenewal rate.

Greg also noted a previous question about automated corrections for 1095-B forms. Corrections for 1095-B forms were in process starting with the 2015 tax year forms, and will be continued again for tax year 2016.

Greg moved on to discussing the 2017 releases. Since the January meeting, the PMT had been working to finalize and recommend the fall and winter releases for approval.

Greg explained that several projects had been slotted for the fall 2017 release. The METS-MMIS Interface Redesign was a full redesign of the METS-MMIS interface to improve the speed and accuracy of information between the two systems. The goal of the redesign effort was to improve the performance of the interface, improve data integrity, and put more efficient and scalable technology in place.

Carrier integration work was slotted to occur in both the fall and winter releases. For the fall release, MNIT was working on the EDI 834 files and files related to the enrollment caps. Defect fixes would also be a part of the Carrier Integration project, with resources dedicated to addressing defects that arise during project work as well as those currently in the defect backlog.

Greg noted that also included in the fall release was the re-trigger of federal tax returns from the federal hub. This project would implement functionality that would ping against the federal hub to help determine proper tax eligibility during annual renewal.

Moving on to the winter release, Greg noted there would be continued goals related to the MMIS Redesign, notices, and carrier integration. The winter release also included two additional projects. The first was related to the federal tax information and would ensure the display of federal tax information (FTI) was safeguarded from unauthorized disclosure to consumers and caseworkers. This project was in response to new guidance from the IRS.

Greg reported Periodic Data Match would also be part of the winter release. This project was charged with addressing the defects that remained following the summer 2016 release, where the functionality was deployed but not utilized due to IRS concerns over the use of federal tax information in the process.

Greg added that his team did look out into 2018 and had approved a DEED project that would likely land in the spring 2018 release.

Kari Koob asked about the capacity of the PMT to add projects. Greg clarified that projects can be added; however, resources are at capacity, so it was not recommended to do so at this time.

Deborah asked for clarification as to the timeline of the recommendations from the PMT about 2017 work on periodic data match. Greg reported that there were a few different pieces, related to the legislature, the Internal Revenue Services (IRS), and MNsure, but affirmed that MNsure and DHS had been given the go-ahead by the IRS to look into periodic data match. In addition, Greg indicated periodic data match was planned for work in 2017.

MOTION: Deborah moved to send the roadmap back to the PMT to have them consider what work could be done if periodic data match were delayed or put off. Nathan Moracco seconded, noting that he felt it was valuable for the committee to discuss the motion.

Deborah reiterated the county stance that the periodic data match should not be implemented until after other functionality and improvements were made in METS. These functionality and improvements would allow county workers to efficiently complete their work without issues raised from periodic data match. She added that periodic data match would add more manual work to caseworker's loads, clarifying the county did not oppose program integrity improvements.

Chuck stated that he agreed with many of Deborah's concerns; however, DHS needed to remain compliant and had an obligation to move periodic data match forward. As such, he noted he was unable to support the motion focusing especially on the timeline, especially since periodic data match had been introduced over a year prior and implementation would still not occur until April 2018.

MOTION VOTING: On a vote of 4-1, the motion was not approved. Member Huskins voted in favor. Members Johnson, Koob, Moracco, and O'Toole voted against.

MOTION: Allison moved to approve the fall and winter releases as presented today, March 3, 2017. Nathan seconded. On a vote of 4-1, the motion was approved. Members Johnson, Koob, Moracco, and O'Toole voted in favor. Member Huskins voted against.

Greg presented an update on the spring release. Testing for spring was largely on track and all projects were reporting in green. In addition, the summer release was already in a test environment.

Greg noted the carrier reconciliation project was ongoing and remained in red as the project team continued to outline a project plan and scope for project priorities like EDI 834 files.

Greg presented on the project status, and noted two projects were in red. MinnesotaCare premium reconciliation was reporting yellow in recent months but was changed to status "red" as of February 24. Program reconciliation was also in red. Greg explained that both were in red mainly due to resource constraints and resources being re-prioritized.

Deborah inquired as to why the METS-MMIS integration is in yellow. Greg explained that the yellow status was cautionary as Greg and his team were trying to figure out the right way to track it, as it is mostly a business project with some IT support. He noted it remained a top priority.

Greg reported that MNIT was also looking at other options such as self-reporting of life event changes. Scott asked if Greg could illustrate more discovery work that was being reviewed. Greg indicated his team was looking into life event changes, effective dates, retroactive Medical Assistance requests, auto-newborn renewals, evidence broker, income wizard, managed care enrollment, and verify lawful presence. However, self-reporting of life event changes was being reviewed first.

New Business

Allison commented that a proposed CMS rule would cut the time period for open enrollment in half, with enrollment opening November 1, 2017, and closing December 15, 2017. Allison indicated MNsure would have a comment by Tuesday, March 7, 2017, and the comment would be consumer-oriented.

Allison also followed up on the request for information (RFI) that MNsure had released the previous summer. She noted that on the small business health options (SHOP) request, which was separate from METS, MNsure would be moving forward. That component was outside the scope of the METS ESC. On the broader items in the RFI, MNsure was also moving forward, but those could include issues for the METS ESC. Allison indicated the ESC should expect more information in the coming months.

Allison noted that Scott's last day with MNIT would be March 22, 2017. Committee members expressed their gratitude to Scott for his service.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

MOTION: Allison moved to adjourn. There were no objections and the meeting adjourned at 2:21 p.m.