Regulations Modernization Taskforce
Minutes
Friday, September 21, 2012

Members Present: Chris Drake, Rich Hanratty, Dick Hemenway, Angela Taetz, Kendall Wiggin, Denise Merrill, Bob Frankel, John Barrett, Brenda Parrella

Absent: John Vittner

1) Meeting called to order at 10:00am

2) Approval of redlined minutes without the recommended change of pdf to rtf. Minutes approved unanimously. (Ken Wiggin abstained)

3) Presentation by Technology Subcommittee

Angela Taetz –Concerned taskforce was putting the technology before the requirements. Suggested a consultant to provide a Business Requirements Document – includes everything you want the system to do. Process flow; online lookup; agencies posting on their sites; central location.

Chris Drake – Does group think it's a good idea to hire a consultant? BEST has "body shop" of preapproved venders. Business analyst 1 v. 2. The cost is different for each. If we use BEST, no RFP or sole service provider. Cost will ultimately be driven by how much time consultant spends on project.

Angela Taetz – Statement of work. Then go out to three venders. Resumes for business analysts. Then pick best fit.

Denise Merrill – who are vendors? Have they worked with our agencies? (Tricom, Superior Design International, Online Systems.) SOTS has worked with PCC through Tricom and they have been great. Subcontract. Used them for business registry. They worked with the vendor. ID'd IT requirements. This is an extensive process.

Angela Taetz – haven't been able to get a ballpark on costs.

John Barrett: Is a facilitator brought in to help us agree to what we are visualizing? Primary concern is access to outside community. Develop how it will look and work to them and then deal with management concerns. Biggest part of our charge is public access and we can develop that and not wait. What do we want them to access, what will it look like?

Pam Booth – in 2008 we had a 20 person focus group who did this work. Focused on input from the lobbying community, law library, state agencies. She still has their recommendations.

Rich Hanratty – We need to look around the country and see what we like. Work in 2008 was frustrating, and fragmented.

Chris Drake – we will look the final recommendations for next time. Bring someone in to rein in the good ideas. We aren't in charge of implementation.   That's the next step. There is some capital money that may be available. Hardware, software, vendor for implementation. Our job is just to come up with what the systems looks like.

Dick Hemenway: A study was done in his office a few years ago. All the administrative code in CT comes down to one person in his office. Three regs processes. (reference three flow charts)

Kendall Wiggin – we need to look at how far back it's going to take in the process to get it to the public face. Ideally, he would like to see it from the very beginning that there is a formal approval process. Look at the statute carefully to make the process better than it is.

Brenda Parella: there is public interest in seeing the files from the draft stages on. From the beginning right to the end. Online file for each reg. Like the legislative history file.

Dick Hemenway – Suggested updating his flowcharts

Rich Hanratty: Keep in mind our timeframe and scope of work. January 1, come up with a plan. Be online by July 1, 2013.

Dick Hemenway – there are some regs that are so large, they never print them. They have never been published. You would need to go to the source (i.e. Dept. of Banking) to see the reg. DPUC may be the same.

Denise Merrill: Wants to reiterate. Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good. She likes consultant idea. In the interim she spoke with people in Oregon, they have a terrific system. They have done this in other states. Might be better off looking at what someone else has done and recreate it. It's the easiest thing to do.

Brenda Parella: It isn't as simple as just popping it online. This must be searchable by the public. This is a broader mandate.

Dick Hemenway – System must be accessible to blind and visually impaired.

Ken Wiggin – Everything they have is made available in Braille or audio form. If they get a request, they will do it. We need to understand where we need to ultimately be. Getting the regs pdf-ed and up there is okay, but we need to consider how a new reg gets incorporated into a static set of pdfs. We may need to revisit it in the session and push out the July 1st date.

Brenda Parella: DSS has lots of budget driven mandates that are supposed to be incorporated on a certain day. This has to be done in a comprehensive way instead of just throwing something online.

John Barrett – This is being organized backwards. Who is our customer? Taxpayers. Secondary are the people in this room. What the mandate is about is getting the info to the public. Easy to lose focus. That can't interfere with getting things out to the public.

Ken Wiggin – State agencies are also the customers. We shouldn't create all sorts of problems for the people who need to get these regs to the public. The process should be timely – if there were a better online system, everyone would benefit.

Chris Drake – Dick Hemenway, Rich Hanratty and Brenda Parrella will redraft charts to make them go back all the way to the process starting with the agency. They could be very helpful to a consultant.

Motion: Brenda, Dick and Rich will report back at the next meeting the entire regulation process. Motion: Brenda; Second: Dick; unanimously approved.

Chris Drake: General agreement that we need a consultant. Drake and Angela will sit down to write a statement of work to be submitted to consultants. Then it would be incumbent on Chris to find money.

Motion: Chris and Angela come up with statement of work. Motion: Brenda, Second: Dick. Unanimous approval.

4.) Ben Elliott – OTG

CT is the only state that does not have a code online. Two main functions, search and browse. (examples: Washington State – search; Texas – browse)

Washington – easy to find on website, integrated, highlights key words in search results, beyond what they saw in WA, they liked multiple search fields. Date of adoption, key terms, etc… also liked sites with broad universe. Past versions of regulations. Entire process is available online.

Texas – browse. Kept it as simple as possible. Not flashy but easy to go through. Source notes: adopted on, amended on, gives a history. HTML is better than pdf.

Louisiana: download and pops up as a word document. Example of a bad site.

Kansas: does an even worse job. They just update the supplement, you need to scroll through the entire thing.

John Barrett– Advantage of html. Obviously the time, but also when you want to copy parts of the document to use somewhere else. HTML is very easy. As an outside user, it's something he deals with all the time.

Chris Drake – CGA website is HTML. The statutes themselves are HTML. Texas: you can see why it's better. No waiting, browsing back and forth easily. Cut and copy for legal brief.

Dick Hemenway – he would suggest taking a number (4-5) that you think are good. Then reach out to a blind employee in the state and ask them to try them out. Maybe they could give a demonstration.

John Barrett – you could create a parallel interface for blind people. Not set up for seeing people. Formatting will be different, layout will be different. You would only need to change the information in one place; you can just see it two different ways.

Angela – We always avoid doing that. Don't want to maintain two different sites.

Ben Elliott – Official v. not official. Some states actually say where the official copy is. Some have gone official online. Some of the better states have adopted an online submission sections with templates, so there is consistency for each agency. Other misc topics: some sites have link on initial page that allows a user to look at recent action. Some sites allow for some sort of notice if you want to sign up for it. You can make keyword requests for notifications. Very specific.

Brenda Parella: like the general assembly update for bills

Chris Drake: Is the service more valuable to Lexis and Westlaw because of the changes we are implementing? It's less labor for them. We could charge more for license fees. If we could integrate the regs search functions with CGA search.

John Barrett – Integration from within the documents. If there is mention of regulations in a statute, we should link directly to the reg.

Angela: She has started to have conversation with Paul Alderucci from the CGA IT Dept.

Chris Drake: we have to figure out a way to get from what we have to an accurate text editable copy that can be distributed to the agency, so when the appropriate time comes, the agency can just amend what they have. We can talk forever about little bits and pieces.

Rich Hanratty: when you sit down to talk about scope of work, it would be helpful to give example of what we like and don't like with a certain group of states. Texas, Washington , Oregon. He liked parts of all of them. We need to start from goal and work backwards. Processes that have developed overtime are not efficient. This is

what we want, how do we get there. We don't want to get too caught up in what's happened in the past.

Dick Hemenway – a lot of what we do now is in current legislation.

Ken Wiggin: that's part of our charge and it needs to be changed.

Rich Hanratty: how do we change the law to incorporate what we want?

Chris Drake: perfect example of what we need to do. On web, searchable, text that most people can read on their computers. The system must do this. Towards the end of process, he feels strongly that we need to go through and check what was done in 12-92 and see if that's what we want to go going forward. Very confident it would be a governor's bill if changes need to be made.

Rich Hanratty: new updated UAPA, the one we are working with is antiquated. CGA needs to adopt more modern version with changes that are specific of CT IT floated around last year. Might have been a proposed bill. Would bring our system into current technological advances.

Ken Wiggin: we hope we ask the consultant to look at the issue of migrating the different regs. It's a big issue. How did other states do it. We want to make it a robust system.

5) Schedule and Set Agenda for Subsequent Meetings - Next In-person meeting: Friday, October 5th, 10:00am

6) Adjourn at 11:26am: moved by John Barrett, seconded by Brenda Parella, Unanimous approval.