

ATRAC Called Meeting October 16, 2003

A called meeting of ATRAC was held, Thursday, October 16, 2003 at 1:00 pm at the AAC Building in Little Rock. County Clerks using AIS were invited to this meeting to discuss 2004 Software Maintenance charges. Randy Lamp, Rick Lamp and Kent Wilson of AIS were also in attendance.

Jim Arnold, President, welcomed all the Treasurers and Clerks and thanked Randy, Rick and Kent for being there. Jim stated that we should first hear from Randy on what the future holds for AIS and then we could ask questions.

Randy Lamp first thanked everyone for being there. He then apologized for the poor way this situation had been handled by him and his office. First, their fax machine did not work properly when sending out the statements (it has since been replaced). Another was a computer "glitch" that miscalculated these bills. Randy assured everyone that the "3rd party maintenance" would be removed from the revised statements. He said that in the future, that aspect would be handled on an individual basis. He now realizes he should have talked these changes over with the users and received input before springing these increases on us. He is looking toward the future of AIS and he wants this company to be around and be able to provide the services we will need. He wants to be a company that we can depend on and one that will support their software over the long term. He stated that as machines wear out and have to be replaced it is impossible to get new ones with DOS operating systems, therefore the programs have to be rewritten to accommodate Windows. AIS is rewriting these programs using the program DELPHI. He explained that he could support the older versions of Windows until sources for them "dries up". He stated that this programming would cost around \$300,000.00 per office. He said he had spoken with Legislative Audit pertaining to county budgeting and by using the term "software assurance" the counties can pay for development. He had run into that problem last year with the Collectors and Assessors budgets. He said he would guarantee and put in writing that there would be no more increases for the next five years - 2009.

Jim Arnold then asked for those who have questions to please raise their hand and be recognized.

Jim Arnold asked since he is from a small county with a small tax base and a small Automation Fund if it would be possible to stay with the old program and bypass the newer Windows program? He stated that his county would soon be unable to pay for this software. He also asked if all the invoices had been seen? Randy answered no that they would be unable to support the "old" programs running on DOS. He stated that in the case of the Collectors and Assessors, the fee is based on the county's classification and he was open to suggestions at

how to arrive at a more equitable solution to our problem with the price. And no, the new statements have not been sent.

Other questions asked were:

- Will the new programs require new equipment? Randy answered-No.
- Will the new programs run on Novell? Randy answered-Yes.
- Will we be able to access old data? Yes
- Will we be able to keep previous years records on the computer if we choose not to continue with Apprentice? Yes
- Would it be possible to spread this increase out over a longer period of time? Yes, Randy replied, I am open to all suggestions.
- It seems that the Collectors and Assessors programs are a lot more complex than the Treasurer's or Clerk's, so why does it cost the same? It doesn't, the Collectors and Assessors pay quite a bit more for their software assurance.
- With the cost almost doubling for the next five years, what's the likelihood of this happening again? It would be highly unlikely, after the programs are rewritten in the Windows DELPHI format, they would not need to be totally rewritten again. The price might go down instead of up.
- When will the new software be ready? 2005 and they are going to try to maintain the "keystroke compatibility" very similar to how it is now.
- Will the new program run on Windows 98? Yes
- What about prorating the cost according to revenue that goes through the office? That could be an option. It was suggested that everyone send their last five years gross revenues to Randy. Ronnie Baird, Treasurer, Miller Co., suggested using the last few years Treasurer's Commission to gauge use of the software. It was then decided that the last three years would be sufficient.
- Will the cost go up or down according to the number of offices using Apprentice? It will be evaluated annually.
- Could the payment for software be deferred to April or May, as the first few months of the year counties usually have a "cash flow" problem? Yes
- What about a contract for the software? Yes that will be possible.

With no further questions, Jim thanked Randy, Rick and Kent again for coming to explain what was happening.

It was decided that we should compile the Treasurer's commission data and forward it on to AIS.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Rinchuso, Secretary/Treasurer