

BOROUGH OF KUTZTOWN
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF September 2nd, 2025

A regular meeting of the Telecommunications and Information Technologies Committee was held on September 2nd, 2025.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Ms. Lisa Ladd-Kidder

Members present were Ms. Lisa Ladd-Kidder, Mr. Fred Engelhardt, and Mr. George Kusterer

Also in attendance: Mr. David Horvath

Public attendance: No public attendance

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 5th, 2025, minutes were reviewed, and a motion was made by Ms. Lisa Ladd-Kidder and seconded by Mr. George Kusterer to approve the minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

OLD BUSINESS FOR IT DEPARTMENT

The meeting focused on updates regarding ongoing IT projects, cybersecurity measures, and a review of the upcoming IT budget.
Old Business

- Internet Alternate Path:
 - The new Cogent circuit is functionally complete on their end.
 - Testing of the new circuit by staff is scheduled for tomorrow.
 - Once testing is successful, the public will be notified via website, social media, and email about a planned switchover date, likely in the early morning (2-3 AM).
 - The switch will cause a brief internet outage. Staff will test the new circuit, then revert to the primary Crown Castle circuit.
 - This new path (Lumen via Cogent to New York) is separate from the existing Crown Castle path (out of Philly), providing full redundancy.

- The new arrangement with Cogent provides better support with more technicians and engineers.
- Calix Equipment Upgrade:
 - Work is progressing on integrating utility billing data (from PCS) with internet customer information into the new SMX system. This will streamline customer identification and service management.
 - The telecom team is prepared to begin migrating subscribers from the older E7 shelf to the new SMX system.
 - Migration will occur in phases, starting with a few subscribers for testing, then moving to different areas, typically during early morning hours (2-3 AM).
 - Both the new and old systems will run simultaneously for approximately one year during the transition.
 - The end goal is to offer residents managed routers that allow for remote troubleshooting, saving time and money.
- Kaseya RMM (Remote Monitoring and Management):
 - This system is used for installing patches on borough office machines (employee computers, servers) and for remote support.
 - A component called SAS (Software as a Service) monitors cloud applications like Microsoft 365 and SharePoint.
 - SAS monitoring detects and has successfully alerted several nefarious attempts to access documents on SharePoint sites, confirming its value as a cybersecurity investment.

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New Business For IT Department

- Email Defense Report:
 - The report for August showed 31,000 emails processed, detailing quarantined and junk emails.
 - Many blocked emails originate from sources like Russia and China, with increasing sophistication, likely using artificial intelligence.
 - The system includes a sandbox environment that allows for safe analysis of suspicious emails without risking the network.
- IT Budget Review:
 - Key Expenditure: The most significant new item is a \$53,000 Fortigate purchase planned for 2026, with a duplicate anticipated in 2027.
 - Savings Achieved:

- Moving exchange hosting to Phillycom resulted in an annual saving of approximately \$6,000.
- Consolidating security software and phishing alerts under Kaseya saved around \$8,000 annually, replacing a previous vendor ("Know Before").
- Recurring Costs: Annual licensing fees for software like Professional Computer Systems (PCS) for utility billing and Springbrook for payroll, HR, and finance are standard and unavoidable due to the industry shift to "Software as a Service" models.
- Hybrid System Strategy: A prior cost analysis determined that migrating entirely to a cloud-based system (e.g., Microsoft Azure) would be too expensive, particularly due to the high storage requirements for police video data (50 terabytes). Therefore, a hybrid system, with some infrastructure maintained in-house, remains the most cost-effective approach despite ongoing annual fee increases from vendors.
- Future Savings: The significant annual cost for the SAN (Storage Area Network) hardware, which supported virtualization and video storage and was purchased three years ago, will expire next year, creating a substantial saving that aligns well with new equipment purchases.

The IT budget will be presented to Gabriel, who will then take it to the council for final approval. The speaker noted that budget items are typically approved.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Ladd-Kidder and seconded by Mr. Kusterer to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 pm.