



Dubuque County Memorandum

TO: Dubuque County Board of Supervisors,
FROM: IT Director Nathan Gilmore
DATE: 08/06/2025
RE: Request for Approval – Interim IT Leadership Appointments

County IT Leadership Succession Plan Executive Summary

With the resignation of the current IT Director, immediate leadership continuity is essential to ensure the security, stability, and strategic progress of county IT operations. I propose a two-person interim leadership structure, elevating:

- **Jered Shipley** to *Interim IT Director*
- **Darren McCarthy** to *Interim IT Operations Manager*

Both individuals are deeply familiar with our infrastructure, staff, vendors, and ongoing projects. Their appointments are critical to maintaining momentum, preventing service disruptions, and safeguarding county systems against cyber threats.

Why Immediate Succession Matters

1. Cybersecurity Protection

- Leadership vacuums are prime opportunities for cyberattacks and insider threats.
- Shipley currently leads our cybersecurity strategy and incident response planning; continuity ensures uninterrupted protection of critical systems.
- Disruption in oversight could delay threat detection, patching, and compliance enforcement.

2. Stability of Critical Services

- County operations—public safety, health services, finance, records—depend on uninterrupted IT infrastructure.
- McCarthy has managed the core infrastructure systems for years and is best positioned to prevent service disruptions and maintain operational expectations.

3. In-Flight Projects Must Stay on Track

- The county is in the midst of key projects including:
 - ERP modernization, Budget Module, HRIS Module, Phone System, PSAP, New Datacenter.
- Leadership by individuals already deeply involved ensures deadlines, vendor coordination, and budgets stay on track.

Why This Succession Plan Works

- **Experience & Trust:** Both individuals have institutional knowledge and established relationships with internal departments and external partners.
- **Zero Learning Curve:** No time is lost in onboarding, assessment, or team disruption.
- **Internal Morale:** Promoting respected internal leaders reinforces team stability and staff confidence.
- **Public Assurance:** Signals proactive planning and responsible leadership to constituents and oversight bodies.

Risks of Inaction or Delay

- Gaps in cybersecurity oversight increasing vulnerability
- Project delays leading to cost overruns and inflation risk
- Operational confusion and drop in team productivity
- Loss of momentum in modernization and digital service delivery

Recommendation

I strongly recommend immediate approval of this interim leadership structure. It allows for:

- **A smooth and secure leadership transition**
- **Stabilized operations** during the recruitment process for a permanent director
- Continued **protection of public data** and uninterrupted service delivery to the citizens of Dubuque County

Nathan Gilmore – IT Director