



Pathfinder

“Start by doing what’s necessary, then do what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

St. Francis of Assisi

Teamwork Matters

*A message from
the City Manager*



JASON STILWELL

In our world, where technology and demands are changing rapidly, innovation is key to success. Innovation is not a one-time process. It should be a mainstream activity. All businesses, including the City, have to be innovative if they want to remain competitive.

Santa Maria’s Technology Summit held February 21st at the Radisson Hotel, drew a wide diversity of attendees (see photo) who learned how they could partner with the City’s state-of-the-art 700 MHz radio communications



system and achieve affordable regional interoperability. The overall goal of this innovative event was to demonstrate, explain, and answer questions about the significant quality improvements and increased capabilities that the City has achieved. By leveraging the City’s upfront investment, partners can reduce their own investment and minimize yearly recurring expenses. Also, they could quicken the purchasing process by piggybacking on the City’s negotiated contract agreement with Motorola. Further, they also could benefit from pre-negotiated price incentives. Beyond the affordability advantages, this innovation

will enhance service and enable opportunities to better interact and communicate.

Attendees included leaders from financial institutions, schools, UCSB, Santa Barbara County Fire Department, healthcare agencies, and others. The summit was paid for by Motorola and was co-organized by the Information Technology Division of the City Manager’s Office. The City is using Motorola products including radios, 911 dispatch call taking, Computer-Aided Dispatch, and a Records Management System. Speakers included Information Technology Manager **Teri Maa**, **Carlos Delatorre** of NewTel Consulting, Police Sgt. **Alfredo Ruiz**, Dispatcher II **Melissa Parker**, and Fire Battalion Chief **Tom Crakes**.

Another City example of innovation was the February 16th forum at the City Public Library’s Shepard Hall at which dozens of employees from numerous departments had unfettered first-hand access to Dane Hutchings, a legislative representative with the League of California Cities. He is an expert on the state of the CalPERS retirement system.

The main message was that our retirement futures are not as secure as we hoped they would be. One takeaway from the question and answer period is that a city reducing its workforce does not make pensions more secure and does not substantially reduce costs. Cities will be reducing workforces because they must have a balanced budget and other reductions are not possible. The two solutions are 1) more revenue or 2) lower employee costs. A sobering message indeed. I look forward to all of us working together to develop feasible paths forward.

The sooner we choose a path to fiscal sustainability and a more secure retirement for us and our families, the less drastic the change will have to be. We will all need to share ideas to be part of the solution.

Jason