The Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa
Staff Monthly Report

Office of Information Technology

Prepared For: Corporate Planning Meeting	Report No.: AD 2021-01
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Preamble

For the last several months, the Municipality has undergone a transformation to increase our network security.

General

1. **Windows 7 to Windows 10 Conversion**

   a. We have completed the conversion of all desktop computers from Windows 7 to Windows 10 following the end of support for Windows 7. This process had begun in the Spring and Summer of 2020 and completed in the Fall. This was the first step in the security at the user level.

2. **Password Changes**

   a. Along at the user level, we implement password rules that all staff was to change their passwords to match a minimum-security level that must include at least eight characters, at least one capital letter, one number and one symbol. In the next couple of weeks, there will be a group policy sent out by the firewall which will make staff change their passwords every 6 months. This rule will be sent out by our new firewall.

3. **Server Migrations**

   a. We have completed a complete migration of our new servers. Our servers are hosting several virtual servers, all hosting programs, data, and acting as domain controllers. All our servers are talking to each other and replicating each other every few minutes. This ensures that if one of our servers go down, such as our domain controller, another server needs to be turned on and the down time will only be the time that it takes for the server to boot up.

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4. <u>**Backups**</u>

   a. We have also changed how we approach our network backups. We have moved our backups from its existing server and moved it onto one of our new servers. Our backups will now be saved on the server and stored onto an external hard drive. This hard drive will be moved offsite and replaced every Monday. If the worst should happen, we would only lose a week of data at most.

5. <u>**Microsoft Office 365**</u>

   a. We have moved away from Microsoft Office 2019 and moved to Microsoft Outlook 365 for our emails. Microsoft Outlook 365 has a lot of built in security features, some of which include:

      i. **Secure Cloud Storage** - Office 365 is a totally secure environment with robust security measures in place, Threat detection and anti-malware means security threats are identified and stopped immediately, which is particularly important, since we deal with confidential data and information.

      ii. **Message encryptions** - This feature allows us to send encrypted email, stopping anyone other than the intended recipient from reading the contents of the emails. Encryption works no matter which email service the recipient uses.

      iii. **Automatic Upgrades -** Upgrades are performed automatically at predetermined intervals, so we don't have to worry about being on the latest version; that will happen automatically. The expense of buying new software is also eradicated as updates are included in the subscription of our Office 365 licences.

6. <u>**New Firewall**</u>

   a. We have a new firewall! Over the last month, the Managed Municipality who we have hired to assist with our network needs have configured and built our new firewall, which I am happy to say was installed last week and is running as planned.

   b. A VPN network was put in place to allow staff who at times, need to work from home or connect into our network securely. The VPN's are currently being installed on all staff computers that may need this.

      i. This will eliminate the need for third party software.

7. <u>**Wireless Networks**</u>

   a. New wireless access points have been put in place, and the ones that are currently installed are all programmed and managed by one program.

      i. Two new points in Town Hall, one upstairs and one on the main floor will work together, for continuous wireless connection to our domain.

ii. One new access point at 3 Maple Street is also connected to our domain, allowing staff to work wirelessly on the domain as well,

iii. And the one that was already set up, but not programmed with the others was the fire hall, which is now connected.

8. <u>Staff diligence</u>

a. We have an incredible team that is always vigilant, while they are working in helping prevent spam, malware or viruses entering our network. They all have great awareness of what appears to be suspicious, and we do continue to stress to everyone the importance of scrutinizing any suspicious emails with active links and to avoid going to unknown sites

All of these changes again couldn't have been done without staff support. Through all the changes, staff has worked through them all, with patience and understanding.

End of report.