



Waukesha Water Utility

SERVING WAUKESHA SINCE 1886

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 17, 2025

TO: Water Utility Commission

FROM: Cortney Nagel
Administrative Services Manager

RE: Utility Billing Software Upgrade

In 2022, the Utility received requests for proposals for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software from three companies: Tyler Technologies, Harris Computer, and BS&A Software. Each company said that they could meet the functionality and regulatory requirements of the Utility and Wisconsin Public Service Commission. Through staff evaluation and cost comparisons, BS&A Software was selected. During implementation in 2024, it became very clear that they would not be able to meet the needs of the Utility or the regulatory requirements in Wisconsin. As a result, the Utility was forced to scrap the conversion and revert back to the old software, Harris Computer (Advanced Utility Systems – CIS) for Utility Billing. The Utility currently operates version 3 (V3) of the Harris Computer Advanced Utility Systems Billing software (CIS). This version is about twenty years old and updates are no longer available. CIS continues to support us with this version, but we are having more frequent issues as Windows versions update and the software does not.

Since the Utility currently operates version 3 of CIS and they were one of the proposals that were originally received, we would like to request approval from the Commission to move forward with an upgrade to the most recent version of our billing software – CIS version 5 (V5) in the Cloud. Staff is confident that this software will meet all of our daily and regulatory requirements. We will not lose any current functionality in the upgrade, but will gain many advanced technology and security features. Code in V5 is compatible with artificial intelligence making reporting and automation limitless. The REST API feature allows us to share with other vendor partners and will make process improvement in the future much more seamless.

The migration from the existing CIS version 3 to the latest version (V5) is a full system conversion — effectively a move to an entirely new platform. Across the industry, vendors are retiring on-premises software and transitioning customers to cloud-hosted environments. Moving to the vendor-hosted cloud platform allows us to transfer significant operational, security, and compliance risks away from the Utility. Chris Pofahl, City IT Director, has provided the following Operational & Reliability Benefits and Security and Compliance Advantages of Cloud Hosting.

Operational & Reliability Benefits

From an operational standpoint, transferring hosting responsibility to the vendor reduces exposure to local system failures and maintenance risks.

- Improved uptime and disaster resilience: Cloud hosting provides redundant infrastructure, reducing downtime risks from hardware failures, power loss, or natural disasters.
- Automatic scalability: The system automatically adjusts resources to meet seasonal or monthly billing spikes and heavy portal traffic without requiring local hardware upgrades.
- Reduced maintenance burden: Vendor-managed hosting eliminates the need for on-premise server patching, backups, and monitoring, freeing IT staff for higher-value projects.

Security & Compliance Advantages

From a security perspective, transferring this environment to the vendor's cloud significantly reduces exposure to threats tied to patching delays or local infrastructure vulnerabilities.

- Enhanced cybersecurity posture: Cloud vendors continuously patch and maintain their platforms, updating software more frequently than is feasible with on-premises systems.
- Geographic redundancy: Data is replicated across secure failover locations that meet retention and protection standards.
- Simplified compliance management: The vendor assumes responsibility for portions of regulatory and audit obligations related to system availability and data protection.

The cost to upgrade CIS from V3 to V5 is \$648,416 and includes licensing for 20 concurrent users. Travel expenses related to the conversion are billed as incurred, but are estimated at \$27,000. Advanced REST API is an additional \$20,000.

Annual fees will be \$41,000 for V5 and REST API. Cloud hosting services will be an additional \$55,191 each year. While the Cloud hosting services are expensive, they not only provide all of the security and operational benefits listed above, but they future-proof the Utility's investment by ensuring compatibility with modern integrations such as payment gateways, customer portals, and API's. These annual fees will be locked in for three years.

We are asking for the approval of Harris Computer Advanced Utility Billing Software proposal to provide Waukesha Water Utility with cloud-based billing software, with initial costs of \$695,416 including estimated travel expenses and advanced REST API and a 2026 annual cost of \$98,441.

Recommended Motion: Move to approve Harris Computer Advanced Utility Billing Software proposal to provide Waukesha Water Utility with cloud-based billing software, with initial costs of \$695,416 including estimated travel expenses and advanced REST API and a 2026 annual cost of \$98,441.