



Robert E. Antonacci II, CPA
Comptroller

COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

Office of the
County Comptroller

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The Honorable County Executive
The Chair of the County Legislature
The Chair of the Ways and Means Committee
The Chief Fiscal Officer
The Clerk of the County Legislature

Please find enclosed our report on County-owned wireless devices performed by my audit staff. While we understand other municipalities have hired consultants specializing in this arena, it is immediately clear we are wasting approximately \$50,000 per year by having cell phones which are being unused by our employees.

Our report and analysis concentrated on the cost of wireless devices and indicates even more savings is possible. We note cell phone costs have increased significantly the last two years. We further note there is a significant variance by departments per wireless device. This leads us to believe the County should look to sharing minutes county-wide. The Probation Department is one department sharing minutes and the data shows the unit cost is lowest in their department.

Further, given the number of devices paid for and not used, we recommend all departments review critically the reasons why employees are given wireless devices. Additionally, the use of Blackberries and other PDA's must be consistently reviewed because those costs are adding to our overall expenses.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Antonacci II, CPA

REA/nlc
enclosures

August 19, 2009

My office has completed a review of County-owned wireless devices, i.e., cellular phones and blackberries. Following are some statistical data and recommendations to consider in revising the existing wireless device directive.

Data Analysis

We analyzed all wireless device claims available in my office for the time periods November 2007, November 2008 and March 2009.

- Onondaga County owns 897 wireless devices, used by 21 County departments with an estimated annual 2009 cost of \$306,000.
- Of the 897 wireless devices owned, 148 had an average minutes used for the periods analyzed of less than 10 minutes with an estimated annual 2009 cost of \$52,000. In other words, the County will spend over \$50,000 in 2009 for wireless devices that are used infrequently or not at all.
- In addition to the County-wide Wireless Usage Directive, there are 21 separate departmental policies in place.
- The monthly average cost per wireless device ranges from \$11.43 to \$73.33.
- The annualized departmental cost per wireless device ranges from \$137.22 to \$879.96.
- The annual County-wide cost for wireless devices will increase 54% from 2007 (\$198,839) to 2009 (\$305,979).

Recommendations for revision of the existing Wireless Usage Directive

1. It is recommended employees who use their County cell phone or wireless devices for personal use reimburse the County for that use. This will help to ensure the IRS standards are followed. The IRS requires cell phones used for personal use be included in the salary of the individual carrying the cell phone, absent certain record keeping and reimbursement requirements. There are currently ten departments that had employees pay some kind of reimbursement for their personal use of a County cell phone for 2007, 2008 and 2009. Those departments are Community Development, County Executive, W.E.P., Emergency Communications, Transportation, Parks & Recreation, Health Department, Mental Health Department, Corrections, and Board of Elections. There are also three departments that paid some type of reimbursement for 2008. They are Information Technology, Law Department and Purchasing.

2. It is recommended there be a periodic review of the cell phones incurring monthly charges. There were 148 cell phones which used less than an average of ten minutes for November 2007, November 2008, and March 2009. It might be cost effective for the County to consider reimbursing employees for business use of their personal cell phone, especially if their use is at a minimum.
3. The County should look into contracts that allow for shared minutes for all the departments that carry cell phones. There are a few departments that have implemented this already. They pay a large amount for the shared minutes and then a small fee for each phone. This resulted in a lower overall per cell phone cost.
4. It is recommended that the employee pay all text message charges relating to personal business unless text messages were allowed on their plan and were used for work related business.
5. In addition to assigning responsibility to each Department to keep proper inventory and accounting records of all wireless devices, the Department should also be required to file an annual inventory of those devices with the Purchasing Department.
6. Consideration should be given to contracting with a consultant to recommend cost savings ideas. Any such contract should be procured through the standard Request for Proposals process.

Cellphone Information

Department	2009 March Cost Totals	2009 March Minutes Totals	03/2009 Number of Active Wireless Devices	Monthly Average Cost per Wireless Devices	Annual Average Cost per Wireless Devices	Annual Average Cost per Dept	Monthly Minutes Per Wireless Devices	Wireless Devices Less than 10 min.	Monthly Cost of less than 10	Annual Cost of less than 10
Board of Election	106.86	1,385	2	53.43	641.16	1,282.32	693	0	0.00	0.00
Community Development	387.51	3,484	10	38.75	465.01	4,650.12	348	3	139.43	1,673.16
Corrections	160.99	175	6	26.83	321.98	1,931.88	29	2	13.95	167.40
County Clerk	34.53	28	1	34.53	414.36	414.36	28	0	0.00	0.00
District Attorney	1,969.71	22,903	37	53.24	638.82	23,636.46	619	4	196.90	2,362.80
Economic Development	89.56	443	2	44.78	537.36	1,074.72	222	0	0.00	0.00
Emergency Communication	287.90	887	8	35.99	431.85	3,454.80	111	3	44.30	531.60
Health	1,783.66	10,761	131	13.62	163.39	21,403.86	82	27	263.12	3,157.44
Information Technology	444.36	935	23	19.32	231.84	5,332.32	41	5	89.38	1,072.56
Law Department	127.51	1,880	4	31.88	382.53	1,530.12	470	0	0.00	0.00
Mental Health	285.66	1,455	8	35.71	428.49	3,427.92	182	0	0.00	0.00
Parks & Recreation	879.90	11,189	42	20.95	251.40	10,558.80	266	3	62.85	754.20
Probation	891.91	5,450	78	11.43	137.22	10,702.92	70	12	123.76	1,485.12
Purchasing	47.38	742	1	47.38	568.56	568.56	742	0	0.00	0.00
Sheriff's	1,910.78	17,026	63	30.33	363.96	22,929.36	270	5	155.51	1,866.12
Social Services	4,140.27	33,519	220	18.82	225.83	49,683.24	152	38	354.30	4,251.60
Transportation	931.70	13,490	29	32.13	385.53	11,180.40	465	0	0.00	0.00
Van Duyn	240.72	501	15	16.05	192.58	2,888.64	33	9	123.19	1,478.28
W.E.P.	2,095.35	18,925	62	33.80	405.55	25,144.20	305	3	112.83	1,353.96
Water Board	44.14	94	2	22.07	264.84	529.68	47	1	22.07	264.84
Community Develp/Data	65.58	60	1	65.58	786.96	786.96	60 *	0	0.00	0.00
Corrections/Data	51.95	522	1	51.95	623.40	623.40	522 *	0	0.00	0.00
County Executive/Data	1,235.31	5,351	17	72.67	871.98	14,823.72	315 *	6	532.95	6,395.40
Economic Devel/Data	51.70	117	1	51.70	620.40	620.40	117 *	0	0.00	0.00
Emergency Comm/Data	228.75	1,133	5	45.75	549.00	2,745.00	227 *	0	0.00	0.00
Health/Data	507.97	2,931,509	11	46.18	554.15	6,095.64	266,501 *	3	129.03	1,548.36
Information Tech/Data	364.06	1,074,639	11	33.10	397.16	4,368.72	97,694 *	0	0.00	0.00
Law Department/Data	103.40	328	2	51.70	620.40	1,240.80	164 *	0	0.00	0.00
Mental Health/Data	73.33	1	1	73.33	879.96	879.96	1 *	0	0.00	0.00
Probation/Data	1,054.85	1,455,243	22	47.95	575.37	12,658.20	66,147 *	3	129.03	1,548.36
Purchasing/Data	86.48	511	2	43.24	518.88	1,037.76	256 *	1	43.01	516.12
Social Services/Data	4,568.37	9,710,427	74	61.73	740.82	54,820.44	131,222 *	21	1,142.85	13,714.20
Transportation/Data	197.53	668,047	4	49.38	592.59	2,370.36	167,012 *	0	0.00	0.00
Van Duyn/Data	48.61	4,554	1	48.61	583.32	583.32	4,554 *	0	0.00	0.00
Totals	25,498.28	15,997,714.44	897	1,363.89	16,366.65	305,979.36	739,967.10	149	3,678.46	44,141.52
2007 Totals			<u>777</u>			<u>198,839.38</u>				
Difference			120			107,139.98				

* KBS of Data