The Virgin Islands Consortium

EDA Board Approves Policy Allowing Employees to Purchase Decommissioned Computers

Board members unanimously approved a plan enabling EDA staff to buy end-of-life computers after data sanitization, citing unsupported software, cost savings, and reinvestment of proceeds into new IT equipment.

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Economic Development Authority board members approved a staff proposal to allow EDA employees to purchase decommissioned computers from the agency once the machines have reached the end of their useful corporate life.

Members voted unanimously to adopt the policy outlined by EDA Chief Financial Officer Kelly Thompson-Webb. She explained that the transition to newer operating systems among computer manufacturers meant that older software such as Windows 10 are no longer supported. “They no longer receive security updates, software patches, or technical support,” she noted. “As a result, these devices cannot be serviced or maintained for official use, even though the hardware itself may be functional.”

Instead of consigning the machines to a junkyard, EDA employees will now have an opportunity to acquire these still-working, albeit deprecated, machines at bargain prices. Based on “life cycle” of EDA computers, Ms. Thompson-Webb estimates that those which will be offered for sale will be between five and seven years old.

Once decommissioned, Ms. Thompson-Webb explained, the computers will undergo a data-wiping process. “All equipment will be sanitized by an authorized IT contractor prior to release…a certificate of sanitization will be retained for audit and compliance purposes,” she assured. The machines will then be offered at 50% of the current market value, first to the employee to whom the computer was assigned. If that person declines to purchase, it would then be offered to other staffers via “some fair and transparent method.” Ms. Thompson-Webb indicated.

The EDA CFO noted one significant caveat – employees who buy the machines will not be able to resell them within the first 12 months after purchase, nor are they allowed to buy them on someone else’s behalf. “We do not want to have any abuse of the program,” Ms. Thompson-Webb said, remaining adamant about this restriction in the face of pushback by some board members.

The money collected by EDA from these sales would feed back into the agency's budget for the purchase of new IT equipment and infrastructure, Ms. Thompson-Webb indicated.