The board of directors of the Inter-American Foundation (IAF) met via video conference on May 26, 2021. Board Chair Eddy Arriola was joined by Vice Chair Juan Carlos Iturregui and members Kelly Ryan, Jack Vaughn, and Luis A. Viada. IAF President and Chief Executive Officer Paloma Adams-Allen was joined by members of the management team, including, Marcia Cota, senior advisor for partnerships; Lesley Duncan, chief operating officer; Kara Rogers, senior management analyst; Nicole Stinson, associate general counsel; and Karen Vargas, board liaison.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Arriola welcomed meeting participants and thanked them for making the time to discuss the IAF’s plans regarding a customer relationship management system (CRM). He noted that a CRM system is a significant and long term investment for the agency and that the meeting would be an opportunity for the Board to ask questions regarding the information contained in the briefing memo shared in advance of the meeting.

IAF President and Chief Executive Officer Paloma Adams-Allen provided additional framing for the discussion, she noted the goal of the meeting was primarily to ensure the Board’s understanding of CRM systems, how one would be used by the IAF, and the potential added-value it would bring to the agency’s engagement efforts. She further stated that the meeting would cover expected costs and contract duration within the limits set by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). Adams-Allen reiterated that the meeting was an opportunity for the Board to ask questions and make an informed decision on the recommendation to move forward with a CRM procurement.

The rules for the meeting were provided by the IAF’s board liaison, Karen Vargas, and Arriola called the meeting to order at 03:05 p.m. No members of the public were present.

II. BACKGROUND

Senior Advisor for Partnerships Marcia Cota noted that CRMs are part strategy and part tech solution and overviewed the functions of a CRM system, including its capability to enhance the efforts of an organization to: (1) build relationships to scale and or expand their work; (2) build their brand and share their stories and impact; and (3) effectively track and manage stakeholders (i.e. potential partners and donors).

A CRM system would support IAF’s partnerships efforts by creating a central repository of partners, prospects, and contacts that would be easily accessible by all staff and allowing IAF to

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1 The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) is the primary regulation for use by all executive agencies in their acquisition of supplies and services with appropriated funds. Per FAR 3.104-4 (b) “Contractor bid or proposal information and source selection information must be protected from unauthorized disclosure in accordance with 14.401, 15.207, applicable law, and agency regulations.”
automate workflows, processes, and communications. Moreover, a CRM system would enable the IAF to better engage IAF alumni\(^2\) and congressional contacts and facilitate a culture shift toward sharing and maintaining institutional contacts. Ultimately, a CRM system is a tool that will enhance IAF’s work by systematizing how we store and access contact information and leverage technology for timely and targeted outreach and reports. Another positive impact of introducing a CRM system at the IAF is that it could be used to support fundraising campaigns and event coordination.

III. DISCUSSION

A short discussion ensued where board members asked clarifying questions on how a CRM system would be used in fundraising campaigns, integration with other agency systems, prevalence of CRM use by other federal agencies, and the timeline for procurement as well as what happens after the expiration of the contract term.

At the request of a fellow board member, Arriola shared some general impressions based on his personal experience implementing a CRM system for his business. Responding to a question regarding how the procurement of a CRM system would impact the IAF’s fiscal year 2022 expenditures, Chief Operating Officer Lesley Duncan noted that the IAF’s FY22 cost estimates for IT systems anticipated the additional cost for the first year of a CRM system contract.

IV. CONCURRENCE

Noting no further questions, IAF Board Member Luis A. Viada motioned to concur with the management team’s recommendation to move forward with the procurement of a CRM system for the agency. The motion was seconded by Board Secretary Jack Vaughn and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There was a brief discussion on plans to reopen the IAF office, in which Duncan reiterated the IAF’s posture of continued telework with maximum flexibility. She also noted that the official government status as per the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) remains maximum telework and that OPM recently requested that agencies begin to think through their return-to-work plans.

Without further business, the meeting was adjourned by Arriola at 3:50 p.m.

\(^2\) IAF alumni refers to former board and advisory council members, staff