

Menahga's IT Updates and the Reported Computer Crash

Adam Gunderson | Response letter | October 18, 2026

Mr. Broden's discussion of Menahga's computer systems leaves readers with the impression that I prevented necessary security updates. The public records reviewed do not document that claim. They show a broader county effort involving neighboring communities.

To verify the statements about the IT issue and alleged computer crash, I personally contacted Chief Amy Lane and former Wadena County IT Director Dave Hotchkiss. Chief Lane told me there had not been a computer crash and that she did not know what crash was being discussed. Hotchkiss told me there had been no computer crash in Menahga and that he had never had an issue with me.

Former city IT contact Nate Nims separately said he did not remember a computer crash and that the county would handle a police computer crash.

Regarding the security updates, I did speak with Hotchkiss in 2022. My recollection is that he was giving me advance notice that a county-wide update was coming. My understanding was that it was not yet ready to be put in place. This was notice of an upcoming change, rather than an available upgrade I was refusing.

The county's February 2023 project list subsequently identified planned security improvements for Menahga and Verndale. Menahga approved its county police IT agreement on March 27, 2023, followed by Sebeka on April 18 and Verndale on May 8. All three approved \$3,500 arrangements within six weeks, with Menahga approving first.

Sebeka's minutes explicitly describe a county-wide effort to create uniformity. Those records are consistent with the upcoming changes I understood Hotchkiss to be describing. They do not document me refusing an available upgrade or holding up Menahga's participation.

A review of 17 Menahga meeting-minute documents from November 2022 through May 2023 found no reference to a police computer crash. That finding is consistent with what Chief Lane and Hotchkiss told me: there had been no computer crash in Menahga.

To check the discussion reported in the newspaper, we requested the March 27 meeting audio. The city could not locate it and identified an apparent recording gap from approximately December 7, 2022, through April 28, 2023. It could not determine whether those meetings were recorded or whether the recordings were retained. Without that audio, we cannot independently check the reported statements in their full context.

Questions about my record are fair. But the records reviewed do not document me refusing the county update or establish that I caused a computer failure. Those conclusions require supporting evidence beyond the timing of my departure.

The accompanying PDF provides the detailed timeline, supporting records, and further explanation.