

# Monette makes call for BlackBerry review

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Orleans Coun. Bob Monette wants the city's auditor general to look into bureaucrats' use of city-issued mobile devices like BlackBerrys and cellphones.

Monette is asking for councillors' support to have a full audit. The motion is expected to come before city council at next week's meeting.

"How are we using these tools we have and is there a better way to be using them?" Monette said.

The audit would account for

all the mobile devices doled out by the city and how much it's costing to run the data and cell services.

Monette said he's curious to know if there are any staffers who have BlackBerrys or cellphones and don't necessarily need them for their jobs.

"It's not a motion to come down on anybody's usage,"

Monette said.

The motion says having appropriate controls on the allocation and use of the devices is "important to good financial and resource management."

An audit of cellphones and

BlackBerrys could look at data transfers through text messages, e-mails and mobile web browsers, in addition to the airtime used for phone calls.

Monette said the auditor general has looked at computer usage, so it's natural to examine how other communication tools are being used.

The councillor also wants to get a sense of who's providing cell and data service to the city and if there are ways to improve the delivery.

According to the motion, the auditor general has indicated there are enough funds to perform the audit this year.

The audit wouldn't affect the 2010 budget.

The motion comes as city council prepares to debate the 2010 budget later this month.

Questions about BlackBerry distribution came up during discussion of the police services board's proposed 2010 budget. The force is asking for an extra \$91,900 for cellphone airtime this year. Police board members heard more staff sergeants have requested BlackBerrys because of the number of meetings they attend.

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