

From: M Bret Blackford (bret_blackford@yahoo.com)

To: mennis@cfserve.org

Cc: bret_blackford@yahoo.com; emcpherson@cfserve.org

Date: Tuesday, August 25, 2026 at 07:48 AM CDT

Mary,

Would you please open another ticket with Kevin Romain asking him to evaluate and develop a plan for migrating CFS away from the on-premises Active Directory environment and, if practical, moving our users and computers to Microsoft Entra ID/Microsoft 365?

The existing physical server and UPS are aging and are becoming a maintenance concern. The UPS frequently beeps and requires attention following power outages, and the server currently has a failing drive. While neither issue necessarily requires an immediate migration, the hardware is clearly getting long in the tooth, so I don't think we should invest much more time or money in maintaining it if we can reasonably eliminate the need for the physical server.

The server historically provides several services:

- Active Directory/domain authentication
- File and shared-drive storage
- Print-server services
- Scan-drive/storage services

The older files have now been backed up and archived, so I don't believe we need to retain the server simply as a file server. Going forward, OneDrive and/or SharePoint should generally be used for office files and shared documents.

Before making any changes, however, we need Kevin to help us determine exactly what still depends on the local server. Could you ask him to address the following in the ticket?

- What currently depends on the local Active Directory server?
- Is moving CFS users and computers from traditional Active Directory to Microsoft Entra ID practical?
- Does our existing Microsoft 365 licensing include what we would need for Entra ID?
- What additional Microsoft licensing costs, if any, should we expect?
- Would we need Microsoft Entra Domain Services, or would a simpler cloud-native Entra ID environment be sufficient?
- Are there any applications, devices, policies, or other services that still require traditional Active Directory?
- What portions of the shared drive, if any, are still actively being used?
- Would SharePoint/OneDrive be an appropriate replacement for any remaining shared-drive functions?
- What should replace the current print-server function?
- Where should scanners save documents once the server is removed?
- Are there any other dependencies that need to be addressed before the physical server and UPS can be retired?
- What would Kevin estimate for any one-time consulting or migration costs?
- Given the failing drive and age of the hardware, are there any short-term steps we should take to reduce the risk of a server failure while we plan the migration?

There isn't an immediate rush to make the change, but given the age and current condition of the server and UPS, I think we should get a plan in place rather than wait for a hardware failure to force the issue.

At this point, we primarily need Kevin to assess the existing environment and give us a recommended migration plan, estimated costs, and any issues we would need to address before proceeding.

--- Bret

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Eric McPherson <emcpherson@cfserve.org>

To: M Bret Blackford <bret_blackford@yahoo.com>

Cc: Kevin Romain <kromain@cfserve.org>; Bret Blackford <bblackford@cfserve.org>; Mary Ennis <mennis@cfserve.org>

Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2026 at 12:28:44 PM CDT

Subject: Re: CFS Server Decommissioning as Next Phase of IT Modernization

Thanks, Bret!

I agree that there is no rush, but we need to prudently move ahead with this idea of removing a physical structure when it could all be on the cloud.

Your turn, Kevin!

Serving for Life,

Eric McPherson, MA, LPC

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From: M Bret Blackford <bret_blackford@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2026 9:06 PM

To: Eric McPherson <emcpherson@cfserve.org>

Cc: Kevin Romain <kromain@cfserve.org>; Bret Blackford <bblackford@cfserve.org>; Mary Ennis <mennis@cfserve.org>

Subject: CFS Server Decommissioning as Next Phase of IT Modernization

Eric,

I stopped by CFS today to look at the first-floor server/UPS (picture attached), which was beeping following a recent power outage. With Kevin Romain now out of state, I may occasionally need to provide some on-site assistance, which is fine, but it also reinforces something we identified during the IT review earlier this year: **I think it is time to start looking at the remaining on-premise server as the next phase of the CFS IT modernization.**

The Dell server currently provides several functions, including:

- Active Directory/domain authentication
- File-server/shared-drive storage
- Print-server services
- Scan-drive/storage services

Before doing anything with it, we obviously need Kevin's assistance to confirm exactly what still depends on the server. However, my preliminary recommendation would be to work toward eliminating the need for the physical server altogether.

The shared drive appears to contain a considerable amount of older/legacy material, although there are also some folders—such as Scans—that are still actively being used. I think we should first determine what needs to be retained and what staff still actively use (it all looks old to me). We could then archive older material and migrate files that need ongoing shared access to an appropriate Microsoft 365 solution such as SharePoint/OneDrive. Similarly, I would like Kevin to help us evaluate moving CFS away from the local Active Directory environment toward Microsoft Entra ID/Microsoft 365 authentication, assuming there are no remaining applications or workstation dependencies that require traditional on-premise Active Directory. We would also need to determine the best replacement for the current print-server function and where scanners should save documents. If those pieces can be addressed, **the goal would ultimately be to decommission and remove the Dell server and its UPS**. That would eliminate another aging piece of on-site infrastructure and reduce the amount of equipment CFS has to maintain and support locally. One other item I think we should address as part of this project is administrative backup coverage. In addition to Kevin, I would suggest that I—and perhaps Mary—have appropriate backup administrative access to Microsoft 365/Entra ID so CFS is not dependent upon a single individual for routine administration or emergencies.

Kevin, please weigh in on this. In particular, I'd appreciate your thoughts on:

- What currently depends on the local Active Directory server?
- Whether moving the CFS users/computers to Microsoft Entra ID is practical
- Whether our existing Microsoft 365 licensing already includes what we would need for Entra ID
- What additional Microsoft/Azure licensing costs we should expect, if any
- Whether we would need Microsoft Entra Domain Services or whether a simpler cloud-native Entra ID setup would be sufficient
- A rough estimate of any one-time consulting/migration costs to make the change
- What portions of the shared drive are still actively used (I think none)
- Whether SharePoint/OneDrive would be an appropriate replacement for the shared drive and what, if any, additional cost that would involve
- Options for replacing the print-server and scan-drive functions
- Any other dependencies we need to address before the physical server can be retired

There isn't any immediate rush, but I think this would be a logical next phase now that the network, phones, and related infrastructure have been substantially modernized.

Thanks,

--- Bret