Using the Disposition Approval Workflow

The Records Management Functionality within SharePoint Management 2007 is very extensive. One of the features of Records Management is to be able to set up an expiration schedule for content types and document libraries. So, for example, if a Document Library contains a couple of different content types like Status Reports and Expense Reports, you can implement separate expression schedules for either or both of them through the information management policy settings of the document library. In this video, I am going to show you how you can set up the expiration schedule and use a Disposition Approval Workflow to obtain approval for disposition of the document.

So here is a typical Team Site. This happens to be a Marketing Team Team Site. First what I am going to do is go to the Document Library, in this Document Library, I have two content types, if I click on New, I can see that there is an Expense Report and a Status Report that I can create using the Document Library. To start creating an Information Management Policy, I need to first navigate to the Settings → Document Library Settings → and then the Information Management Policy Settings. Here, it is going to show me that I can set up the Information Management Policy for either or both of these documents. I would have to do each of them separately, of course. So, let me go ahead and try to set it up for the Expense Report.

Okay, now I can 'Define a new policy' at this level, at the Expense Report library level, or I can 'Use an existing Site Collection Policy'. Since there are no Site Collection policies that have been implemented, I would have to define a new one here, click OK. In here, it is telling me, first of all, that it is going to be implementing an Information Management Policy for Expense Report only. I can put Administrative Description here. So, in here it is going to be 'this document will expire 5 years after its creation' and I will take the same wording and put it in Policy Statement as well. The Policy Statement will be shown every time somebody opens a document, which this IMP, Information Management Policy applies to. The Administrative Description is shown only to administrators, so this could be in two different things if I wanted to.

Now there is a bunch of different settings that exit in Information Management Policy. The only thing that I am going to care about right now is the Enable Expiration. The Retention

Period of a document can be set either programatically or it can be set directly here using one of the Date fields that appear in the Document Library. Now by default the Created and Modified date fields already appear in the Document Library, if I had created a new field, a custom field, which also happens to be of type date, I could have seen that here as well. So I am going to say that time of period this document is created, wait for five years, and after that kick off whatever the subsequent action that I am going to state. Now, this could be five years, months or days. The action here could be either 'go ahead and delete the document' or 'go ahead and delete record and submission information for the document', or the second option here is going to be 'start a particular workflow'.

Now, let me talk briefly about the Delete action first. The Delete action is just going to go ahead and delete the document, and that means totally delete it from the database, not move it to the recycle bin. If this thing is picked then the document is gone. Start this workflow, I can pick on any of these workflows, which are present. Now one thing to know here is that this Disposition Workflow, the Disposition Approval Workflow, which comes out of the box with SharePoint Server is not present here and the reason it is not present here is because there is no instance of that disposition approval that has been created so far. So I actually need to go back and create an instance first before I can choose that here. Let me click on Cancel. Going back to the Settings → then I need to go to Workflow Settings, now I can see the Disposition Approval template is here, and I need to create a new one, let us call this Dispose, and I will only let it start manually because the only way this workflow should start is when it is kicked off by the Information Management Policy. No other events should be able to kick off this workflow. So, I am going to click Ok. Alright, so here is my Disposition Workflow. Go back to the Settings page → and back to Information Management Policy Settings → click the Expense Report → Define a new Policy since I did not save the other one that I was making → click OK, alright so I need to rewrite what I wrote before, which is 'this document will expire 5 years after its creation', same thing for the Policy Statement and now going down to Enable Expiration. Once again I am going to say that 'retain this document for five years after its creation' and then this time Start this Workflow and then pick the Dispose Workflow, which I just created. Click OK. Alright, so now the policy has been set, description of the policy, the administrator description appears right here. Now I won't be able to demo this functionality, the disposition approval and I cannot wait for five years to demo it, so what I am going to do is take a document that is preexisting in the document library and then execute the workflow manually. So, first I want to go back to the Shared Documents Document library. Now, as you can see, I have two documents here - one was created as a Expense Report content type, the second was created as a Status Report content type, both of them by clicking on a New button and clicking the appropriate content type. The first ones, actually both had created dates in here as 4/24/08, so five years from now, the Expense Report document will go through the Disposition Workflow. The Status Report will not. It will remain there and nothing will happen to it. So what I am going to simulate is what is going to happen after five years. So, I am going to push the Workflow off manually, → click on Dispose → OK, so this is what you shud expect to see after five years, the Dispose Workflow is In Progress for the Asif's Expense Report, not the Status Report. Okay, when I click on In Progress, it shows me that the Workflow Status for Dispose, when it was started, and also it shows me that there is a task that is assigned to no one, so this task can actually be managed by anybody who is either a member or above of the site. This task just says right now that it needs Disposition Approval from someone, a member or above of the site to dispose of this document. Now if I look at this task, it is simply asking me here is 'do you want to Delete this item', if 'yes' then 'do you want to retain a copy of the item's metadata in the audit log or not' or 'do you not want to delete this item'. That is all the functionality that the Disposition Approval process provides us. So if I click on 'Delete this item', then put some comments in here saying that 'this document no longer valid' and click this very small OK button in here, it should have deleted the document. Let us go ahead and verify that. Go to Shared Documents and Expense Report is gone.

Okay so once again what really happened here was, the Expense Report content types, if there are multiple content types, if there are multiple documents with Expense Report content types, all of them would have run after five years of the creation date and the actual workflow states that 'a task gets put into the task list assigned to no one, any member or above of the site can go ahead and edit that task and decide whether to delete or not delete the document'.

Going back to the Information Management Policy Settings, let me show you some other settings that were there. If I go back into the Expense Report Information Management Policy I can see that the other option that I had was to simply delete the document that would have not gone through any work flow, the only thing that would have happened is after five years it would have deleted the document. Now an ultimate thing that you can do, something much better that you can do, even better than the Disposition Workflow is to define your own workflow. You can do that using this SharePoint designer or you can do that using ______ (10:24). Once you have your own workflow and it is specified here in the Document Library, you could choose that workflow and give some additional parameters. so for example that Approval workflow could be sending an E-mail to someone asking them their permission and it could be assigned to a specific person or people instead of being assigned to no one. And other things could happen where you would have more control over what to do with that document rather than just Pick, Delete, or Not Delete the document, but out of the box the Disposition Approval Workflow lets you just do what we just showed you. So, I will be showing that scenario where you can make a workflow using SharePoint designer and use it here in a separate video. I hope you enjoyed the content of this video. This has been a presentation of SharePoint-eLearning.com.