

UC2B Marketing & Outreach Subcommittee Minutes – October 25, 2011
12:00 PM – Champaign Public Library – Foundation Conf. Rm., 200 W Green, Champaign

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 12:10 p.m. by B. Bowersox.

Present: Brandon Bowersox, John Kersh, LaEisha Meaderds, Teri Legner, Ray Mitchell, Brian Bell

2. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion to approve made by R. Mitchell; and seconded by J. Kersh. Approved as presented.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from September 12, 2011 were presented. Motion to approve made by J. Kersh and seconded by R. Mitchell. Approved as presented.
4. **Construction and general project updates**

M. Smeltzer gave a construction update. The contractors are making steady progress. There are no glaring issues to date. Crews are installing approximately 1,200 feet of conduit per day. Some unmarked utility lines have been hit over the course of construction to date. Some hits are to be expected, so this is not out of the ordinary. The contractors are working with the cities and utility companies to develop mutually acceptable methods to make repairs when service lines are hit. Some crews will be brought in in the coming month to install lateral conduit to feed sites outside of the FTTP areas.

B. Bowersox asked M. Smeltzer when we can expect the first portions of the network to be in operation. M. Smeltzer anticipates that the first areas will be around mid-March or early April 2012.

5. **Canvassing and outreach update**

L. Meaderds updated the group on the activities of the GSLIS canvass and outreach team. The GSLIS team is getting information together to mail out the UC2B service interest cards by the end of this week or next week. This card will be mailed to residences and businesses in the FTTP areas to gauge the interest for UC2B service. The survey interest form will be a part of a separate effort.

L. Meaderds mentioned that the hiring process for the Community Ambassadors is moving. Background checks are being finalized. Training for the new hires is tentatively scheduled for November 12. There was a very strong applicant pool representing diverse geographic, gender, racial, ethnic, language, and age demographics. The GSLIS staff of graduate assistants is diverse as well.

B. Bowersox asked L. Meaderds if we should publicize the interest cards prior to their mailing. The group discussed possible avenues to do this and decided on a press release that the two cities will distribute. L. Meaderds volunteered to draft a press release for the group to review and provide comment. Facebook and Twitter also will be used to distribute the press release

L. Meaderds discussed the canvassing and outreach team's process for doing the canvass. The interest card that will be sent out will be the way to see who wants to sign up. The ambassadors will go out a separate time to conduct the survey. Ultimately, the first 2,500 people to sign a service commitment – not just say they want service – will receive the grant-funded installation.

One subcommittee member made a suggestion that we utilize comments that have been made by prominent members of the community on mailings to residents that will inform them of the upcoming survey and subscription opportunities. We can also have the churches and other

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Community Anchor Institutions help in getting the word out about UC2B to the people they provide service to; especially if they live in the areas that qualify for UC2B installation under the grant.

Once created, J. Kersh will send the press release and interest cards to contacts at the Community Anchor Institutions so they can provide hard copies on site and use other means to make them available to their clients/customers.

6. Outreach plan

The group reviewed the outreach activities and practices that were discussed at the October 11, 2011 meeting. The group re-approved the activities and practices as re-presented.

J. Kersh and B. Bowersox will work on setting up the Twitter, YouTube and new Facebook accounts for UC2B in the coming week.

The group also discussed how to direct UC2B information and sign-up requests that come in via emails and phone calls. For the time being, calls and emails from customers requesting more information or who want to sign up are routed through the UC2B phone number (217-366-UC2B, or 8222) or email (info@uc2b.net), which goes to M. Smeltzer and J. Kersh. Based on the nature of the call or email, it is answered at that time or forwarded to the appropriate source. Most calls and emails have been from residents who want to sign up. Information collected from these calls and emails ultimately will end up in the The GSLIS team has re-stated its willingness to help provide staff to answer phone calls should the need arise.

7. Future subcommittee activities

B. Bowersox invited the subcommittee to propose ideas about future subcommittee activities.

B. Bell suggested that the subcommittee take the lead on developing a list of resources that interested people can refer to obtain training and computer equipment.

The group discussed plans for a series of open houses where owners of rental properties could come to learn about UC2B and how to sign their tenants up for service.

The group also discussed a series of Anchor Institution meetings that can be held during the late fall or winter. The purpose of these meeting would be to update these institutions on the latest UC2B information and construction progress and to facilitate a discussion on how the different Anchor Institutions – which fall into several different NTIA-designated categories – can utilize and benefit from being connected on the UC2B network.

Kate Williams and students from a course she is teaching this semester are working with several of the Community Anchor Institutions. M. Smeltzer will talk to her and Jon Gant to discuss ideas for organizing these meetings.

The group agreed that these meetings should, at the very least, be held prior to the completion of the work of the business consultant. Ideally, the consultant will be present for the meetings. Seemingly, the most practical way to accomplish this would be to hold the meeting(s) around a scheduled visit by the consultant.

R. Mitchell and J. Kersh emphasized the need to ensure that the business consultant makes an effort to gather all the information from all perspectives in the community to inform her

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recommendations. It is unclear what this process would look like, but both expressed a desire to see a process that does not connote business as usual.

R. Mitchell suggested a revised public comment process to allow for expanded discussion of agenda items.

R. Mitchell proposed the idea of profiling each of the Community Ambassadors in UC2B communications.

8. Member comments and announcements

None.

9. Audience participation (5-minute limit per person)

None.

10. Tasks or Items for the next meeting

- Follow-up and planning for Community Anchor Institution meetings
- Follow-up and planning for rental property owners meetings

11. Member Comments and Announcements

None.

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned by B. Bowersox at 1:17 p.m.