



# UC2B Policy Board Minutes

## Special Meeting

January 27, 2011

### Location:

Douglass Branch Library Board Room  
504 E. Grove, Champaign, Illinois

Committee Members Present: Abdul Alkalimat, Brandon Bowersox, Deborah Frank Feinen, Fred Halenar, Pete Resnick, Richard Schnuer, and Mike DeLorenzo

Committee Members Absent: Rev. Zernial Bogan, Minor Jackson

### Others Present:

Mike Vrem, Champaign Telephone  
Ray Mitchell, Volo Broadband  
Peter Folk, Broadband Access Committee  
John Kersh, University of Illinois  
Bob Miles, University of Illinois  
Tony Vandeventer, City of Champaign  
Paul Duke, Shive-Hattery, Project Manager  
Craig Shonkwiler, City of Urbana  
Brittney Eckels, University of Illinois  
Rev. Eugene Barnes, New Life Church of Faith and  
Metanoia Center Inc.  
Rev. Larry D. Lewis, Bethel A.M.E.  
Rev. Charles O. Nash, New Hope Church  
Rev. Robert L. Smith, Center of Hope Church

The meeting was called to order at 11:57 a.m. by Committee Chair Feinen.

**Approve Minutes:** Member Resnick, seconded by Committee Member Halenar, moved to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2011 Policy Committee Meeting. Motion was passed by a voice vote.

### Action Items:

#### A. Grant Required Approvals

- Committee Chair Feinen stated that Committee Members received an email from Mike Smeltzer stating that the Request for Proposal (RFP) is in its final stages. It is being analyzed in terms of cost factors and the review team has an issue for the Policy Committee. Mr. Smeltzer asked that the Policy Committee schedule a meeting for Saturday afternoon. Committee Member Resnick stated that the

decision will affect Shive-Hattery's design. The issue is that vendors were asked to provide pricing for two options: everyone gets 1GB service, or anchor institutions get 1GB service and everyone else gets 100MB service. However, multiple vendors have provided both alternatives, so based on evaluation of proposals thus far it appears that Policy Committee action may be required to determine the best choice.

Discussion included:

- Due to the meeting notice requirements, a meeting can not be held until Sunday or Monday.
- Not enough information to decide what kind of decision is needed. Is this a monetary question such as the price point at which it's worth giving everyone 1GB service? Is the question that if we have two vendors, one with a better deal for the 1GB service and the other with a better deal for the combination service, should we choose the vendor or the technology?
- Does the Technical Committee need to be included? (No, three members of the Technical Committee are on the RFP review team. May need the Technical Committee to answer technical questions such as the future costs implications to the various technologies.)
- The results of the RFP evaluations should decide a single vendor and technology because those considerations were built into the evaluation criteria and forms. (The process was built to address some issues but not all of them.)
- If there is a change in technology, the City Councils will need to be updated. Will a change in technology affect the grant?
- The Policy Committee should receive a memorandum containing the recommendation, and explanation of it, prior to the meeting.

The Committee decided to meet Monday, January 31, 8:30 a.m., in the Urbana Council Chambers. Committee Chair Feinen will send Mike Smeltzer an email requesting the following information, in memo form, by 6:00 p.m. Sunday, January 30:

- The results of the evaluation.
- Pros and cons of the decision.
- Ultimate costs.
- Technical issues.
- Differences in maintenance costs.
- Which line item in the grant budget is for electronics?
- What is the dollar amount for electronics?
- Are any other expenditures budgeted in the electronics line item?
- What is the sustainable cost to the community? (1GB Triple Play in Chattanooga is \$360 per month.)
- What are the future costs implications to the various technologies?

- **Technical Committee Update:** The Technical Committee will meet the first three Tuesdays in February. The meetings will go back to the regular schedule in March, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays.

**Discussion Items:**

**A. Letter from Ministers:** Committee Member Alkalimat stated that broadband grants were designed to provide an economic stimulus to areas that are unserved and underserved with regard to internet connection. The UC2B grant called for anchor institutions to be the structure for rolling out the high speed internet program. The underserved population was identified as being in north Champaign and the key anchor institutions in that area are churches. It is important that the ministers are actively involved because they are the leadership of the community. Committee Chair Feinen noted that the ministers' letter proposed that the churches help recruit subscribers and receive a discounted or rebated rate in return. Committee and audience discussion included:

- Need to think about this option for every anchor institution, keeping in mind there are two types: health/government institutions and social services institutions.
- The Broadband Access Committee will recommend establishing a fund to support access for people who cannot afford it. Internet service providers would provide voluntary contributions to the fund. Policy Committee Members suggested soliciting donations from all corporations and organizing the community to collect unused computers for reuse.
- Several ministers stated that the savings from the reduced rates or rebates would be used to cover the operational costs of their technology centers such as utility bills, technical support, security, and replacing out-of-date equipment. Other uses would include getting people less dependent on the church by providing computer training, helping them get a home computer, and possibly subsidizing their monthly internet fees.
- The Latino community should not be left out. Marketing materials should be provided in Spanish as well as in English. John Kersh has talked to Ben Mueller, who is active with the Latino community, about attending community meetings to talk about UC2B.
- eBlackCU will host a follow-up to the January 8, 2011 community technology meeting on March 19, 2011 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Champaign Public Library.
- The ministers represent a larger coalition than just the churches. The community should be involved in the Policy Committee and minister's discussion. Policies need to be put in place to address minority and local hiring, and training.
- The February 24<sup>th</sup> Policy Committee meeting will be used to address grant required approvals quickly, followed by discussion with the ministers and the community on the topics of :
  - a. the use of savings from the reduced rates or rebates,
  - b. minority and local hiring.
- Community Benefits agreements may be the answer to incorporating specific language in RFPs or actual bids. Some members commented that they aim too

low and more can be done and that it's a good idea but UC2B's goal is to be competitive.

- In the short term, UC2B needs one lawyer for contract discussions and one HR department for employment discussions. They would work with all three entities, but be a single advisory source to UC2B. Committee Member Bowersox will talk to Urbana staff to see whether they are willing to prepare information for the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Committee Member Halenar will introduce the topic to Champaign's staff.
- In the long term, UC2B needs a staff person to do things like provide memos, get agendas out, organize meetings, record keeping, etc. Committee Member Schnuer stated a job description will be needed and he asked Committee Members to send him an email stating staff items that they believe should be performed. He will compile them and create a draft.
- Shive-Hattery is expected to have design documents ready on February 8, construction documents by the end of March, and bid specs to go out the first week of April. Any issues that will be a part of design, construction documents, or bid specs must be completed prior to these dates.
- Need to determine the capacity of a local labor force of minority contractors.
- The construction aspect of the project will be in two phases: fiber to the curb, and fiber from the curb to the home. Fiber from the curb to the home will be the most suitable for local hires. However, local firms have the capacity to perform some tasks in the fiber to the curb phase such as landscaping.
- Peter Folk presented a proposal during one of the eBlackCU meetings on training people to perform the fiber from curb to the home construction work. UC2B should evaluate that option.

Committee Member Bowersox distributed a memo from the Mayor of Urbana. The memo stated the Urbana personnel who will serve on RFP selection committees.

Committee Member Bowersox stated that there will be a job fair on February 2, 2011 at the Douglass Community Center from 10:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Several members of the Marketing subcommittee will be there to let people know about UC2B and employment opportunities that it may provide.

Committee Member Bowersox stated that the legislation enacting funding sources for the Illinois Capital Bill has been struck down in court, which may affect be the funding source for UC2B's match from the State. He noted that the decision will be appealed to the Supreme Court.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 1:16 p.m. by Committee Chair Feinen