



UC2B Policy Board Agenda

Regular Meeting

November 2, 2011 – 12:00 noon

Council Chambers, 102 N. Neil Street, Champaign, Illinois

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call (By Roster) – Determine Quorum
- III. Approve Agenda
- IV. Approval of Minutes from October 19, 2011
- V. ACTION*/DISCUSSION ITEMS (note in this section we will go to audience for comment prior to discussion by Board of each item, comments are limited to 5 minutes in length per person)
 - a) Update on FTTP Bidding Process – Teri Legner
 - b) UC2B Policy for Minority Inclusion in Contracting
 - c) Marketing Committee Update – Brandon Bowersox/John Kersh
 - d) NTIA/Grant Update – Mike Smeltzer
- VII. Tasks to complete for next meeting
- VIII. Items for next meeting's agenda
- IX. Public Participation
- X. Adjournment
- XI. **Next Meeting:**
November 16, 2011- 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Council Chambers, 102 N. Neil Street, Champaign, Illinois
- XII. Items for future Action/Discussion:
 - a) Grant Required Approvals – Mike Smeltzer
 - b) Technical Committee Report and Request for approvals of items forwarded from Technical Committee and its sub-committees – Tracy Smith
 - c) FTTP RFP Decisions – should construction and management be included together as one RFP or not
 - d) Discussion of pursuing a change order for ring design in order to include a production class facility – Rough Cost Estimates



UC2B Policy Board Minutes

Policy Board Meeting
October 19, 2011

Location:
City of Champaign Council Chambers
102 N. Neil Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Board Members Present: Abdul Alkalimat, Brandon Bowersox, Mike DeLorenzo, Deborah Frank Feinen, Pete Resnick via Skype, Richard Schnuer (arrived 12:15pm)

Board Members absent: Rev. Zernial Bogan, Minor Jackson, Tracy Smith

Connected via conference call: Business consultant candidates: Diane Kruse, Neo Fiber and Mark Ansboury, Gigabit Squared

Connected via Skype: Mike Smeltzer, University of Illinois

- I. The meeting was called to order at 12:10 p.m. by Chair Feinen.
- II. Roll Call
- III. Alkalimat moved and DeLorenzo seconded to approve the Agenda as written. The Board approved by voice vote.
- IV. Bowersox moved and Resnick seconded to approve the Minutes of the September 28, 2011 UC2B Policy Board meeting as written. The Board approved by voice vote.
- V. Action Items:

A Resolution recommending a Business Planning Consultant: NEO Fiber with Gigabit Squared

Chair Feinen asked for audience participation prior to the board's discussion. Craig Walker stated he was deeply concerned about the divide between UC2B and the community and that staff had not included enough minority-owned firms in this process. Mr. Walker expressed concern that in his opinion at least five African American or Latino owned firms are qualified to provide consulting services to UC2B and that the City, as lead agency, did not reach out to them. He asked the committee to do one of the

following three things: 1) start the process over, 2) add a provision to the NEO Fiber contract that it subcontract some of the work to a firm owned by an African American or Latino or 3) see whether staff can identify a minority-owned firm with whom UC2B would contract part of the project along with the current consultants.

Alkalimat asked Teri Legner to respond to those concerns. She stated that in May when the Board decided to hire a firm, representatives from the City of Urbana, the University of Illinois, and the City of Champaign provided the names of nine firms to whom she should send a request for qualifications. These companies were from across the United States and all had significant experience doing specific big broadband projects. Richard Schnuer stated that the companies that were asked to bid all have experience working with Federal broadband grants. He stated that the work requires a specific type of consultant, not just any business consultant. Feinen stated that the firms had to have qualifications that are quite specific and necessary to the project. Smeltzer stated that of all the firms and individuals with whom he had done business in this segment of the business, he is aware of only one minority and he is an author who does not provide the type of services that the Policy Board seeks. Smeltzer stated that the University, Urbana and Champaign reached out to everyone they knew in the industry for names and were given these nine companies.

Alkalimat stated that his intention was not to point fingers, but to insure that the committee investigated the hiring of a minority firm and that the Board does not find itself doing "business as usual". Feinen asked Diane Kruse, Owner of NEO Fiber, about the makeup of her firm. Diane stated that NEO Fiber is a 100% woman owned business with five employees (one Latino male, two white males, and two women, including herself) and noted that she will also work with Mark Ansboury from Gigabit squared. Schnuer sought confirmation from Kruse that NEO Fiber is a 100% female owned, MAFBE certified firm with 20% minority (Latino) employment. Resnick stated that while he agreed with Alkalimat's frustration, he noted that the Board had received a memo from Legner in May advising the Board of the nine firms that she had been provided and that she planned to send a request for qualifications to each of them. Feinen confirmed that fact, stating that the Policy Committee approved the choice of the firms in May as well as a general list of assumptions and questions that would be provided to the firms

DeLorenzo asked the status of the consultant selection process. Legner responded that names were submitted from all three entities, Champaign, Urbana and the University as to consultants who had extensive experience with BTOP and grant projects. Nine companies were identified and were sent letters asking them to provide information regarding their work. Five companies responded and of those five, the committee (made up of members of all three entities) selected four companies to interview. Of those four companies, two were MAFBE certified and female owned. After interviewing the four companies, the committee identified two agencies on which to conduct reference checks. Mike Smeltzer, Mike Monson and Teri Legner conducted the reference checks and the references for NEO Fiber were outstanding. She stated that the interview committee thought that NEO Fiber, along with Mark Ansboury, would provide excellent services to the Board, so she asked Feinen to place this item on the agenda.

Schnuer noted that the City reviews the minority employment of firms as standard practice during the contract process, so the City did not have to use an exceptional process to review minority employment. Resnick stated that he doesn't have a problem with the actions of the selection committee but that the Policy Board dropped the ball and should have considered minority ownership when it reviewed the firms in May. Bowersox stated he was pleasantly surprised that the consultants were so qualified and moved to approve the resolution as is and secondly to ask the Board to received staff input up front for the next Professional Services procurement. Motion seconded by Schnuer. Schnuer stated, depending on the services sought by UC2B there may be a large number of minority owned firms available to provide the services or no minority owned firms. Feinen said that the question is how the Board could broaden the scope of its search for firms to involve more minority participation, not that the Board hire a non-qualified individual. Alkalimat warned against "business as usual," saying that he fully understands staff's recommendation to hire the firm under consideration and is not in a position to vote against this motion, but that he will abstain from voting to encourage the Board to go the extra mile to avoid "business as usual" in the future. Resnick stated he could not disagree with Alkalimat; he is not complaining about the end result but that the Board made an overt failure back in May. Resnick stated that Bowersox's motion is spot on and that the outcome was good despite the problem with the process. Feinen called for a voice vote from committee members: The motion was approved 4-1-1 (Yays: DeLorenzo, Schnuer, Resnick, Bowersox; Nay: Feinen; Abstain: Alkalimat)

Audience Participation Regarding Fiber to the Curb (FTTC) Construction: Feinen called for audience participation. – No response.

FTTC Construction in Champaign: Tony Vandeventer reported that Western Utility started working in Champaign on October 2nd. The firm is adding more crews. Two crews are currently working in Garden Hills and one crew is working on North University between First and Wright streets. They are doing between 1300-1500 linear feet of boring per day. Direct mailings were sent to the residents. Water pipes have been hit a couple of times and street lights once. Vandeventer is meeting with the construction company every two weeks.

Audience Participation: Craig Walker asked for special permission to make a statement to the committee regarding Fiber to the Street. Mr. Walker stated that African Americans are not getting hired. He stated that the Board can meet minority hiring requirements by hiring women owned firms, but that is not meeting the Board's promises. UC2B will not get people to purchase broadband services. There are many minority owned firms who could have bid on this project.

FTTC Construction in Urbana: Beth Reinke gave Urbana's construction update. Construction began September 7th in Urbana. John Burns Construction have installed empty conduit and hand pulls by Booker T. Washington School and King School. The construction map is available on the City of Urbana website. There is usually a two week look-ahead displayed.

Teri Legner shared an email from Brittney Warga with the University of Illinois: The contract is complete with Western and the node construction is running smoothly.

Canvassing Update: Dr. Gant provided an update to the Board. Friday they completed interviews for the canvassers. Forty six applications were received in total. Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences (GSLIS) had held eight workshops and public events. Of the forty six applications, twenty two individuals were selected with the majority of those individuals living in the targeted areas. Half of those are bilingual which is important. Those 22 applications have been submitted to University personnel for backgrounds checks which take between three days and two weeks. Training is planned for October 29th. GSLIS has hired a Visiting Project Coordinator, LaEisha Meaderds. Nine individuals were identified by the committee for this position and two were interviewed. LaEisha was selected from that process. The process for signing up UC2B subscribers and canvassing will begin in November. The canvassing team will be blitzing the census blocks door to door. Additionally, GSLIS will be sending print, mail and social media notifications as well as holding public forums, sending SMS feeds and texts. If anyone has any opportunities for the canvassing team to speak, please contact Dr. Gant; they are glad to do so.

Alkalimat asked about cost of services: Is it still \$19.95 or less? Legner stated that hasn't been finalized yet, it may be a matter of bandwidth that will change rather than pricing. Gant said GSLIS is prepared either way to proceed with canvassing with or without the costs; it would be nice to have it but they are prepared to be flexible. Ray Mitchell stated it was exciting to see how many people were interviewed and that people from the census blocks were considered for hiring. Bowersox stated that social media driven by GSLIS (FB, Twitter, Pics, Web, Newsletter) are important as well. GSLIS folks have done great job on the newsletter and calendar. Bowersox stated that he, Legner, and Kersh are involved with the community and have attended a lot of public events. Feinen asked that maps of construction sites and canvassing (which neighborhoods are affected) be placed on the City of Champaign website.

Bowersox stated that Tanya Parker from Community in Action magazine had followed up with John Kersh and LaEisha Meaderds, regarding the magazine and UC2B purchasing advertising. A new issue was published a few days ago. Bowersox stated that it is important for the magazine to interview anchor institutions as this type of information is more important than the Policy Board buying advertisements in their publication. Alkalimat stated that Parker agreed to do a special issue and thinks it is important for UC2B to encourage purchasing ads in the magazine, as it is good advertising. Alkalimat will follow up with Parker. Feinen agreed that perhaps the three entities could think about advertising in the magazine.

NTIA – Smeltzer stated he has nothing to add to his report.

Legner stated that the City of Champaign has scheduled a meeting with Fred Coleman, City of Champaign Legal, and City of Champaign and City of Urbana Community Relations departments to develop of process for hiring of minority contractors. That meeting is scheduled for November 1st and the City will schedule a meeting with local minority contractors as soon as possible after that meeting.

Feinen adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.

Next Meeting – Wednesday November 2, 2011 at 12:00 p.m. – Champaign City Building,
Council Chambers, 102 N. Neil Street, Champaign, Illinois



NTIA and Grant Update – 10/30/11

There has not been a conference call with NTIA since my last report. A call is scheduled for this coming Tuesday morning. I will be able to give a verbal report of any highlights on Wednesday. The “first draft” of the quarterly Performance Progress Report is due tomorrow evening, and it will be submitted prior to the deadline.

The University and the two cities are still working through the process of submitting pay requests, and now that the sub-awards are finalized, funds can begin to flow. I am still working to better understand the University’s accounting system and translating the reports that come from “Banner” into the categories and forms that NTIA requires. Up until now, there have not been significant expenditures to report, next quarter there will be.

Construction – Our contractors continue to make progress installing conduit, manholes and handholes. Both contractors have been informed that it will be close to the first of the year before they receive any backbone fiber for our project. That translates into the first UC2B customers being illuminated in March or April, depending primarily on the weather. The canvassers will set that expectation for the beginning of UC2B services in the first areas.

Canvass – The training for the canvassers that was initially planned for yesterday, has been rescheduled for Saturday November 12th. While Jon Gant and crew are excited about the quality of the finalists for those positions, the process of getting them hired is taking longer than had been hoped. Jon or LaEisha may be able to provide an update on Wednesday.

There are at least four issues that we will ask our municipal broadband consultant to address early in their engagement, as the canvassers will need those details. Those issues are: the retail service packages – the costs and the Internet bandwidth provided, equipment deposits, service contracts, and how to best work with landlords and renters. My hope is that the consultant will provide the Policy Board with recommendations by early December, and that the Policy Board will take action on them at its December 7th meeting.

Looming Issues – Once the contractors have the backbone fiber, they will be eager to install it and to turn over sections of the completed fiber plant to UC2B for acceptance. We plan to accept each of the 12 Fiber Distribution Hub areas individually, and then accept each of the seven backbone rings individually. The first FDH areas will need at least part of rings to be completed before they can be functional, but that will not be a problem.

Once any fiber is turned over to UC2B, UC2B will need to be prepared to have that fiber located by JULIE and to have it repaired, should it be damaged. There will most likely be one contract for fiber locating and one contract for fiber repair, both paid for from the start-up fund, until such time as we have operational funds. The Illinois Century Network has recently bid both of these activities, and they have agreed to share their bid documents with us, which will give us a good head start on bidding these activities. Ideally we would have these vendors in place by February 1st.

Mike