City of Bloomington: Bloomington Digital Underground Advisory Committee

Date of Record: June 3, 2004

Summary:

Bloomington Digital Underground Advisory Committee meeting held on Thursday, June 3, 2004 at 4:00 pm in the McCloskey Conference Room of City Hall at Showers, 401 N. Morton St., Bloomington, Indiana.

Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

Rick Dietz, Indiana University
Mark McMath, Bloomington Hospital
Bruce Myers, Kiva
Brian Voss, Indiana University
Charlie Webb, CallNet

Committee Members Absent:

Dennis Morrison, Center for Behavioral Health
Linda Williamson, Bloomington Economic Development Corporation

Guests Present:

Brett Skilbred, InfoComm Systems, Inc.

Staff Present:

Gregory Volan, CIO, City of Bloomington
Rick Routon, User Support and Network Operations Manager, ITS, City of Bloomington
Heather Collins, Intern, ITS

Meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm

I. Administrative Business
   a. Minutes from May 6, 2004 were reviewed and approved.

II. New Business: Telecom Providers Questionnaire
   a. Greg Volan offered the group a draft questionnaire which would be given to telecom providers interested in participating in the Telecom Town Hall. The group reviewed the questions, and proposed suggestions.
   b. The group agreed that the key question is whether telecom providers would be willing to share peering points, i.e. manholes and handholds.
      i. Mark McMath said that it would be important for everyone to know who has the right to be in those spaces, so that there would be accountability if something went wrong.
      ii. Bruce Myers agreed that there would need to be some kind of notification system to alert providers when others are in the shared spaces. Another question would be: What involvement would the City have in managing the fiber? What do the providers expect from City regarding this?
      iii. Brian Voss noted that the concept of sharing peering points may be a more common scenario for these providers than we think. It may be that providers

are currently dealing with these kinds of arrangements; this should be considered.

c. Brian also suggested that the Committee contact the City of Indianapolis to see what kinds of experiences they have had with this. They have multiple providers (Level 3, Qwest, AT&T, Williams, McCloud, etc.) who share peering points and who share space in the City's telecom hotels.
    i. Brett Skilbred said he would get the proper contact information for the group.
d. Rick Dietz said that Indianapolis may also have suggestions about policies we should consider if we are to have multiple providers sharing space.
    i. Brett said that thus far, Indianapolis has had problems establishing new policies. In particular, providers have not been notifying the City about street cuts.
    ii. Rick Routon said that Bloomington, too, is trying to work with SBC re: street cuts, especially about adhering to standards for repaving streets. Thus far, SBC has been more cooperative.
e. Mark said that it might be helpful for us to know about upcoming plans/projects in the City's Engineering or Planning departments. This may help us coordinate with providers.
f. Mark also raised the question of getting maps from providers.
    i. Brian and Brett thought that maps would be difficult for us to get. In Mark's case, the Bloomington Hospital has them under a non-disclosure agreement.
    ii. Brett offered that there may be a possibility for the City Council to request/require maps from providers. This was done in Noblesville in order to assist the City with GIS projects.
    iii. The question was raised whether ITS Staff/Advisory Committee should have access to these maps (if we could acquire them).
        1. Bruce stated this would depend on the terms of the NDA.
    iv. Brian stated that we may also run into the problem of the maps being part of the public record. We need to consider who can access/control this information.
    v. Everyone agreed that it would be possible for potential businesses to ask if there is a provider at the intersection of "X Street and Y Street;" the person looking at the map could simply answer Yes or No.
    vi. Brett revisited the option of creating a map with shaded areas of where particular providers have fiber.
    vii. Mark said that we need to come up with some sort of plan to help facilitate coordination between businesses and providers. A map could also enable the City to watch how the fiber market is growing or shrinking over time.

III. Discussion

a. Greg asked Mark to tell the group more about the Hospital's experience in trying to get providers to come up with a solution that would meet their fiber needs.
b. Mark said that for the Hospital, the problem was getting prices from providers, and then when they did the cost was incredibly high. They could not get a reasonable cost for fiber from providers—in most cases this was more expensive than getting a wireless network. While wireless is an attractive theoretical option for the Hospital,

there would likely be a strong ideological opposition to it due to a potential for health and radiation effects. In the end, they did find a solution for their needs.

c. Greg raised another case where Monroe County is trying to get a connection to the Center for Behavioral Health and the Telecom Hotel; however, they cannot get pricing from providers. They are considering building their own dark fiber.
d. The group agreed that this raises the question whether local telecom providers have stagnated the market for fiber. If places like the County cannot get services they need, should the City be able to step in and help? Is this the result of a lack of coordination? Purposeful unresponsiveness?
    i. Bruce said that we need to get the complete story about the County before making any decisions based on their experiences with providers.
e. Mark said that perhaps this group needs to "bring sense to the marketplace." If service providers cannot/will not meet the needs of our community, maybe the City needs to "take the gloves off."
f. Brett offered that this could also be a result of a lack of coordination between what the customer wants and what the vendor can provide.
g. Mark asked whether the City would offer the option of lighting fiber to the County or Hospital directly if no current providers are interested in the BDU, and providing services to customers.
h. Brett put this into the context of economic development. Are there new companies whose needs we cannot meet? Should we talk to Cook Pharmacopeia to make sure we are aware of their fiber needs as they expand in Bloomington?
i. Returning to the questionnaire for service providers, the group suggested the following questions:
    i. What do service providers see as the role of the BDU Advisory Committee?
    ii. Do providers have any suggestions/input on pricing the dark fiber? What would be a fair pricing strategy?

IV. Wrap Up

a. It was agreed that the providers should receive these questions well in advance of the Telecom Town Hall. The next BDU meeting will be held July 1st; it was suggested that the TTH be held in September.
b. It was also suggested that the group contact Linda Williamson to get potential end-users involved (e.g. Cook, Baxter).
c. Rick Dietz asked whether it makes sense to split out the TTH into two meetings, one for the providers and one for the end-users. Who is at the meeting will drive what kind of format the meeting will take; we do not want this to be a sales pitch to end-users.
d. The group also asked Brett to provide further details on Noblesville's situation with getting service providers' maps. It would be helpful to know what Noblesville gained from this experience.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm

Minutes submitted by Heather Collins, June 10, 2004.