



State of Illinois

Minutes



City of Urbana

URBANA CITY COUNCIL – STUDY SESSION
(Broadband Grant Application)

January 25, 2010
5:30 p.m.

The Urbana City Council met in study session at 5:30p.m. for the purpose of discussing the broadband grant application.

Elected Officials present: Brandon Bowersox, David Gehrig, Robert Lewis, Diane Marlin; Dennis Roberts, Mayor Prussing.

Staff present: Mike Monson

Others present: Doug Dawson, Mike Smeltzer, Joe Villanti, Peter Reznik

Mayor Prussing called the study session to order at 5:35 p.m. and introduced Doug Dawson and Mike Smeltzer.

Mayor Prussing thanked Mike Smeltzer for putting the grant proposal together. She announced that the proposal had to be put together quickly and the City had asked Doug Dawson to review it because he is a leading consultant in the field.

Mr. Dawson reviewed the grant proposal and went over the report that was presented to Council. He recommended that a general manager be hired to oversee this project as it should be considered a business which needs to be sales driven. He recommended this person also be the technician as well. His main concern is that it is highly reliant on residential customers. He discussed a second grant to buy computers especially for households that cannot afford it, but stated this grant had not been approved yet. It is important to have enough customers to pay for the venture and to allow for electronic replacement and upgrades in the future. He mentioned there are three ways to close the revenue gap: sell wholesale access to the network; find companies who wish to buy dark fiber; and selling data services to businesses in the area; however the grant will not cover this service. He also said the network was over-designed by the looks of it and may need to scale it down a little. He discussed various ways to adjust the costs. He recommends hiring an engineering firm. He discussed the use of technology companies listed and possible vendor changes and not making customers guinea pigs. The first year will be hooking up fiber and the second year will be involved in setting up the customer base. Discussion followed.

Mr. Dawson took questions and comments from the following public: Joe Vallanti, 300 Buena Vista, Champaign; Peter Reznik, 503 W. Indiana; Durl Kruse, 2007 S. George Huff Drive;

With no more business to come before this study session, Mayor Prussing adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis D. Clark
City Clerk