



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

Information & Technology Services

Minutes Bloomington Digital Underground Advisory Committee

Bloomington City Hall, 401 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, Indiana

Hooker Conference Room and on Zoom

Thursday, January 9th, 2025

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER [4:16 pm]

Facilitated by Rick Dietz

ROLL CALL:

Board Members present: None

Board Members present via Zoom: Mike Allen, Marianne Chitwood, and Mike Trotzke

Board absent: Michelle Cole, Mike Sullivan, Chris Robb

City staff, officials, and guests: Rick Dietz and Victoria Jones

Dietz began the meeting with a slight delay while we waited for more members to join online.

Information & Technology Services (ITS) Department Updates

- Member renewal status updates: The Board of Public Works will soon hear Mike Trotzke's and Chris Robb's community membership renewals. The City Council is also considering reappointing Mike Allen. Rick recommends that all BDUAC committee members remain in position until replaced or resigned.
- The core Bloomington Digital Underground (BDU) loop is making significant strides in its expansion, now including areas on the city's south side, such as the City Animal Shelter. While we currently rely on third-party providers until these city properties are connected to the BDU, the plan is to expand the BDU to include city infrastructure over the next decade, which is a promising development for our digital future.
- The 2025 budget includes hardware for the IU Data Center, which ITS staff will purchase and install in early 2025.
- The 2024 Digital Equity Grants funds have been successfully distributed or encumbered, a testament to the City's commitment to digital equity. The grant recipients are proceeding with their projects, and we eagerly anticipate sharing their results, further reinforcing our collective impact on the community.
- The 2020 Digital Equity Survey and Strategic Plan are being renewed. The 2020 plan supported the projects developed over the last few years, including the Broadband project. The Digital Equity Specialist will support the development of these plans. We are looking for a strong candidate to assist in overseeing the \$11.4 million Federal Grant. We anticipate receiving the funds before the change in administration.

- The NTIA Federal grant is just over \$12 million, with \$11.4 million in Federal funds and around 1 million funded through matching funds and in-kind salaries by the City and its project beneficiary partners, including South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP), BEACON, Monroe County Public Library, and Ostrom Institute. The institute will help oversee the grant from years one through four, and then, in year five, will be for assessment and evaluation by the institute. The City of Bloomington will be the principal manager of the grant. Additional non-beneficiary organizations participating in the Federal grant include Meridiam, Hoosier Fiber Fiber Network, Monroe County Community School Corporation, and Bloomington and Perry Townships. Rick said he is very excited to begin the work; this would be a transformative investment for many of our residents in the community. Marianne Chitwood congratulated Rick on this accomplishment. Rick responded that the City of Bloomington was only one of four municipalities that received the competitive grant. The grant funds will support purchasing and distributing three to four thousand new high-quality devices for low-income citizens and support their needs for digital skills training, safety, security, and technology support.
- The Digital Equity Specialist position deadline has been extended until the end of the day on Tuesday, January 14th. Victoria Jones shared the link to the job posting in the meeting chat. Application Link: <https://bton.in/DESJD>.

City-wide Fiber Broadband Initiative

- Rick Dietz reported on behalf of Dave Brodin with Hoosier Fiber, who was absent due to a scheduling conflict with Hoosier Fiber's organization-wide management meeting.
- Despite recent weather delays and the work shifting to underground, construction continues to be on track for completion in November of 2025. The underground work shift was necessary since the number of usable Duke Energy poles made continuing aboveground impossible. The result is more labor and time-consuming. However, the infrastructure will be more durable underground.
- The number of citizen complaints is within the range of expectations. However, many issues regarding yard restoration can not be resolved until spring or the land is dried out. Trueline has reiterated its commitment to follow up and address these issues later when conditions allow.
- Rick followed up later in the meeting by stating that an agreement with Meridiam designates funds to support Hoosier Fiber connections for any low-income private neighborhood by covering half of the lateral cost. After the agreement's term, the unused funds will support city Digital Equity initiatives managed by the Digital Equity Specialist.
- Rick continues to meet with Dave Brodin and Trueline at their monthly meeting to discuss progress and weekly with the ITS staff to work through issues and challenges.

MEMBER REPORTS (Items not on the agenda)

- Mike Trotzke mentioned the delays in their internet service connection and the lack of a suitable alternative during the interim. This should be resolved in the next couple of months. The Triads District Executive Director has left, and John is the interim Director. They will soon take steps to fill the opening.
- Marianne mentioned they had purchased the hardware for a network refresh.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS (Items not on the agenda) None

ADJOURNMENT [4:56 pm]

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Minutes prepared by: Victoria Jones