Digital Inclusion Meeting
Friday, January 26th, 2007
9 - 10 AM

Present: Mayor Tom Barrett, Sharon Robinson, Randy Gschwind, Patrick Hall, Joe Volk, Jared Erdman, Dextra Hadnot, Ed Hartfield, Reggie Moore, Glen Mattison, Sue Kenealy, Donna Raffaelli, Deborah Fugenschuh, Rick Schuster, Bobbi Marsells, Julie Kerksick, Amy Hefter, Michael Walsh, James Davis, Michael Davis, Mike Soika, Paula Kiely, and Bruce Maas

Introductions were facilitated.

Mayor Tom Barrett opened the meeting with a welcome as well as a thank you for the turn out and the interest showed by the people in the room for Milwaukee's efforts to ensure broad and even access to not only the wireless system, but to the advantages of technology offered by the opportunity. By March of 2008, the entire city will be wired and a "walled garden" of about 60 sites will be available to people accessing the wireless system in the City of Milwaukee. He noted that Milwaukee is on the cutting edge of wireless installation and has the opportunity to be far more advanced than other cities in the United States.

He noted that Sharon Robinson, the Director of the Department of Administration and Randy Gschwind, the Chief Information Officer for the City of Milwaukee are the wireless project leaders.

Sharon Robinson offered a brief overview of the advantages of the wireless technology for all of Milwaukee's residents. In order for Milwaukee to keep moving forward as an economic force, it is important that access to computers, training and the Internet be open to people of all income levels. Residents can use the Internet to access employment opportunities, continuing education, and training, learn about health issues and find out about social service and other type of community resources.

The three fundamental needs for the project as it now stands is 1) finding the resources to obtain/purchase workable computers and software, 2) ensure training access and continued technological support, and 3) track and measure the results of the initiative.

Randy Gschwind presented two short slide presentations about the wireless network installation and the Digital Inclusion mission.

He explained that the project will have two community pilots. One at Berryland (north) and the other in the Historic Clarke Square (south) site.

Sharon Robinson then asked for input and or questions.

Mike Soika – What is the end product, what is the group's goal and how long will it meet?
Sharon – Expects the group to break into smaller teams to determine what resources are already available and how to mesh them together; how to get the program underway and move forward; and how to create a community and funding "buzz" about the program – sustaining a well heeled program at about a million dollars a year. This particular group will design the road map and is expected to be in place for about six months.

Julie Kersick – noted that the computers are always full at the libraries – is the goal that every person who wants a computer can have one?
Sharon – Yes, but people will also need training and support. The plans for this project will have to include those things.

Jim Davis – Mentioned resources from Dell. (500 students get re-furbished computers along with 40 hours of training)
Some packages offer a year of AOL. MPS can offer two levels of access; Dial up and Broad Band. 40% of MPS homes do not have telephone lines.

Pat Hall – There are a number of technical limitations to access. The mission of the group needs to be clearly defined.

Joe Volk – CA serves 43,000 low-income people/year. 30% of that group does not have a telephone. People are systemically disenfranchised when they do not have a phone or cannot access a computer with Internet.

Mike Soika – Broad Band would be helpful to those without phone lines.

Deborah Fugenschuh – Talked about ENTEC (Empowering Non-Profits in Technology) which is part of UW-M's Center for Urban Initiatives and Research. It is important to have standards for equipment. Some hardware is unusable due to lack of cleaning of the hard drive and some groups are hesitant to donate because of confidentiality issues.

Jim Davis – MPS stopped taking stuff. Wanted the group to be mindful of the Micro-soft settlement due in April of 2007. – Vouchers will be part of the settlement.

Dextra Hadnot – think about including the needs of the group when strategizing about the settlement.

Randy G – Large vendors (Dell, HP, etc.) will be offering special pricing for some Milwaukee projects. ($300/desktop, $500/laptop)

Deborah Fugenschuh – some donors are more interested in supporting new equipment rather than refurbished.

Jim Davis – additional need is insurance ($50/computer/year)

Dextra H. – Look at barriers to access. Must be all-inclusive. Indicated that the group should maybe look at the toughest challenges first.

Bruce Maas – An inventory of current initiatives might be helpful.

Donna Raffaelli – Room is full of experience and knowledge – it is important to capture that before the group moves forward. Develop a more complete roadmap.

The entire group will meet again. On the agenda will be three areas to discuss:
- What is out there?
- What is the best equipment?
- What is working?

Contacts will be made for the next working meeting.