



CITY OF BOSTON LAW DEPARTMENT

City Hall, Room 615
Boston, MA 02201

THOMAS M. MENINO
Mayor

WILLIAM F. SINNOTT
Corporation Counsel

November 16, 2009

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20544

RE: GN Docket 09-51

Dear Secretary Dortch:

This letter and the attached e-mails convey the content of conversations on November 5, between Jessica Strott, Consumer Adoption Analyst for the National Broadband Task Force and Susan O'Connor, Executive Director of Timothy Smith Network and, subsequently, on November 9 between Jessica Strott and Matt Mervis, Consultant to Technology Goes Home and Nigel Jacob, City of Boston Senior Advisor for Emerging Technology. Both conversations were about affordability of hardware used as part of sustainable broadband adoption training programs in the City.

Sincerely,

Donna Sorgi
Senior Assistant Corporation Counsel
Donna.Sorgi@cityofboston.gov
(617) 635-4097

Attachments
cc. Jessica Strott

Sorgi, Donna

From: Susan M. O'Connor [smoconnor@timothysmithnetwork.org]
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2009 4:00 PM
To: Sorgi, Donna
Subject: Phone Call with Jessica Strott (FCC)

Donna,

On Thursday, 11/5, I talked with Jessica Strott (Jessica.Stroll@fcc.gov).

We discussed several aspects of providing hardware as part of a training program in general and specifically the equipment proposed for Technology Goes Home. Jessica wanted to understand the differences between the cost for TGH and what I suggested would be the cost of a laptop for the Online Learning Readiness Program. TGH is proposing a netbook running Linux operating system and programs at a cost of about \$99 / person; I believe that the costs for a laptop appropriate to OLR will be approximately \$400. The primary difference is that the OLR laptop will have to have a Windows operating system as well as Microsoft Office installed in order for students to successfully utilize the Digital Literacy and Elevate America curriculums.

I emphasized the need for warranties on whatever equipment is purchased. This may not be necessary on a \$99 netbook since the repair costs could well exceed the cost of simply repairing the device.

Lastly we discussed free computers to participants versus having participants purchase their netbook or laptop. I emphasized the need for participants to have some "skin in the game" so to speak. I believe that they will value the computers more if they have purchased them (possibly at very reduced prices) rather than having the devices simply being given to them.

Susan

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Susan O'Connor
Executive Director
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11/16/2009

Sorgi, Donna

From: Susan M. O'Connor [smoconnor@timothysmithnetwork.org]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 2:31 PM
To: 'Jessica Strott'
Cc: Sorgi, Donna; Khalid Mustafa
Subject: RE: Help for the FCC Broadband team

Jessica,

Donna Sorgi mentioned that you might be contacting me concerning the Online Learning Readiness Program that the TSN is proposing as part of Boston's Sustainable Broadband Adoption grant.

The TSN procures the hardware it purchases for use within TS Centers independently of anything TGH would purchase. However, we do use the same vendor, HiQ Computers. If the Online Learning Readiness Program and TGH are funded, the TSN will supply the comparable netbooks for those enrolled in the TGH. In fact, OLR participants will be required to complete a course based on TGH content prior to being accepted into OLR.

Since students will be using the Digital Literacy curriculum and Elevate America courses available through Microsoft, the netbooks must be compatible with Microsoft products and services. This means running Windows operating system (e.g. Windows 7). We plan on using open source software for productivity applications (word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, databases) whenever possible. If this proves impractical because of the Microsoft courses, then we will get software from Microsoft. We would expect the vendor from whom the netbooks are procured to develop a system image that is implemented on all machines delivered to OLR students. I don't want to have to install software repeatedly.

I do not know which warranties will be included but would like to see a 3 year warranty with local support, meaning that OLR/TGH students could bring their computer to a local place for support. If the students were actively enrolled in classes, then I would like to see the warranty include either replacement notebooks or loaners. There should be system images maintained so that it is each to bring ay machines experiencing problems back to their initial state (or the state needed for OLD/TGH) I anticipate paying between \$300-400.

The current plan is to go with new netbooks because they are relatively inexpensive, readily configured, and easy for students to carry around.

I'm not an expert on refurbished laptops and don't know they are available in sufficient quantity to be feasible. 4-5 years ago I was actively recommending refurbished machines to small businesses and for home use. They were readily available, reasonably priced, reliable—a great value economically not to mention the ecological aspects of not just filling dumps with them. Since that time issues of privacy, corporate espionage, sustainability, and responsible disposal of the toxic components of PCs, MACs and laptops have discouraged corporations from making obsolete equipment available to non-profits for use in their organizations or for distribution to students. If refurbished laptops were available with the appropriate power and capability, I would definitely consider them for the participants in the OLR program. One problem I envision is that the variety of drivers needed for different manufacturers would mean multiple system images or the inability to have a consistent interface for students.

You can direct the others on your team to me for questions. I'm the only employee at the TSN so everything comes to me anyway. If I can't answer their questions, I'll get others involved.

11/16/2009

Susan

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Susan O'Connor
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From: Jessica Strott [<mailto:Jessica.Strott@fcc.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 1:29 PM
To: smoconnor@timothysmithnetwork.org
Cc: Scott Berendt; Jennifer Flynn
Subject: Help for the FCC Broadband team

Hi Susan,

My name is Jessica Strott and I am a member of the FCC's National Broadband Task Force. I am focused on broadband adoption issues and have been working with Matt Mervis and Donna Sorgi to learn more about how Boston is tackling some of the barriers to adoption. Matt and I have talked a good deal about Tech Goes Home, and Donna referred me to you to discuss the online digital training program that TSN runs.

Our team is has split work by having each team member become an "expert" on one of the barriers to adoption: affordability of service, affordability of hardware, skills/training, relevance, and usability. I am focused on affordability of hardware—namely helping individuals overcome the high cost of PC ownership. Is there someone in your organization I can talk to about the hardware side of TSN? As I mentioned, I am having a similar discussion with Matt about TGH and I believe he is going to set me up with Nigel Jacobs from the CTO's office. Would Nigel also be the right person to talk to about TSN or do you procure hardware separately? I'm getting down into the weeds and some of the questions I'm trying to answer include:

- What types of netbooks are provided to TSN graduates (or will be provided if funding becomes available)
- What operating system, what software
- What warranties are included
- How much did/will they cost your program to buy
- What are the benefits of going with new versus refurbished machines

Finally, I'd like to introduce you to two of my team members: Scott Berendt is working on training/skills/digital literacy and Jennifer Flynn is working on relevance "hooks" and outreach. Do you also have specific people who I can point them to on their topics if they have questions?

Thank you so much for your help and I look forward to learning more about TSN.
Jessica

Jessica Strott
Consumer Adoption Analyst
National Broadband Task Force
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202-418-2607

11/16/2009

Sorgi, Donna

From: matt.mervis@1000paces.com on behalf of Matt Mervis [mmervis@lgfnet.org]
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2009 9:45 AM
To: Sorgi, Donna
Subject: Fwd: Some notes for our 9 a.m.
Attachments: Picture 12.png; Picture 15.png

With the attached files included Donna on this one.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Matt Mervis <mmervis@lgfnet.org>
Date: Mon, Nov 9, 2009 at 8:49 AM
Subject: Some notes for our 9 a.m.
To: Jessica Strott <Jessica.Strott@fcc.gov>

Hi Jessica

Below are some notes for our 9 a.m. call as well as a couple visuals (attached) to illustrate hardware and curriculum issues for TGH 2.0.

Looking forward to the conversation!

Matt

Overview

TGH 2.0 Lilla Frederick Pilot: Netbook, WiFi, Broadband and Client Apps to Live, Learn, Earn, Work & Play

What types of netbooks are provided?

2007-2008

65 EEE PC 7' 4G Surf (\$278) & 135 iBook G4 (Free-90 day warranty)

2008-2009

201 EEE PC 7' 8G - \$238

Fall 2010

Dell Mini 10 - \$265

What operating system, what software?

Xandros Linux Customized for TGH/EEE PC

Ubuntu Netbook Remix for TGH/Dell Mini 10

What warranties are included?

1 Yr Send it In on Netbooks

How much did they cost your program to buy?

65 EEE PC - 4G Surf - \$278

201 EEE PC 8G - \$238

Dell Mini 10 - \$265

How much do you charge the families (and how did you arrive at that number)?

\$50

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What are the benefits of going with new versus refurbished machines?

Warranty Experience

Focus on Applications as Opposed to Focus Hardware and OS

Customizable OS

Mobility and Wireless

What's next on Hardware/Connectivity?

iPhone and Android

Internet Work **Learn** Play Settings Favorites Help ?



Science



Language



Math



Paint



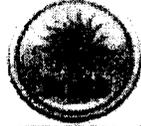
Teacher Pages



Achieve3000



MyGradebook



FOSS Web



NET-nedker



Study Island



MyAccess!



13:12



Welcome Willair SLVN

MAIL PEOPLE REPORTS SEARCH

PROFILE HELP FAQ HOME LOGOUT

Lounge
Sites
Courses
All Courses
Locker

- Mail
- Calendar
- Documents
- Live
- Learn
- Lern
- Work
- Play

Willair UPDATE hide comments

Messages (2 unread)

The Biology Resource Website L... from Patricia Mackinnon (Fri, Oct 24, 2008 08:16 AM)

view all messages | compose a new message

newer | older | colleagues | students | me | customize faculty/staff list | colleague list | student list

- Abbas Manger is so sleepy**
about 23 hours ago | comment | send Abbas a message | Houston, New York, New York
- Carol Acha is sending a message to Ms. Tiffany Jones** Ms. Tiffany, thank you very, very much for attaching my chosen pictures of flowers. They are so beautiful.
about 23 hours ago | comment | send Carol a message | Annapolis, Baltimore, Maryland
- Gloria Pineda is working on SP net**
about 23 hours ago | comment | send Gloria a message | CA Demo
- Gloria Pineda is at the Sacramento Office**
2 days ago | comment | send Gloria a message | CA Demo
- Gloria Pineda is back from vacation**
2 days ago | comment | send Gloria a message | CA Demo
Welcome back, Gloria. You were missed.
Abbas Manger, Mon, Oct 20, 2008 03:40 PM
... 2 more comments
- 1 Burke updated his site Mathematics of the infinite**
2 days ago | comment | send Burke a message | Newark, Liberton
- 1 Burke Mr Burke "thinks" that he is a Math teacher**
2 days ago | comment | send Burke a message | Newark, Liberton
Have no doubt, you are a math teacher!
Thomas Mahr, Mon, Oct 20, 2008 03:32 PM