



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Information Technology

Date June 11, 2013

To: The Honorable Betsy Hodges, Chair, Ways and Means Committee

Subject: Wireless Community Account

Recommendation: Approve application for free Wireless Community account for Parker Skyview High-Rise, 1815 Central Avenue

Prepared by Elise Ebhardt, Interagency Coordinator, 612-673-2026

Submitted by Otto Doll _____, 673-3633
Chief Information Officer

Approved by Paul Aasen _____
City Coordinator

Presenter in Committee Otto Doll

Policy Review Group X Not Applicable

Permanent Review Committee (PRC) X Not Applicable

Prior Related Directives:

Financial Impact: None.

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

- No financial impact (If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget
- Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase
- Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- Other financial impact (Explain):
- Request provided to department's finance contact prior to the Committee Coordinator

Background/Supporting Information

In its continuing efforts to make Minneapolis a wireless city that bridges the digital divide, the City of Minneapolis continues to accept applications for “Wireless Community” accounts, which are free wireless Internet accounts intended for non-profit and community organizations that provide free computer access to the public and/or digital literacy training. There are a total of 100 accounts available as part of the community benefits agreement of the Wireless Minneapolis contract with U.S. Internet Wireless. In 2009, staff completed two rounds of applications however accounts still remain for distribution.

The City’s Information Technology (IT) Department has a new request for use of a free account at the Parker Skyview High-Rise at 1815 Central Avenue, in Northeast Minneapolis.

Volunteers of America is coordinating with the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority property manager and high-rise residents to request a Wireless Community account for the Parker Skyview community room. In addition, the group is exploring options to make computers available in the community room and to provide computer training. The Wireless Internet services will be available to residents of all 335 housing units as well as their guests. The residents have indicated an interest in using the Internet to apply for jobs, access health and social services, communicate with family members, to research and learn new skills, and to help each other learn more about technology.

Volunteers of America is a non-profit organization, working in conjunction with the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority to provide housing and social services to low income Minneapolis residents.

IT Staff have reviewed the request and determined that the program meets the established eligibility criteria for the Wireless Community Accounts:

Must be non-profits located in the city of Minneapolis, and that:

- Provide public computer access (“community technology centers”)
- Provide technology literacy training, and/or
- Provide technology support for underserved communities

Groups eligible to apply for Wireless Community accounts:

- 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations located in Minneapolis and serving Minneapolis residents
- Nonprofits that are not 501(c)3 designated, but who have a fiscal agent
- Neighborhood, community-based, and faith-based associations or groups

Request for Approval

IT requests City Council approval of the Parker Skyview High-Rise application for a Wireless Community account.