

Item 5.B

Community Technology and Telecommunications Civic Technology Working Group

NOTES FROM MEETING AT AUSTIN PUBLIC STUDIOS SEPTEMBER 6 2016

Attending: Rebecca Campbell, Sarah Ann Mockbee, Mirasol Enriquez, Brian Blake, Doug Gray, Malcolm Yeatts

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss topics for a presentation to the Council Economic Opportunity Committee. The music community has already made a presentation to the Council EOC on the economic impact of the music business, and this presentation can be used as a template. Austin Public has set a tentative goal of making a presentation to the Council EOC in December. Malcolm distributed an outline of possible areas in which Austin Public Studios contributes to the Austin economy. One area is coordination with the Digital Empowerment Community of Austin to help achieve the goal of reducing the digital divide. Austin Public participates in DECA meetings, but the priorities of DECA are increasing Internet access and developing software skills, rather than the creative content skills fostered by Austin Public. Making decision makers aware of the potential job market for people with skills taught at Austin Public Studios would help to justify future requests for increased operational funding for more classes and longer operating hours.

Austin Public plans to offer more classes during the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Statistics that would confirm the demand for classes in equipment operation would include: attendance figures for classes, the utilization rate of the equipment, the utilization rate of the studio spaces, the number and type of content produced. Austin Public content is now available through YouTube, in addition to the public access channels and live stream on the Austin Public website. These statistics can be tracked during FY2017 in order to demonstrate the impact of Austin Public on job creation and economic growth. Tracking the geographic and economic distribution of Austin Public users would demonstrate another aspect of the digital divide.

Austin Public plans to submit a GTOPS grant application this year to fund scholarships for training on their equipment. It was noted that the requirement for multi-year follow-up feedback on the impact of GTOPS grants is a difficult metric to quantify, and places an enormous administrative burden on small organizations.