

Angola approves iMAN lease agreement

by JENNIFER DECKER jdecker@kpcnews.net | Posted: Tuesday, December 7, 2010 12:00 am

ANGOLA — Angola's Common Council took a step toward technology of the future by approving a real property lease agreement with the Indiana Metropolitan Area Network Monday.

iMAN is a Steuben County-based fiber optic broadband project that provides high speed data transfers and secure access for very large data users through direct point-to-point high speed data/voice/video connections.

Nate Armstrong, Angola's information technology department head, explained the city already has five connections to iMAN — two in the street department, one in parks, one in the waste water treatment plant and one in public safety.

Under the month-to-month agreement, iMAN will install an equipment rack in Angola's Police Department to serve as a point of presence in the network. In return, iMAN will provide the city five fiber optic connections without charge. The city will provide electricity to the equipment. A city police dispatcher will have a key to the communications room housing the iMAN equipment to assure it remains secure.

The equipment is already in place and running. The lease formalizes the arrangement between the city and iMAN, which is a non-profit that operates under the umbrella of the Steuben County Community Foundation. Part of the fees collected by iMAN are returned to the foundation to be redistributed in the community in the form of grants.

“(The agreement) makes it formal,” said Angola Mayor Richard Hickman. “It lies out what we want iMAN to do. I think it's a pretty fair agreement.”

Armstrong noted the agreement is a major win-win situation for the city since leased lines cost the city several thousands of dollars monthly. “It's such a great deal. One connection is \$225 each monthly,” he said. “Fiber moves data at 1,000 MB. It's more reliable. We started putting it in in 2002 or 2003. It can centralize (city operations) and there's no drawbacks.”

In the future, more fiber connections could be added in the city for further expansion, Armstrong said. It could also tie all the city buildings together. A connection could be added in the water department, water tower, and at a lift station.

“(The fiber optic project) is protected by generator and a battery in case of electrical problems,” Armstrong said and added some electrical wiring had to be installed at the police station prior to the iMAN equipment arrival. “It’s fiber to your doorstep.”

As iMAN continues to be installed around Steuben County, Armstrong said the possibilities from the cutting edge technology are endless.

Earlier this year, Steuben County and Fremont made commitments to bring iMAN locally.