



THE COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN
THE CITY OF NEW YORK



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
SCOTT M. STRINGER



April 16, 2014

Mr. David Hagan
CEO & Director
Boingo Wireless, Inc.
10960 Wilshire Boulevard
Suite 800
Los Angeles, California 90024

Dear Mr. Hagan:

We are writing today to follow up on the City Council's December 2013 Resolution, sponsored by Manhattan Borough President (then-Council Member) Gale Brewer, calling for an amended contract between the Boingo Inc. and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, to provide free Wi-Fi for the 111 million passengers that use New York area airports annually (Resolution below). Since the Resolution, which passed unanimously, we have had no update on the status of our request or of the contract, which we understood was up for renewal last year.

With the spread of the service from cafes and parks to museums and libraries, it seems incongruous that our airports, where passengers are often stuck for hours on end, are without free Wi-Fi. In addition, free Wi-Fi has become the standard for airports. According to Global Gateway Alliance studies, of the 5 major U.S. airports that do not offer an internet connection free of charge, 3 are ours, LaGuardia, JFK, and Newark; and 15 major world airports outside of the U.S. all offer free Wi-Fi.

Boingo's current long term contract with the Port Authority has locked our airports into a pay model that is leaving New York passengers at a disadvantage. In this age of social media and constant connectivity, it is essential that New York area airports remain at the forefront of technological innovation.

Both business and leisure travelers have come to expect and rely on Wi-Fi service, whether to conduct work or connect with friends and activities. Visitors also use the resource to navigate their way around the airports and the region, ensuring a smoother arrival and departure and making for a better first and last impression.

The contract between Boingo and the Port Authority must be revisited and renegotiated. The time to act is now, before New York visitors and residents are left without free Wi-Fi for another 10 years or more. At the very least, passengers should have limited access to free Wi-Fi in the form of initial time allowances prior to paying a fee, a model that a number of U.S. and international airports utilize, and that Boingo employs elsewhere. As good corporate citizens for New York, Boingo must recognize the benefit of offering such a widespread and useful amenity to passengers.

What's more, this amenity need not cost the Port Authority, or Boingo – advertisements can be used to subsidize the service, ensuring that free Wi-Fi is still profitable for all parties involved.

We know that the Port Authority is working to turn around the low rankings of our airports on passenger surveys with a sustained effort to create 21st Century facilities. Free Wi-Fi would go a long way toward ensuring that passengers have the amenities they need to enhance our airports' reputation.

Please provide an update to my office by April 30th, 2014 on where this stands. You may send your response to Council Member Rodriguez' Communications Director, Russell Murphy at Russmurphy55@gmail.com; or Will Colegrove in the Manhattan Borough President's Office. We thank you for your attention to this matter and hope to further our city's relationship with Boingo in a way that best serves our residents and visitors.

Sincerely,



Ydanis Rodriguez,
Chair, Transportation Committee



Melissa Mark-Viverito,
Speaker, NYC Council



Scott M. Stringer,
NYC Comptroller



Gale A. Brewer
Manhattan Borough President



Eric Adams,
Brooklyn Borough President



Joe Sitt,
Chair, Founder, GGA;
CEO, Thor Equities

CC: Mr. Pat Foye, Executive Director, Port Authority of NY/NJ
Ms. Deborah Gramiccioni, Deputy Executive Director, Port Authority of NY/NJ

--

Res. No. 1954

Resolution calling upon the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to amend its contract with Boingo Wireless, Inc. in order to provide free Internet access at its three major airports.

By Council Members Brewer, Cabrera, Comrie, Jackson, James, Koo, Levin, Richards, Rose, Williams, Rodriguez, Vallone, Koppell, Van Bramer and Greenfield

Whereas, In 1999, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey signed a 15-year contract which gives Boingo Wireless, Inc. exclusive rights to provide wireless Internet

access at LaGuardia Airport, John F. Kennedy International Airport, and Newark Liberty International Airport; and

Whereas, The contract can be renewed for another 10 years during a six-month window which began in August 2013; and

Whereas, Boingo currently charges \$4.95 per hour or \$7.95 for 24 hours for wireless Internet access at the three airports; and

Whereas, According to a July 2013 survey conducted by the Global Gateway Alliance, 15 of the 20 largest airports in the country provide free wireless Internet access and, despite being the largest airport system in the country, LaGuardia, JFK and Newark are three of the five busiest airports in the nation without free wireless Internet access; and

Whereas, Boingo already offers free advertising-support wireless Internet access at other locations, including Calgary International Airport; and

Whereas, Free wireless Internet access has become increasingly commonplace at various public spaces and facilities, reflecting our society's growing reliance on consistent access to technology and the Internet for both work and leisure; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to amend its contract with Boingo Wireless, Inc. in order to provide free Internet access at its three major airports.