

MINUTES

**SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY
SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 30, 2020
9:00 A.M.
(via Adobe Connect Webinar due to COVID-19)**

Present: Shellie Ransom-Jackson (Chair, At-Large)
Patricia Leonaggeo (Vice Chair, District 6)
Karen Lau (District 1)
Junaid Akther (District 2)
Michelle DeP Potter (District 3)
Maria Antuna (At-Large)
Bruce Lewis (At-Large)
Selena Samios (At-Large)

ABSENT: Tina White (District 7) – *Excused Absence*

STAFF: Phil Mugavero, Esq., Director of Business Development and Compliance
Colleen Robbs, Director, Equal Business Opportunity Office
Hattie Asberry, Outreach Specialist
Kendrick Jackson, Contract Compliance Specialist
Tim Thompson, Contract Compliance Specialist
Myra Piper, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Ransom-Jackson called the Small Business Advisory Committee (SBAC) meeting to order at 9:11 a.m. via an Adobe Connect webinar due to COVID-19.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Piper called the roll, and each member in attendance stated they were present.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW SBAC MEMBERS

The new members in attendance were welcomed and introduced to the Committee.

Michelle DeP Potter has served 18 years as CEO of Associated General Contractors of America's (AGC) Florida East Coast Chapter, and represents the interest of construction. AGC is a membership organization comprised of general contractors, specialty contractors, suppliers, and service providers to the industry.

Karen Lau is the President and owner of Porta Potty ToGo, a sanitizing solutions company servicing Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Martin counties.

The current members also provided a brief introduction.

Shellie Ransom-Jackson (SBAC Chair) has been a General Contractor for the past 21 years, and a Building Official for the past 13 years. She transitioned into private industry, and owns a consulting firm specializing in providing services to private clients.

Junaid Akther is a resident of Palm Beach, Florida Atlantic University graduate, and small business owner.

Bruce Lewis is the owner of L.B. Limited & Associates, a strategic public relations firm. He has been in business for 30 years in Palm Beach County, involved in disparity studies, and a Small Business Advocate.

Maria Antuna is the CEO of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Palm Beach County.

Selena Samios is the Executive Director of the Women's Chamber of Commerce of Palm Beach County (serving businesses since 1994), and a Councilwoman in Royal Palm Beach.

Patricia Leonagge (SBAC Vice-Chair) has been the owner of Leonagge Benefits Inc. for the past 20 years.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Ransom-Jackson called for a motion for approval of the agenda. A motion was moved by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Ms. Samios. With no objections, the agenda was adopted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Ransom-Jackson asked the Committee for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2020 meeting. A motion was moved by Ms. Leonagge to accept the minutes, as presented, and seconded by Mr. Lewis. The minutes were adopted with no objections.

ETHICS & FLORIDA SUNSHINE TRAINING

Mr. Mugavero reviewed the handout on Ethics and Florida Sunshine training, wherein he stressed the importance of adhering to the Florida Public Records and Florida Sunshine Law. Mr. Mugavero discussed Persons Governed by the Ethics Laws, Financial Disclosure and Ethical Questions, Public Records, and Florida Sunshine Law. He encouraged Committee Members to abstain from voting when a conflict of interest is being discussed.

EBO PROGRAM ORIENTATION

Ms. Robbs began by welcoming the new members to the Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County's (SWA) Small Business Advisory Committee (SBAC). She also welcomed back the members who formally served last year, and thanked them for their dedication and taking time to volunteer for such important work. The work that we do is great work because we are assisting our local businesses, specifically the small, minority and women-owned businesses to work with SWA.

Ms. Robbs indicated that the meeting's purpose was to provide an overview of the Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Program, and also talk about how the SBAC members have helped

us in the past with ensuring that our local businesses participate in the SWA's procurement process.

OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

Ms. Asberry began by referencing a couple of events (e.g. Projects 2020 Business Opportunity Forecast and Transformational Tuesdays) which took place prior to COVID-19. Since the pandemic began, the EBO staff has had to pivot and redirect its outreach efforts to ensure we are still effective. "Did You Know?" videos have been recorded and available at SWA.org/EBO to provide business development on a virtual platform. Partnership is powerful, and SWA is open for business and here to help the business community!

The virtual outreach campaign has included digital advertising in South Florida (Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties) via various online publications, social media posts (e.g. "Did You Know?" video series, EBO Connection presentations, Business Development Quick Hit video series, and Transformational Tuesday Facebook Premiere), and EBO's website enhancements.

Ms. Asberry stated that since the beginning of the fiscal year (10/1/19) to present (6/30/20), 138 new vendors have registered in the SWA's EBO Management System.

Mr. Akther: Of the 138 new vendors, is that in addition to the 676 from last time? With 138 new vendors, can you break it down?

Ms. Asberry: To clarify, the timeframe for 138 new vendors was October 2019 to June 2020 (beginning of the FY 2020 to present). Yes, we will break it down and provide an update at the next meeting.

Ms. Robbs: Later in our presentation we will highlight the April EBO Monthly Report which will provide the information on vendor registration.

Ms. DePotter: Are the numbers strictly SWA numbers or Palm Beach County numbers?

Ms. Robbs: All of information reported pertains to SWA.

Ms. Asberry thanked the SBAC members for assisting the EBO staff with recruiting, training, and educating the local business community about SWA.

EBO PROGRAM ORIENTATION *(Continued)*

Ms. Robbs reviewed the Equal Business Opportunity Program Overview via a PowerPoint presentation which included the creation of the EBO Program, staff roles and responsibilities, Economic Inclusion Policy and Procedures, Affirmative Procurement Initiatives and Goal Setting process, and the EBO Management System (EBO Program's management tool). She also provided an in-depth overview of the Solicitation Review process (formal and informal), including the Subcontractor Utilization Plan and Subcontractor Waiver Request.

Ms. Robbs informed the Committee members that they are key to making our program work because they represent other organizations or are part of a circle of business owners, so they have an opportunity to educate businesses about SWA, tell others what we do, and how they can benefit from these great business opportunities. Local, small, minority and women-owned

businesses are encouraged to register as a vendor at SWA.org/Vendor. The EBO Office is an advocate for small and minority businesses; we need them to register. Registered vendors will populate on lists generated from the EBO Management System, and they will be notified of upcoming opportunities, events, training, and much more.

The EBO's top priorities include smart processes, pivoting to virtual services, vendor outreach (promoting vendor registration and marketing upcoming contract opportunities), S/M/WBE participation in contracts, and contract compliance. Our goal is continuous improvement in processes, provide information, best customer service, seamless processes, information on bids, and business development opportunities. We also strive to ensure that we have participation in contacts and are contract compliant, educate the public, provide information on bid opportunities, help remove barriers so vendors can do business with SWA, and ensure that the commitment that the primes make to the subcontractors are adhered to.

The EBO Office and other SWA departments each generate a monthly report that is submitted to Mr. Pellowitz, Executive Director, and shared with the Governing Board. In reviewing EBO's April 2020 report, Ms. Robbs highlighted the B2G Vendor Registration (760 registered vendors; of which, almost 300 were certified), Solicitation Reviews (formal and informal), and Contract Summary sections.

In closing, Ms. Robbs thanked the Committee members for their commitment to take time to help others. During this pandemic, she stated that this Committee's role is even more important, as well as the commitment in helping certified S/M/WBE businesses. Ms. Robbs expressed her appreciation for their commitments, and looks forward to working together in moving the Program to the next level. Additionally, Committee members were encouraged to participate in EBO's virtual events and outreach, and to invite individuals to visit our websites at SWA.org/EBO and SWA.org/VENDOR.

Ms. Ransom-Jackson thanked Ms. Robbs and Ms. Asberry for the informative presentations, and opened the floor for questions.

All: The Committee members complimented Ms. Robbs and Ms. Asberry on their presentations and "Did You Know?" video.

DISCUSSION OF OTHER MATTERS

Ms. Ransom-Jackson asked if any of the members had something to discuss at this time.

Mr. Lewis: With all of the current events, is SWA looking at other ways to innovatively approach some of these issues, and have you heard of any particular difficulties with small businesses maneuvering through the COVID maze?

Ms. Robbs: It is already difficult for small and minority businesses to grow. As we have taken the last year and a half to educate businesses on our program and processes, we have had to change the way in which we do business with our business community. We are now doing a re-education via videos and digital advertising to educate businesses that SWA is an essential agency that is open for business and want to ensure that they know that the EBO Office is their point of contact at the SWA.

Ms. Asberry: An outreach component that we have is the EBO Connection presentation all about SWA and what we have to offer. Ms. Robbs has personally delivered this signature presentation to the National Association of Black Women in Construction (ZOOM and Facebook Live), as well as to The School District of Palm Beach County's Office of Diversity in Business Practices (ZOOM). The presentation is approximately 15 minutes, however, it can be customized (e.g. duration, industry, etc.).

Mr. Lewis: At the Black Chamber of PBC, we do have a ZOOM platform called "Wednesday Wisdom" (every other Wednesday), and will take this information back to the Committee that handles event booking. Ms. Asberry will send Mr. Lewis the information.

Ms. Samios: Is there designated individual(s) to contact for the Mentor-Protégé group?

Ms. Robbs: The Mentor-Protégé Program is a part of the Policy, and will be as a part of the EBO Office; however, we have been brain storming with the Florida State Minority Supplier Development Council (FSMSDC) on how this can be delivered. Currently, we partner with other agencies and non-profits to provide free technical assistance to businesses; this could be an initiative that the Committee could consider. Again, our focus is to determine how to deliver the needed services to businesses during this pandemic. The EBO Office will look forward to working on this with the Committee.

Michelle: The AGC exists not only to advocate but to educate, advance and connect within our construction community. We have changed the way we do things with the challenges of COVID; one thing is educational opportunities in general construction classes. AGC of America has over 150 online classes offered in Creole, Spanish and English.

Ms. Robbs: Will follow-up with Michelle regarding working together to provide this information to SWA's registered vendors (certified and non-certified) in the construction industry.

Mr. Akther: Is the EBO Office monitoring the prime's percentage to minority subcontractors and ensuring compliance?

Ms. Robbs: Yes, the EBO Office monitors each contract on a monthly basis. Once a contract is awarded, it is entered into B2G. After the prime is paid, the prime receives a notification to report payments to their subcontractors. The subcontractors then receive a notification for payment confirmation. In B2G, the Contract Compliance Specialists review contracts monthly to ensure monthly payment audits are complete.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ms. Robbs mentioned that at the August 11, 2020 SBAC meeting, members will hold elections for the Committee. Ms. Ransom-Jackson reviewed the Election of Officers process as stated in the SBAC Rules and Procedures.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Ransom-Jackson called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was moved by Mr. Akther and seconded by Ms. Samios. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Announced Future Meeting Dates: 8/11/20, 10/6/20, 12/1/20, 2/2/21, 4/6/21, 6/1/21, 8/10/21, 10/5/21 and 12/7/21.

Attest:



Colleen Robbs, Director, EBO Office



Myra Piper, Administrative Assistant