

# MINUTES

**SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY  
SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 5, 2021  
9:00 A.M.**

Present: Michelle DePoter, Chair (District 3)  
Junaid Akther, Vice Chair (District 2)  
Maria Antuna (At-Large)  
Angeleta Gray (At-Large)  
Bruce Lewis (At-Large)  
Selena Samios (At-Large)

ABSENT: Karen Lau (District 1) – Excused  
Patricia Leonaggeo (District 6) – Excused  
Rolando Barrero (District 5) – Excused  
Tina White (District 7)

STAFF: Colleen Robbs, Director, Equal Business Opportunity Office  
Hattie Asberry, Outreach Specialist  
Tim Thompson, Contract Compliance Specialist  
Kaitlin Fitzpatrick, Administrative Assistant  
Kendrick Jackson, Contract Compliance Specialist - Absent

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. DePoter called the Small Business Advisory Committee (SBAC) meeting to order at 9:08 A.M.

## **ROLL CALL**

Ms. Fitzpatrick called the roll, and each member in attendance stated they were present. Ms. DePoter welcomed Ms. Fitzpatrick to the meeting.

## **PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

Ms. DePoter led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

## **AGENDA**

Ms. DePoter called for a motion to approve the agenda as it is presented. A motion was moved by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Ms. Samios. Ms. Robbs requested an amendment to the agenda to add the EBO August Report in addition to the July Report. Ms. DePoter agreed, and this

amendment was moved by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Ms. Gray. With no objections, the amended agenda was adopted.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. DeP Potter asked the Committee for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted of the August 10, 2021 meeting. A motion was moved by Ms. Gray to accept the minutes, as presented, and seconded by Ms. Antuna. The minutes were adopted with no objections.

**EBO PROGRAM MONTHLY REPORT & UPDATE**

Ms. Robbs indicated that the EBO Monthly Reports for July 2021 and August 2021 were distributed.

Ms. Robbs indicated that she will be presenting the August 2021 Report.

Ms. Robbs presented a high-level overview and explained the following sections of the August report:

SECTION	DESCRIPTION	AUGUST 2021 DATA	
<b>Vendor Registration</b>	Number of Registered and Certified Firms	Registered: 1,064	S/M/WBE Certified: 324
	Breakdown of Registered Certified Vendors by Certification Type	Total 731 (most vendors holding multiple certifications) MBE: 130 WBE: 122 M/WBE: 194 SBE: 285	
<b>Ethnicity and Gender Summary Report</b>	Breakdown of the Registered Certified Vendors by Ethnicity and Gender. This was requested by the SBAC members at the August Meeting.	Asian-Pacific American: F=6 / M=3 Black American: F=39 / M=47 Caucasian: F=79 / M=98 Hispanic American: F=20 / M=26 Native American F=0 / M=1 Subcontinent Asian American: F=1/M=4	
<b>Solicitations Advertised with APIs Applied</b>	Lists Projects with Goals (e.g., Affirmative Procurement Initiatives (API) are used to set preference goals.)	ITB 21-23/LB: Furnish & Install Twenty-Three (23) Roof Mounted & Four (4) Wall Mounted Exhaust Fans (Certified S/M/WBE Only)  RFP 21-207/PA: Property & Casualty Insurance Broker Services (12% SBE Subcontracting Participation)	

<b>Solicitation Reviews</b>	Number of informal and formal procurement requests received from various SWA departments which are reviewed by the Contract Compliance Specialists.	<b><u>Informal</u></b> Received: 59 Completed: 64 Contract Value: \$656,813 <i>(Completed Reviews only)</i>
		<b><u>Formal</u></b> Received: 2 Completed: 4 Contract Value: \$1,263,624 <i>(Completed Reviews only)</i>
<b>ITBs/RFPs Reviewed / Pending Contract Award / Contract Execution w/ APIs</b>	Summary of the different types of procurements in process.	Two (2) formal solicitations with APIs applied were in process.
<b>Contract Type Summaries (Monthly &amp; Program Performance YTD)</b>	Contracts being monitored, contracts awarded and payments.	<b><u>Program Performance</u></b> <b><u>10/1/2018 – 8/31/2021</u></b> # of Contracts: 230 Award Amt.: \$383,026,700 Goal: 27.7% Prime Payments: \$145,115,488 SMWBE Payments: \$38,138,221 Participation: 26.3%
		<b><u>8/1/2021 – 8/31/2021</u></b> # of Contracts: 2 Award Amt.: \$2,235,592 Goal: 0%
<b>Contract List (Reporting Month)</b>	Breakdown of all formal contracts (with or without goals) being monitored for contract compliance.	Two (2) contracts; Both (2) without a goal.

Ms. DePotter asked if there were any questions relative to the EBO Monthly Report for August 2021:

- Mr. Lewis asked since the participation for Professional Services (Non-CCNA) is slightly less than the goal, is it safe to assume that the goal percentage is a collective percentage overall for the program and is this a breakdown of each categoric goal attainment? Ms. Robbs responded, yes. Professional Non-CCNA contracts represent 50 contracts, and the goal attainment is an overall percentage for the program for that category contract type.
- Ms. DePotter asked in the Contracts Awarded chart in August, where the goal is zero (0), what trade is the chart referring to under trade services to? Ms. Robbs responded, the related chart "Contract List" lists the trade as Annual Inspection Testing, Certification, Repair contract. When we place an API in a procurement, we must have a minimum of three (3) certified firms in that category. Ms. Robbs gave a high-level overview of the requirements needed and resources, including outreach, SWA uses to find vendors for services needed. Availability is established through identifying firms certified within specific commodity codes, vendors website information, and sending out surveys and interviews to determine ready, willing, and able. Once established we place appropriate language in solicitations.

- Mr. Akther inquired about the 324 certified vendors by ethnicity and gender in the Ethnicity and Gender Summary Report and obtaining the dollar amount breakdown between the Caucasian and the other minorities who have been awarded a contract? Ms. Robbs stated, yes, we can provide the dollar amounts that have been awarded/paid to certified firms by ethnicity and gender. Generally, we provide this information in our annual report but are working to be able to provide it more frequently. The Contract Type Summary chart that is shown for contract awards and payments represent all formal contracts for the Authority for the time of the program. Mr. Akther stated his concern was that the number of the Caucasian and the minorities are almost the same and wants to know what they can do to improve that picture. Ms. Robbs stated that the Ethnicity and Gender Summary Chart represents certified registered vendors by ethnicity and gender and that all vendors have not been awarded a contract or a subcontract. These are just the vendors that are registered to do business with the Authority. Mr. Akther asked are they getting enough in terms of numbers of contract awards and are the noncertified getting business or are they just not applying? Mr. Akther stated that he was looking to see that the minorities are getting or participating in certification and in terms of getting the business and if not, what is lacking? Ms. Robbs mentioned that all firms that are in our vendor registration database are not participating in our procurement.
- Ms. Antuna stated that she knows the Hispanic Community and that there are so many businesses in Palm Beach County that are Hispanic, and she's concerned that Hispanic registrations are low. Ms. Antuna requested that Ms. Robbs advise her as to the vendor certification type on the Hispanic businesses as she would like to go back to their membership and see why they are not certified. Ms. Robbs agreed to provide a list of Hispanic registered vendors. Ms. DePotter mentioned that this is a possible opportunity for her and Ms. Antuna to work together to do outreach with the Hispanic community and Ms. Antuna's affiliation with the chamber.
- Ms. Samios asked for clarification on Mr. Akther's question from earlier; the breakdown of the certified vendors by ethnicity and gender are these awarded ones? Ms. Robbs answered no, at our last meeting it was requested to see the breakdown by ethnicity and gender those certified vendors that are registered with us. So, we are showing a chart of those firms that are registered with us, certified, and providing their ethnicity and gender. Ms. Samios responded that she believes this is where the disconnect was from earlier because if she understood the question correctly it was asking is the dollar amount being awarded to Caucasians the same dollar amount being awarded to the other ethnic groups, but this is not the awarded amount, these are just those that are certified. Ms. Robbs answered "correct." Mr. Akther acknowledged the misunderstanding of the Ethnicity and Gender Summary and mentioned that an area they could work on would be outreach especially in the Hispanic community. Ms. Robbs agreed and mentioned that we encourage various chambers to participate with the advisory committee because they have their finger on the pulse of the different ethnicities, genders, and trades in their memberships. We don't want to miss anybody; the doors are open. Vendor Registration is an electronic process on our portal and registration can be completed in minutes.
- Mr. DePotter asked if there is someone on staff to help walk new registrants through the registration process. Ms. Robbs stated that our entire EBO staff helps vendors register with us, as well as the tech support team accessed through our portal.
- Ms. DePotter asked Mr. Thompson if there is a list, focusing on construction, of the trades where a deficiency is seen that could be provided. Mr. Thompson did not have the list available but acknowledge that there are a large number of the Authority's registered small

businesses that are not yet certified. Ms. DePotter asked if it would help if we pushed it out to our respective organization and maybe we don't have them as members but maybe they know somebody or a family member that wants to do business with us and get certified? Mr. Thompson answered "absolutely".

- Ms. DePotter observed that there is a slight decline in the number of registered certified vendors from the July to August Report, and asked for clarification on what this is attributed to, is this due to Covid maybe? Ms. Robbs stated that the numbers are going to fluctuate because most certifying agencies certify for three (3) years, and it is possible that businesses have more to think about or are trying to decide if they want to recertify, it could be covid, but Ms. Robbs said that she didn't want to necessarily put it on Covid.
- Mr. Lewis stated that he believes the most important message, in order to push these numbers up, is to let people know that they don't have to be certified, they just need to be a registered vendor to participate in this procurement process. A lot of small businesses go through fatigue, documentation fatigue, and don't necessarily want to go through the difficult process of being certified and they have to persevere through it. There are benefits to it once they attain that, but they don't have to be a certified company to participate in this process.
- Ms. DePotter asked for clarification on the difference between registered and certified in terms of willingness, able, and qualified. Ms. Robbs stated that a registered business can be any company, large or small. Whereas a certified firm goes through a process of submitting an application to certifying agencies to obtain certain types of certifications based on ethnicity, gender, type of services they provide, their location, and a number of other things. Everyone can register and we want everyone who can do business with the Authority to register. Part of our outreach is so that businesses know from A to Z what we purchase in terms of products and services. We work hand in hand with our purchasing department and other user departments to get the word out. The Authority is always working on outreach and events to get the word out about who we are and what we buy. The first step again is the vendor registration. If there are low numbers in a particular area, that is the purpose of us advertising and constantly sending bid opportunities to our entire vendor database and to the SBAC committee so that it can be forwarded on. We post bids in the newspaper, use our B2G system, and send it to our partners to get the word out so that businesses know about upcoming bid opportunities. Then when we have our outreach events, the goal is to connect businesses with the user department staff. Ms. DePotter responded that she was just concerned about the vetting of qualified willing and able. Ms. Robbs stated that we do a high level of vetting, but it is the procurement document that determines who is qualified or not. We can't go ahead of the procurement process in vetting companies to say if they can or cannot bid. If we have firms that are certified in a particular area, we must have three (3) or more, certified to perform those particular services, then a survey is sent to see if they can perform the work and are interested in bidding. Mr. Lewis stated the prerequisites are a little different for certifications. For example, you must have a business tax receipt, be registered with the division of corporations, and have a legitimate business structure. The procurement department really vets that out as far as really being qualified. But the availability side of that is whether somebody is willing, able, and interested in doing that work.
- Ms. DePotter asked if there is a local goal on SWA procurement projects. Ms. Robbs answered yes, goals are based on Palm Beach County certified businesses. Ms. DePotter asked if when SWA receives the business tax receipts, is someone checking to see that the information is correct, and the offices are local? Ms. Robbs responded yes.

- Ms. DePotter thanked the SWA staff for their quick turnaround on the visuals and Ethnicity and Gender Summary (Vendor Registration Chart) provided for the meeting as it provides an abundance of information for the SBAC Committee. Ms. DePotter stated that she doesn't believe they are looking to have the dollar amounts at every meeting but on an annual basis is great. Maybe last year's numbers can be given as a refresher.
- Ms. DePotter recognized Ms. Gray who asked if the committee would be in agreement to request a short outreach training for the registration of vendors, possibly for about 10-15 minutes prior the meeting to explain how an outreach can be done. Ms. DePotter asked for clarification on Ms. Gray question to find out if she is requesting a joint outreach of all of the organizations. Ms. Gray stated not at that level just at the beginning of our SBAC Committee meeting. Ms. DePotter suggested piggybacking on the Transformational Tuesdays and doing some sort of outreach collectively between the members organizations. Mr. Lewis mentioned that the SWA staff has many tools that can be shared. SWA is a part of the Palm Beach Partners Steering Committee which puts on an Annual Expo for large and small businesses that has an abundance of information. The Black Chambers has employed SWA, Ms. Robbs, and Ms. Asberry who have a wonderful presentation that tell all the ins and outs from registration to the types of opportunities that are available, and we used them at least twice a year to just get an audience of our membership and the general public to learn about how to get registered and what kinds of services, commodities, and construction opportunities there are. Ms. Gray expanded on her question to consider hosting these trainings on the weekend for the local small businesses to attend as most small businesses are busy during the week. Ms. Robbs agreed to look into this opportunity and also mentioned the abundance of training videos and live webinars by the B2G team available at [www.SWA.org/vendor](http://www.SWA.org/vendor) under the Training Tab. Ms. DePotter suggested that a mailer be sent out with this information.

### **OUTREACH UPDATE**

Ms. Asberry provided an overview of the August outreach events and commented on the following:

- Digital Campaign runs April through September with advertising via Caribbean Today, El Latino Semanal, Florida Trend, and MIA Media (*Haiti Open Magazine was postponed due to the current events.*) We are preparing for our upcoming digital ads to get started after the opening of the new Fiscal Year.
- Transformational Tuesday (a monthly training opportunity for vendors) titled, "Effective Project Team Communications," presented by Lorna Anderson, Project Management Professional at Greywood Consulting Corp. on August 24, 2021, via Facebook Premiere. The training outlined the effective communication strategies during challenging times when in-person engagements are limited, and we are forced to work in an online or virtual world. Ms. Anderson did a phenomenal job with this, and the goal was to let the businesses know that communication is the lifeline of any good project. Visit [www.SWA.org/EBO](http://www.SWA.org/EBO) to view all Transformational Tuesday videos and much more.
  - A big kudos to the SBAC Committee on the phenomenal event we had on September 27<sup>th</sup> "Q&A with the SWA's Members of the Small Business Advisory

Committee” broadcasted on Facebook Premiere on October 1, 2021. Ms. Asberry stated that it was amazing that all of these brains came together, and the energy was so over the top positive. It was very effective, and everyone did a great job. Ms. Asberry acknowledged that she sees Rolando is sharing the information for the Transformational Tuesday on social media. Ms. Asberry stated she is looking forward to what they are able to do the next time.

A few upcoming scheduled events include:

- Projects 2022 SWA Business Opportunity Forecast Conference on December 2, 2021 (Virtual) from 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. – This event is to inform the local vendors of the upcoming opportunities regarding purchasing and service opportunities for projects at SWA in 2022. This is a very informative event, and the vendors will get to know who we are and what we buy.
- Pending October Event: Ms. Asberry asked Ms. DePotter for information on the Business Forum event and when it will take place. Ms. DePotter stated she placed a call with Michelle Jacobs with the Economic Council where together many of them in the business community comprised the Business Forum. Unfortunately, Ms. DePotter doesn’t believe the event will take place in October, but she will speak with Ms. Jacobs again this week.

### **Outreach Discussion**

Mr. Lewis asked how SWA receives feedback on the events that are hosted. Is it via chats, emails, or YouTube? Ms. Asberry responded that we receive feedback on YouTube, and our Public Affairs and Recycling team is working on getting it broadcasted on Channel 20. However, the committee can push it out to the community. We also receive feedback on our Facebook page, and it can also be shared by the SBAC Committee members and let it reach the community so everyone can see what it is that we do. Ms. DePotter thanked the SWA team for all that they do in ensuring that the event happened with no mistakes. Mr. Akther also thanked the SWA team, specifically Ms. Asberry, for the energy she brings to the events.

### **DISCUSSION OF OTHER MATTERS**

Mr. Akther who asked about Ms. Tina White, SBAC Member. A discussion ensued regarding Ms. White’s attendance record, and the Committee Rules and Procedures. Mr. Akther stated that he reached out to Commissioner Bernard who said that he is aware of the vacancy and has put in motion through his staff a possible replacement. Commissioner Weinroth is also working to fill his vacancy on the Committee. Ms. Robbs stated that the Commissioners make appointments and inform our Executive Director and appointments are done at the board meeting. Ms. DePotter requested that the picture and name be removed from the district to show that it is available. Ms. DePotter asked to be advised on what the next steps would be. Ms. Robbs stated that she has been informed that there is a search being done to fill the positions. Ms. DePotter mentioned that she believes the SBAC rules state the procedure for this. Ms. DePotter read Rule 2 from the SBAC Rules and Procedures which states “Removal of Committee Members: Attendance of Committee Members at scheduled meetings is mandatory. A

Committee member shall be subject to review by the Committee for removal after two (2) unexcused absences from regular meetings within a twelve (12) month period. The Committee shall review the circumstances and render a determination on whether to remove the member by a majority vote. If the member is removed, the Committee must notify the member in writing of his/her removal and the Committee must notify the Board of the vacancy.” Mr. Akther mentioned that he believes that the filling of the vacancy is being worked on by the Commissioner’s, but this Committee should have leverage in moving forward with the Commissioners approval. Mr. Lewis stated he agrees with Mr. Akther to maintain the hierarchy as this Committee doesn’t appoint the members, but the Commissioners do and if they are currently looking for the right person then this Committee should allow them time. However, if anyone on this Committee has someone in mind then it could be mentioned to the Commissioners, but at the end of the day it is the Commissioner’s choice of who they want to fill the vacancy with. Ms. Robbs stated that the Commissioners are aware of the comments from this Committee from the minutes taken at the meetings, which are included on the Governing Boards agenda. Further discussion occurred related to the Committee’s opportunity / responsibility, but they did not come to a consensus.

#### **MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. DePotter made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Antuna seconded. Ms. Robbs stated that before moving forward with carrying the motion to adjourn the meeting, the next meeting is in December and generally there is not a meeting held in December as usually it is within the same week of our Business Opportunity Forecast Event, mentioned earlier by Hattie. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:12 A.M.

**Future Meeting Dates: 12/7/21, 2/1/22, 4/5/22, 6/7/22, 8/9/22, 10/4/22 & 12/6/22.**

**Attest:**

  
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Colleen Robbs, Director, EBO Office



**SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**October 5, 2021**

**ATTENDANCE LIST**

MEMBER	DISTRICT	2/2/2021	4/6/2021	6/1/2021	8/10/2021	10/5/2021	12/7/2021	2/1/2022	ABSENT
Karen Lau	1	Present	Present	Excused	Present	Excused			2
Junaid Akther	2	Present	Present	Excused	Present	Present			1
Michelle DePotter	3	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present			0
Vacant	4	--	--	--	--	--			--
Rolando Barrero	5	--	--	--	Present	Excused			1
Patricia Leonaggeo	6	Present	Present	Present	Excused	Excused			2
Tina White	7	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent			5
Maria Antuna	At-Large	Present	Present	Excused	Present	Present			1
Angeleta Gray	At-Large	Present	Excused	Present	Present	Present			1
Bruce Lewis	At-Large	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present			0
Selena Samios	At-Large	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present			0
<b>Next Scheduled Meetings:</b> December 7, 2021 February 1, 2022 April 5, 2022 June 7, 2022									