

MBE Advisory Committee Conference Call January 12, 2010

Participants:

Ruth Byrd-Smith – Allegheny County M/W/DBE Department
Victor Diaz – Pittsburgh Metropolitan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Elaine Dudley – Allegheny County Department of Economic Development
Amy Griser – Allegheny County Department of Budget and Finance
Jim Johnston – Allegheny County Department of Economic Development
Joyce Query – I2, Inc.
Toni Silva – UPMC
Faith Stipanovich – Office of the Allegheny County Controller

The purpose of this conference call was to address outstanding issues from the Advisory Committee meeting on December 9, 2009. One issue tabled at that time was the correspondence between the Committee and the County Executive. Joyce Query suggested holding off on discussing this since some of those who contributed to the letter of recommendations were not present for the conference call today.

Ruth Byrd-Smith inquired as to the structure that this new Advisory Committee should take. Ms. Query proposed Ms. Byrd-Smith as the Chair. Ms. Byrd-Smith stated that since the Committee is to advise the M/W/DBE Department, it would not be efficient for her to be the chair. In addition, according to the new legislation, neither County employees nor elected officials can hold office in the Committee. Ms. Silva inquired about the Committee structure before the revamp took place. Previously there were two Co-Chairs, the County Executive and then-Councilwoman Brenda Frazier. Ms. Query asked for the responsibilities of the Chair. The Chair would be in charge of the meetings and help to formulate any subcommittees. Ms. Silva asked who sets the agendas and Ms. Byrd-Smith replied that she had been setting them for about the past year. She suggested that everyone think about a possible structure for the Committee and any ideas can be discussed at the next meeting in March. She asked Ms. Query and Mr. Diaz what they thought of the co-chair structure, and Ms. Query responded that it worked better with Ms. Frazier as Mr. Onorato tended to be absent from the meetings. Mr. Diaz stated that he saw the co-chairs more as ceremonial figures since Ms. Byrd-Smith set the agendas for the meetings. He has felt that if a Committee member wanted to add something to the meetings, Ms. Byrd-Smith would be the person they would approach. Ms. Byrd-Smith offered to present these thoughts at the next meeting for the consideration of the entire Committee. However, Mr. Diaz countered that he would rather that Committee members raise issues they would like to discuss instead of spending another meeting trying to determine a Committee structure.

At the last meeting, it was suggested that the Committee host a networking event for M/W/DBE vendors. Ms. Query posed setting up a subcommittee to address that. She and Mr. Diaz volunteered for this subcommittee. Ms. Byrd-Smith offered the services of

her offices if a clerical need presents itself. Ms. Query would like to present ideas for this event to the Committee at large at the next meeting. Ms. Byrd-Smith suggested another conference call before the next meeting and Ms. Query liked that idea.

Also proposed at the last meeting was a single internet location for contact information of and recognition of primes and subs. Ms. Byrd-Smith made reference to the Diversity Business Resource Center web portal, which is partially funded by the County. Ms. Query thinks that a subcommittee could be formed to handle that issue as well. She will participate as will Ms. Silva. Ms. Byrd-Smith will be part of both subcommittees.

Two conference calls will be scheduled before the next meeting, one for the event planning and one for the website. Amy Griser offered help in any way she could and invited the Committee members to call on her if they need anything.

Ms. Byrd-Smith will have her staff send out the date for the next quarterly meeting with the conference call minutes.