
Allegheny County MBE Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
204 County Office Building
Tuesday, April 30, 2013
9:00 a.m.

Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

Austin Davis – Executive Assistant, Office of the Allegheny County Executive
Ola Jackson – Founder/CEO – Onyx Woman Network (OWN)
M. Gayle Moss – Chair, MBE Advisory Committee
James Overton – Chairman/President, City of Pittsburgh Equal Opportunity Review Commission/
Overton Financial Group
Roxanne Sewell – President, LJS Publishing/Talk Magazine
Gregory Spencer – President/CEO, Randall Industries, LLC
Tim Stevens – Chairman, Black Political Empowerment Project (B-PEP)

Advisory Committee Members Absent:

Larry Brinker – President/CEO, Brinker Group
Victor Diaz – CEO, Pittsburgh Metropolitan Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Amy Griser – Deputy Controller, Office of the Allegheny County Controller
Abass Kamara – Director of Government Affairs, Pittsburgh Penguins
Philip La May – Deputy Director, Allegheny County Division of Facilities Management
Marc Little – CEO/President, Minority and Women Educational Labor Agency (MWELA)
Iftikhar Malik – President, Shawn Malik, Inc.
Toni Silva – Supplier Relations Director, UPMC

Also Present:

Ruth Byrd-Smith – Director, Allegheny County Department of M/W/DBE
John Deighan – Chief Purchasing Officer, Allegheny County Division of Purchasing
Lisa Edmonds – Deputy Director, Allegheny County Department of M/W/DBE
Kevin Jackson – Black Political Empowerment Project (B-PEP)
Barbara Parees – Deputy County Manager, Office of the Allegheny County Manager

Agenda:

- I. Open Meeting**
- II. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
- III. Presentation by Chief Purchasing Officer**
- IV. Adjournment**

I. Open Meeting**II. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

The minutes from the February 2013 meeting were reviewed and approved.

III. Presentation by Chief Purchasing Officer

Chief Purchasing Officer John Deighan presented information on the Purchasing Division and contracting with the County. Allegheny County supports the open competition principle of public purchasing, which is something that the Purchasing Division strives for every day. Purchasing also issues bids and Requests for Proposal (RFPs) for the City of Pittsburgh. However, the County does not make purchases on behalf of the City; Purchasing simply issues their solicitations. There is a legal concern regarding the County issuing purchase orders on behalf of the City. The Purchasing office manages a contract portfolio that includes over 1,000 contracts inclusive to County only contracts, City only contracts and County/City contracts.

Allegheny County's Administrative Code sets the following requirements for solicitations. Purchases below \$10,000 dollars are at the director's discretion and no solicitation is required. For purchases valued above \$10,000 and below \$30,000 an informal solicitation or Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is issued. For purchases valued above \$30,000, the more formal process is followed. The Administrative Code establishes the threshold for the solicitation of contracts. RFQs are not advertised in the newspaper. With RFQs, Purchasing has the ability to negotiate factors or elements of the contract. That is unique to the RFQ as compared to the Invitation for Bid, or IFB. Used for transactions above \$30,000, it is considered a formal solicitation. It is advertised in the newspaper and detailed specifications are included, advising the market what our needs are.

Exceptions to the competitive process are sole source purchases, which occur when there is only one company that can provide a specific product or service. There is a formal documentation process required for that as the user department has to justify as to why it a sole source. Then Purchasing investigates to verify that the vendor is a sole source vendor. With piggyback contracts, a vendor enters into an agreement with a government agency then offers the terms and conditions of that contract to a second agency. The contract has typically a three to four-year term, awarded by a competitive process.

As of 2011, the bid process became electronic. Vendors access the bids electronically and submit their bids electronically. The biggest advantage to this process is that all of the bids are opened electronically, which eliminates expenses with regard to paper postage. Modifications can be made up until the date and time that the bid is due, and it gives the supplier more control over their bid.

Ruth Byrd-Smith referenced the 2013 first quarter progress report that has been posted to the County website. The progress report displays all of the Purchasing contracts for which the M/W/DBE Department vetted M/W/DBE participation. It was noted that the Commonwealth of

Pennsylvania utilizes COSTARS, but that vendors must pay a \$500 fee to join. The County uses U.S. Communities as well, which is a national group for government agencies. Piggyback contracts must be awarded by a qualified government agency.

IV. Adjournment