
Allegheny County MBE Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Facilities Management Conference Room, County Office Building
Friday, August 22, 2014
9:00 a.m.

Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

Austin Davis – Executive Assistant, Office of the Allegheny County Executive
Abass Kamara – Partner, Carey Group
Marc Little – CEO/President, Minority and Women Educational Labor Agency (MWELA)
M. Gayle Moss – Chair, MBE Advisory Committee
Iftikhar Malik – President, Shawn Malik, Inc.
James Overton – Chairman/President, City of Pittsburgh Equal Opportunity Review Commission/
Overton Financial Group
Barbara Parees – Deputy County Manager, Office of the Allegheny County Manager
Roxanne Sewell – President, LJS Publishing/Talk Magazine
Toni Silva – Supplier Relations Director, UPMC

Advisory Committee Members Absent:

Larry Brinker – President/CEO, Brinker Group
Victor Diaz – President, VideoTek Construction
Ola Jackson – Founder/CEO, Onyx Woman Network (OWN)
Gregory Spencer – President/CEO, Randall Industries, LLC
Tim Stevens – Chairman, Black Political Empowerment Project (B-PEP)

Also Present:

Ruth Byrd-Smith – Director, Allegheny County Department of M/W/DBE
Lisa Edmonds – Deputy Director, Allegheny County Department of M/W/DBE

Agenda:

- I. **Open Meeting**
- II. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
- III. **Director's Report**
 - **Progress of the M/W/DBE Department**
- IV. **Old Business**
 - **Chapter 435 Legislation**
- V. **Adjournment**

- I. **Open Meeting**

- II. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

The previous meeting minutes are reviewed and approved.

- III. **Director's Report**

Ruth Byrd-Smith updates the Committee about the Department. The first is a paper reduction project, which consists of all of the certification files housed in the office being scanned into OnBase and stored electronically. The hard copy files will be shredded, except for pages including live signatures and notarial seals.

Secondly, a report of the amount of businesses that have been certified over the years, requested by Barbara Parees, is presented. Ms. Byrd-Smith provides a chart, detailing certification numbers from the past 10 years. In 2004, 124 companies were certified; 569 companies were certified in 2013. This number represents both newly certified businesses and businesses that are still considered eligible for certification according to PA UCP standards. She believes this number continues to grow because the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania no longer provides certification services. Ms. Parees asks if it would be possible to know how many companies were certified in 2012 and then did not recertify the following year, and if this would be a significant number. Ms. Byrd-Smith assures her that the majority of certified firms do recertify, though there is a number of companies that are unable to maintain certification due to various changes. A discussion ensues regarding the M/W/DBE Department tracking these statistics and the usefulness of this information. Ms. Byrd-Smith will speak with her staff regarding this matter and will get back to the Committee.

The third is the Annual Open House on September 18, 2014. The entire Committee is invited. The County Executive will deliver opening remarks. This year there will be honorees: two M/W/DBE owners who have been certified with the Department since its inception 26 years ago and Sue Broadus, who has been employed with the Department for 26 years. Ms. Byrd-Smith will provide an overview of the services offered by the Department for attendees' information.

- IV. **Old Business**

M. Gayle Moss believes the revision of the Chapter 435 legislation is almost complete. A copy will be given to Committee members. If the Committee can agree on it, it will then be passed on to County Council for approval. There is a section on the next to the last page that Ms. Moss would like to discuss with the Committee as she believes a change in wording is needed. The section states that the Director of the M/W/DBE Department, or Ms. Byrd-Smith, has access to the County Executive through the County Manager. However, the CFR states that the Director should have direct access to the County Executive. Ms. Moss is of the opinion that the Director should have direct access to both. Austin Davis says that this was vetted through the Department of

Transportation and the Law Department; every department is to report to the County Executive through the County Manager. He also spoke with someone at the DOT who felt that the current language was acceptable. Ms. Parees seconds Mr. Davis' statement, saying that the County Manager was appointed to assist the County Executive with his responsibilities, and that all 18 departments report to the Executive through the Manager. Mr. Davis adds that if there is ever a serious issue, any director can get direct access to the County Executive. The Legislation will be introduced to County Council for approval in early September.

In other old business, Toni Silva gives a report regarding the Advisory Committee's subcommittee. She says that three M/W/DBEs were interviewed for the RFP that was submitted and their references/recommendations are being checked.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.