
Allegheny County MWDBE Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
(Virtual Teams Meeting)
March 31, 2022
1:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

M. Gayle Moss – Chair, MBE Advisory Committee

Roxanne Sewell – President, The LJS Group

Alberto Benzaquen – Commissioner, Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations

James Overton – President/Principal Advisor, Overton Financial Group

Melissa Wade – Communications Coordinator, Allegheny County Office of the County Executive

Tim Stevens – Chairman, Black Political Empowerment Project (B-PEP)

Advisory Committee Members Absent:

Tori Shriver – Political Director, Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters

Also Present:

Lisa Edmonds – Chief Officer, Allegheny County Department of Equity and Inclusion

Agenda

- I. **Open Meeting**
- II. **Introductions**
- III. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (November 9, 2021)**
- IV. **Chairperson Report**
 - a. **Central Location - Bids/Proposals**
 - b. **Vacant Committee Seats**
 - i. **County Staff Members**
 - ii. **Recommendations**
- V. **DEI Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer Report**
 - a. **Staffing**
 - b. **Resources**
 - i. **Website**
 - 1. **Advisory Committee**
 - 2. **Quarterly and Annual Reports**
 - 3. **Legislation**
- VI. **Miscellaneous**
- VII. **Adjournment**

I. **Open Meeting**

II. **Introductions**

III. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (November 9, 2021)**

Gayle Moss asked for approval of previous meeting minutes from November 9, 2021. James Overton made a motion to approve, Roxanne Sewell seconded the motion. All members were in favor of approving the previous meeting minutes. The items were then reviewed and discussed by the members present.

IV. **Chairperson Report**

Gayle Moss mentioned a few items from the previous meeting to Melissa Wade, since she had not been present.

a. **Central Location – Bids/Proposals**

Gayle Moss mentioned a letter that James Overton drafted regarding a central location for bids/proposals that was sent March 16, 2022, to the County Executive. Gayle Moss requests that Melissa Wade check on the progress of this project from within the County. Gayle Moss also mentioned that she has personally discussed the issue with him, and that he did not know much about Bonfire.

b. **Vacant Committee Seats**

i. **County Staff Members**

Gayle Moss discussed a letter, sent November 11, 2021, that had been received by the County Executive, Rich Fitzgerald, wherein the committee

recommends a notice be sent to the following departments, asking that representatives be appointed to the committee:

- Purchasing/Procurement
- Public Works
- Economic Development
- Facilities Management
- Human Services

She also mentioned she spoke with Rich Fitzgerald and noted that he was reaching out to the stated departments and there would potentially be someone from Economic Development put forward as a candidate for the committee. Now that the committee has Melissa Wade on board, Gayle Moss requests that she check on it from within the County, and help move the appointment process forward, and assist in gathering candidates from the requested departments. Gayle Moss mentioned when reaching out to potential committee candidates that the committee does not require time intensive meetings, and that it would be helpful for the committee to have the information directly from representatives of those County departments to be able to give the best information to the public and MWDBE owners.

ii. **Recommendations**

Gayle Moss mention that she met a young woman by the name of Tina Daniels, owner of Concrete Rose Construction, in December 2021, at the Western PA African American Chamber of Commerce luncheon hosted by Carson William, and they discussed minority and women business enterprises. Gayle Moss contacted Tina Daniels at a later date to continue their discussion. Tina Daniels returned Gayle Moss' phone call on March 30, and Gayle Moss extended the offer to serve on the MWDBE Advisory Committee. Tina Daniels enthusiastically agreed.

V. DEI Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer Report

Lisa Edmonds informed the committee that member Tim Stevens had joined the meeting.

a. Staffing

Lisa Edmonds informed the committee that DEI has hired a receptionist and office clerk, but vacant seats for Office Manager and Certification Analyst remain. The positions are listed on both the department page within the County's website, and the main job posting for the County. She also mentioned the County will be hosting a Virtual Job Fair on April 13, 2021, which will be broken up into two parts from 10am-2pm, and 4pm-8pm. Gayle Moss asked if potential applicants were required to register beforehand or were able to join the Job Fair at will. Lisa Edmonds informed her the County would be providing training to departments and she would find out. Gayle Moss asked if once she knew that Lisa Edmonds could inform the committee, so they could find some potential candidates. Tim Stevens mentioned the B-PEP job and training site is being expanded and that Lisa send the job postings and Job Fair event to him to post to their network and on their site. He also mentioned he has a candidate and in mind and will direct her to the County website and Job Fair information.

b. Resources

i. Website

Lisa Edmonds covered the locations job opportunities could be found on the County website.

1. Advisory Committee

Lisa Edmonds shared her screen to show the various ways to access information regarding the MWDBE Advisory Committee, and the legislation for it, and showed the committee where on the website these pages could be found.

2. Quarterly and Annual Reports

Lisa Edmonds also showed where to find the DEI Annual Report and discussed that the Department was finalizing their 2021 report. She asked committee members to submit a photo so DEI could include them on the report. Gayle Moss asked when these pictures would be needed, and Lisa Edmonds advised that they are needed as soon as possible. She also showed that her department is the repository for quarterly reports of County Authorities and their commitments to utilizing MWDBEs for contracts.

Tim Stevens asked Lisa Edmonds if she would like to present on a radio show that B-PEP airs about what she and the County do regarding MWDBEs. Lisa Edmonds asked for Tim Stevens to send her information about the show and she would reply at a later date.

3. Legislation

Lisa Edmonds mentioned and showed that the DEI section of the County website posts the meeting minutes of the MWDBE Advisory Committee, as well as committee members and its' legislation.

VI. Miscellaneous

Gayle Moss asked the committee, and Lisa Edmonds, if there was another way aside from utilizing Bonfire to access contracts. Lisa Edmonds mentioned there were various ways to approach this issue and she would let the committee know more details at a later date. Melissa Wade asked if DEI ever posts information on social media pages about the department and what it does. Lisa Edmonds discussed the DEI Facebook page and the County LinkedIn page. She then showed the department Facebook page so the committee could see the types of content posted that promotes minority, women, and diverse businesses, and resources available to them, and that we highlight certified DBEs. Tim Stevens mentioned that most students he had a discussion with recently do not watch local television. There were a few more items discussed including partnering/marketing with major corporate entities in the Pittsburgh area to promote MWDBEs.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.