
**Allegheny County MWDBE Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
(Virtual Teams Meeting)
October 26, 2021
10:00 a.m.**

Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

M. Gayle Moss – Chair, MBE Advisory Committee
Tim Stevens – Chairman, Black Political Empowerment Project (B-PEP)
James Overton – President/Principal Advisor, Overton Financial Group
Roxanne Sewell – President, The LJS Group
Alberto Benzaquen – Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations

Advisory Committee Members Absent:

(Note: Ralph Watson – deceased)

Also Present:

Lisa Edmonds – Chief Officer, Allegheny County Department of Equity and Inclusion
Damian Wiles – Deputy Director, Allegheny County Department of Equity and Inclusion

Agenda

- I. **Open Meeting**
- II. **Introductions**
- III. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
 - a. **September 20, 2019**
 - b. **August 20, 2021**
- IV. **Letter Addressed to Chairperson**
- V. **Central Location for all County Bid/Proposal Opportunities**
- VI. **Director's Report**
 - a. **Staff**
 - b. **2021 Annual Open House**
- VII. **Vacant Seats on Committee**
- VIII. **Miscellaneous**
- IX. **Adjournment**

I. **Open Meeting**

II. **Introductions**

III. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

The previous meeting minutes for September 20, 2019, and August 20, 2021, were reviewed, discussed, and approved by the members present.

IV. **Letter to Addressed to Chairperson**

A letter addressed to Gayle Moss from "We The People of the Republic of the United States of America" dated June 9, 2021, was received on October 14, 2021, and titled – "Cease and desist order." The letter listed seven items related to COVID-19 restrictions, and closures of boundaries and borders. It was agreed that there was no need to consider or respond.

V. **Central Location for all County Bid/Proposal Opportunities**

A brief discussion regarding the comments made at the last ensued and it was decided to future the discussion at the next meeting.

VI. **Director's Report**

Lisa Edmonds informed the committee of the department's vacant positions (Office Manager, Certification Analyst and Receptionist) She also introduced Damian Wiles the new DEI Deputy Director and the committee welcomed him aboard. Information regarding the 2021 Annual Open, the presenters and the number of attendees was provided. Gayle Moss noted that the event was well attended and that the presenters provided excellent information. Gayle also asked committee members to attend such events given by the department.

VII. Vacant Seat on Committee

Discussion regarding the loss of Ralph Watson resulting in only 5 of the 15 seats currently being filled, the 5 seats open for Allegheny County employees or their representatives, and recommendations for the other 5 vacancies. The role of former committee members from the County Executive's and Manager's Offices was discussed. The committee agreed to formulate a letter to the County Executive that recommends appointing directors or their key designee from the following departments that engage in procurement opportunities:

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

as well as clarification on the role of employees from the offices of the Executive and Manager that are appointed. Specifically, whether such members will have voting rights. Having a lawyer on the committee and contacting the following for possible member recommendations were discussed:

- The Advanced Leadership Institute (TALI) – Gayle
- Vibrant Pittsburgh - Roxanne
- Urban League Young Professionals (ULYP) - Tim
- Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project (PUMP) - Tim

VIII. Miscellaneous

The committee agreed to have the next meeting at 10:00 a.m. on November 9 and to limit the agenda to the following:

- Finalizing the letter to the County Executive
- Further discuss member recommendations
- Further discuss Items noted in the August 20, 2021 meeting minutes
- Location of contracting opportunities.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned