ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & DIVERSITY COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SCHOOL BOARD REPORT
NOVEMBER 12, 2021
Regular School Board Meeting

Good morning, Interim Superintendent Cartwright, Chair Osgood, Board Members, and staff. My name is Carolyn Jones and I serve on the Small Business Advisory Committee, also known as SBAC, managed by the Economic Development & Diversity Compliance Department.

At the October 28th meeting, Carlton Crawl and Dr. Reggie Lewis were both unanimously approved to serve a 2nd term as Chair and Vice Chair of SBAC, respectively.

Secondly, we discussed EDDC's implementation of the M/WBE Prime Preference Points Affirmative Procurement Initiative. Mr. Ballou gave a report on the department's efforts to increase the participation of local certified suppliers at the prime level. He stated that based on their last data review, the District is exceeding its goals in Construction, but not in other business categories. For the first time, EDDC reserved eight (8) points out of a total of 100 points M/WBE Primes. The application of M/WBE Prime Preference Points creates a pathway for existing sub firms to compete on the prime level for non-construction procurements.

A marketing and education push is under development to attract suppliers to bid on solicitations including this Affirmative Procurement Initiative. One component is the development of a logo to brand solicitations that include M/WBE Prime Preference points. Additionally, supplier training on the BCPS bid process is available in partnership with the Urban League and the Florida Atlantic University Small Business Development Center.

SBAC highly support this initiative and member Dodie Keith Lazowick expressed that this methodology has helped her win with other agencies because of the points available for M/WBEs.

Other trainings established by EDDC include a construction-focused Job Ready Initiative with the South Florida Anchor Alliance and monthly Certification Training. By the end of the year, Broward College will host a Commodities job- ready program, and every 4-6 months, the South Florida Anchor Alliance will train suppliers in areas based on upcoming opportunities. EDDC will also begin to host monthly workshops on how to do business with Broward Schools.

Robert noted that while Broward Schools does not have sub-contractor goals on non-construction procurements, an approximate average of 20% utilization of certified subs has been attained.

Finally, we discussed concerns about the perception that the procurement process is not fair. Of particular concern is the real impact of late, rushed, and changing dates on advertised bids. SBAC members consider this a systemic issue and emphasized how it creates havoc, limits opportunities, and critically needs to be addressed.

Robert informed us that EDDC has identified opportunities for improvement in the bid timeline process, and there is opportunity for better transparency and effectiveness to make the District a more compelling place for vendors, including diverse suppliers, to do business.

We also discussed the serious concern regarding the sense that the same firms continue to win contracts repeatedly and the need for a clear determination on what is happening.

In closing, Mr. Ballou plans to work with Procurement on potential solutions and provide an update at the Nov. 18th SBAC meeting. Currently, EDDC meets bi-weekly with the PWS Construction team and will be meeting with the Commodities team monthly. Thank you.