ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & DIVERSITY COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SCHOOL BOARD REPORT
JANUARY 11, 2022
Regular School Board Meeting

Good morning, Interim Superintendent Cartwright, Chair Levinson, Board Members, and staff. This report is on behalf of the Small Business Advisory Committee, also known as SBAC, managed by the Economic Development & Diversity Compliance Department.

At the December 16th meeting, EDDC staff reported back on three items previously discussed:

1. The Bid Evaluation Grading Scale,
2. Restrictive Bid Language, and
3. Bid Data Tracking

The concern with the Solicitation Evaluation Grading Scale was that all firms meeting the 15% or higher M/WBE inclusion percentage receive a maximum of 7 M/WBE Preference Points. In review, the EDDC compliance team will modify the inclusion percentage ranges to avoid this issue in the future.

EDDC also plans to consult SBAC in the course of drafting Affirmative Procurement Initiatives for solicitations under development for advertisement. Additionally, the department is considering proposing a policy change to require input from SBAC for solicitations with a goal of 5% or less.

To address bid data tracking, EDDC committed to story-boarding data pertaining to inclusion percentages, goal attainment, and strategies to achieve inclusion goals. Mr. Ballou reported that in FY22 Q1, the area of construction was at 31.6% attainment against a goal of 29%. Beginning this month, EDDC plans to focus heavily on commodities which has attained less than 10% inclusion spend.

Regarding restrictive bid language, SBAC previously discussed how over-reaching eligibility requirements are a barrier for small businesses. After meeting with Procurement, EDDC has now been invited to provide input and suggest edits pertaining to minimum eligibility requirements as part of the API assignment process. This will be effective this month and will be done on a case-by-case basis. Also, by February, EDDC will implement a pilot project to debrief firms that bid unsuccessfully on District contracts. The process will help bidders improve their proposals and give them an opportunity to share any other concerns.

Finally, EDDC was pleased to report 11 BCPS certified firms are the recipients of Comcast RISE, a multi-year commitment to invest in minority-owned businesses affected by the pandemic. Details of the award winners were released this morning via blackboard in the Winter edition of EDDC Business Connect.

Thank you for your time.