

Board of Education  
Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

Minutes  
June 13, 2006

**Attendance:** Commissioners Evans and Thompson; Board Staff Linda Dunsmoor; Ms. Beverly Jackson; Carol Lee Albert and Robert Davey, PPC; District Staff Jana Carlisle and Andrew Ray. Commissioner Brennan arrived at 5:49 p.m.

Chairman Malik Evans convened the meeting at 5:42 p.m.

**I) RMBDC Inc.**

Ms. Jackson of RMBDC Inc. spoke to the committee regarding her role in the Facilities Modernization Project.

She said she will be ensuring the participation of small businesses, women and minorities. She has done this before, with projects in Schenectady and Albany among others, totaling more than \$800 million. This will be the first time her firm has worked in Rochester, where it is located.

The deliverable at the end of her contract with the District is a strategic master plan for achieving maximum MWBE participation.

In order to be counted toward the required minimum MWBE participation in public projects, a firm must be certified through the New York State Department of Labor.

In Monroe County MWBE certified firms are as follows:

- 291 businesses owned by women
- 176 businesses owned by minorities
- 34 are in both categories
- **476 Total**
  - Of these, firms engaged in construction/related trades:
  - 85 of the women-owned businesses
  - 81 of the minority-owned businesses

Firms are certified in order to ensure authenticity. Principals must document unconditional ownership, at least 51 percent, with the principal in control of every major aspect of the firm -- bank accounts, bylaws, etc.

Ms. Jackson said the way the construction packages are structured will be critical in ensuring MWBE participation. She noted that there are not a lot of firms that can handle a \$1 million contract and they need help building capacity. Some of the businesses will need support services in order to grow. Her firm can help in the

long-term development of the MWBE businesses, and she predicted there would be more participation in the second or third phases of the project.

Her plan for this project will likely embrace the teaming concept -- pairing smaller contractors with larger contractors so that the small firm can build capacity. She also discussed the use of HUB zones, which are federally designated districts providing greater contracting opportunities. When businesses have their headquarters in HUB zones, 35 percent of the workforce must live in the zone. In Ms. Jackson's view, HUB zones provide the most local benefit. HUB zone certified firms employ more than 1,700 workers throughout the city.

MWBE participation is important in this project because it represents much more than a typical construction project, Ms. Jackson said. The FMP has the opportunity to change the City of Rochester as much as it will change the educational system.

Commissioner Thompson asked Ms. Jackson to elaborate on the 'teaming' concept. Ms. Jackson said this concept has been successful in the private sector and is also a concept endorsed by the Small Business Association.

Commissioner Evans asked whether bonding is an issue and can it be overcome. Ms. Jackson said bonding is a very important topic, and although some people say it keeps them from participating, she noted that is not always a bad thing. Many firms have upward of \$20-30M in bonding, others have \$1-5M, which should be enough to participate in this project. Bonding will not be the issue that keeps the District from reaching its MWBE goals on this project, according to Ms. Jackson, who said teaming will alleviate some of the bonding issues, as will subcontracted work.

Commissioner Thompson asked about the challenges of the FMP. Ms. Jackson said there is a danger of people having over-expectations and that it is important to not oversell opportunities. Work on a public sector project is not a gift; firms must show that they have employees, have a record of paying their employees and payroll taxes, etc.

Commissioner Brennan asked about the impact of NYS-approved apprenticeships. Ms. Jackson said there would be lots of opportunities, especially with the NYSDOT program. She said there would be synergies with the Renaissance project regarding opportunities for young people interested in professional trades: engineering, surveying, estimating, etc.

Ms. Jackson said the bottom line is MWBE certification; it is key and should be the first effort.

## **II) Parent Partnership Council (PPC) Update**

Parent Partnership Council President Carol Lee Albert updated the committee on PPC activities in 2005-06.

Several parent meetings have been held since the PPC was created in the Fall of 2005. Issues identified at those meetings included Site Based Planning Teams, the role of parent liaisons, student behavior, and parent involvement, among others. Some parents have expressed concern about the lack of transportation to meetings and daycare at the PPC meetings.

The PPC believes it needs to remain independent of Central Office in order to have an impact, but does need resources to do the job. Representatives also cited a need for increased communication with administration and with the Board.

Commissioner Evans said he would like to see the PPC begin reporting to Community and Intergovernmental Relations on a quarterly basis. He also said administration should work closely with the PPC and ensure that the communication is flowing in both directions.

Commissioner Thompson said some fundamental works needs to be done, mainly putting mechanisms in place for the PPC to communicate with the appropriate stakeholders. She echoed the need for frequent, regular communication from the PPC to CIR.

Commissioner Evans said PPC is an independent organization governed by its own bylaws, not those imposed by the Board or Administration. PPC should be supported by both.

Commissioner Thompson suggested the PPC identify unresolved issues, make recommendations for resolving them, and report to CIR. Jana Carlisle said she would also like to meet with the PPC, and Commissioner Thompson said the report would not preclude a meeting. Commissioner Thompson noted that there does not have to be conflict; there has to be clarification of the role of the PPC.

Commissioner Evans commended the PPC for its work this year and noted that students achieve better when their parents are involved in their education; that is the main goal.

**ACTION ITEM: Report on role of parent liaisons.**

**ACTION ITEM: L. Dunsmoor to arrange for PPC to report to CIR quarterly in 2006-07.**

**ACTION ITEM: L. Dunsmoor to maintain contact with PPC on behalf of CIR and report back.**

### **III) Facilities Modernization Project**

Commissioner Evans said that Richard Hannon, Chief of Governmental Relations and Special Projects, was in Albany personally delivering enabling legislation for the Facilities Modernization Project. He said RCSD is not the first district to ask for this legislation and he is hopeful that the legislation will be approved before the end of the session.

**Commissioner Brennan motioned for adjournment at 7:10 p.m., second by Commissioner Thompson, approved at 7:10 p.m.**