

Inclusive Procurement and Contracting Board Meeting Minutes

Date: March 5th, 2024 | Time: 5:30 pm | Location: Microsoft Teams (Virtual) & TRC
1165 Franklin Street, Suite 100, South Bend, IN 46601

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ipcboardmeeting>

❖ **Call to Order- The IPC Board Committee is now called to order on March 5th, 2024, @ 5:30 p.m.**

- COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Kara Boyles, Keana Baylis, Murray Miller, Wilbur Boggs, Cynthia Simmons-Taylor, Jeff Rea, Michael Morris
- COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY:
 - DIVERSITY & INCLUSION: Darius Lipsey, Bianca Jones
 - PURCHASING:
 - LEGAL: Michael Schmidt
- COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Breanna Allen, Rachel Tomas-Morgan, Caleb Bauer

❖ **Approval of Minutes: February 6th, 2024.**

Notes:

Jeff Rea – December minutes were approved with one Nay and one name correction on last page.

I. Office of Diversity & Inclusion:

Simmons Taylor – Informed the board of the continuous efforts to increase the capacity of and stated we are holding a workshop to assist businesses with applying for certification. She informed the board of the presence of our consultant Ronald Minnis and states she has been assisting us with becoming well versed with the ordinance, program plan, and supplier diversity. She will also be assisting Bianca with the certification workshop. She continues to on to say the ODI office will continue to be as transparent as possible and open to

constructive criticism. The ODI office is reaching out to companies and informing them of upcoming projects as well.

Morris – States that he is happy we are doing the certification workshop. He went on to say that he really wants to encourage ODI to use part of their marketing to include the ecosystem in South Bend. He acknowledged that while we are familiar with his program, he had lunch with Paula (Sours) who is over the Spark Program who is also hosting a workshop, and she informed him that she knew nothing about the certification session. There is also a Cynthia that is hosting one as well. Others in the ecosystem are the SBDC, IDEA Center, Spark, and SBERP; who all have small business development programs should be included in the marketing of ODI programs so word can get out.

Simmons-Taylor – Stated the reason we started with the certification workshop was because with some organizations ODI was not seeing certifications happening. She continues to state that the only way she knows people are getting certified is to do the certification. She agreed with Morris, stating that we need to do a better job of letting our community partners know because they have a wider reach. She stated that in 3 weeks we had 70 people sign up – Jones interjected that it was 2 days that we had individuals sign up. – Simmons-Taylor continued that it is something being spread Morris’ suggestion is a great one because ODI can use the reach.

Morris- Stated we need to raise the visibility of the ODI office because nobody knows what South Bend is doing. People talk down on the CoSB when the city is doing some cool stuff. – Simmons -Taylor - Informed Morris that we just got access to our Facebook page. – Morris – Stated he just needed a this is a great idea and we’re going to do it. He expressed his frustration and suggested that being asked for the mailing list of who we need to contact would have been a better response.

Simmons-Taylor - Asked Morris and Rea for their mailing list of community partners. She goes on to inform the board we will be moving to the department building across from the CCB.

Baylis – Ask does MWBEs stand for Minority Women or Minority and Women.

Simmons-Taylor /Jones /Morris - It stands for Minority and Women

Baylis – Stated that the wording on the flyer was confusing to individuals and the MWBE needs to be distinguished as Minority and Women because individuals only thought it was for Minority Women. She stated that if ODI is not going to listen to the board members say she has a problem with it. She goes on to state she was asking for clarification, and it is not to tear the ODI team down. We don’t want people to think we are being biased because of the MWBE. She thinks that the post needs to be clarified to include men. She continues; The problem with the ODI Office and community in South Bend is the trust has been broken. She questions why did ODI start with certification? She followed up by stating everything individuals needed to get certified. She stated that not all the businesses who are trying to get certified will be doing business with the city. Then continues to say that certification helped her business get 50k in grant funding outside of the CoSB. She suggested maybe we need to

consider to be more niche about who where are working to get certified. She then asked when they finished then what? (Those who can't do business with the city)

Simmons-Taylor – Stated the point is to connect them to opportunity. It's having enough confidence in the ODI staff and knowing that they will follow through. That's why the workshop is for 4 weeks.

Baylis - Interjects and stated that the businesses are spending 4 weeks to fill out paperwork and ODI is still not helping them.

Simmons-Taylor – States that ODI is helping because they are slowing down the process and explaining the process to them thoroughly. She goes on to support Baylis' statement regarding the extensiveness of the application process which is why we are slowing it down and walking them through it step by step. There are weekly expectations that would be met so the documents needed will be in their possession by week 3.

Baylis - States individuals are not getting certified. So, invite people to go through the b-suite so they can get assistance first because they (individuals) think they are getting certified and they are not and goes on to question if we see the miscommunication is this.

Simmons-Taylor – States that she hears what Baylis is saying then went on to say that Bianca has spoken to every one of them and there are men and women so not everyone is confused. Some of them do know what MWBE means. Women and Minority. So we should spell it out. I will turn it over to Bianca to explain.

Baylis – Stated Certification is not her issue, she believes ODI should have started from a different standpoint.

Jones – Inquired on what standpoint should ODI start?

Baylis – Stated ODI should have gone back to the b-suite and reintroduced it and the services they offer. There were some pitfalls, and it left a bad taste in people's mouths.

Simmons-Taylor – Stated that ODI audited the b-suite and reached out to individuals to had applied and wanted certification.

Jones – Stated that all of Baylis' questions regarding participants being at a standstill are valid questions. She goes on to say that the intake form vetted individuals by asking about their company financials and those who stated they had those documents were admitted into the cohort. She continued and stated that when the individuals were reaching out to Baylis with confusion on if the workshop was for both men and women she should have reached out and made the team aware of the confusion so it could have been corrected. She stated that we are a team and that information like that is valuable. With the concerns raised the board knew about the workshop before the action plan had started to give some of that feedback and they did not.

Simmons-Taylor – Stated the Mayor has asked her to get people certified and that's what we are going to do.

There was an exchange between Baylis and Simmons-Taylor

Boggs – Called point of order, citing Roberts Rules

Schmidt - Stated with Wilbur's approval, It is recognized that Keana and Cynthia has a difference of opinion in the approach the ODI is taking; and Cynthia has some disagreements with Keana. We are going to leave it at that. ODI's program will go on tomorrow and we will move on to the next agenda item.

Boggs – States that he thinks the ODI team is great. He continues to say people like a carrot and if there is not a carrot out there, they don't come. Some businesses are not from business backgrounds and don't have those financials together, so if that happens, we should send them to programs like Michael's to help people. People come with their own illusions, and we can work to get them on right track. They go through the process for 4 weeks they may think that they are walking out with certification and think something magical happens.

Jones – Stated she agreed with Boogs and Morris on building that ecosystem and stated that ODI has been in conversation with SBERP and WorkOne to develop relationships and identify where to send people. We have 55 businesses who have done business with the city, and we are trying to pull them in.

Morris – Stated what ODI is doing is great and wish they could do this every month. He continued to state that he was very uncomfortable with the exchange. He followed up with he thinks this being encouraged as a holistic approach and to do more things like this.

Jones – Stated that the ODI team is looking for partners to make connections and direct individuals to the right places. The goal is to build camaraderie and be in the fold with other organizations in small business development. The business that ODI has for the workshop varied. There are currently 55 minority or women owned businesses doing business with the city that ODI is targeting to get certified. Of those 55 only 9 applied for the workshop. ODI will do their best to engage with the other businesses to obtain certification.

Miller – Stated he tried to reach out to Jones to ask about the program (MWBE) and Jones' tone seemed offended by his questioning and of using other individuals.

Jones – Stated that Miller pulled her to the side at a NIMBA meeting while she was on her way out and questioned what made her qualified to do the workshop. She continued to say that his insinuation of her tone did not make it a fact and she was not offended by his questions, she was offended by him questioning her competency.

Rea – Stated that some of the frustration is looking at the board's duties and seeing that the board is not doing any of those items. They are trying to figure out that role they play. He brought attention to item 1 on the board duties which speaks to setting annual utilization goals with the program administrator. It is now March and we have not set any goals. He went on to ask if there was an annual report coming and if there was a new goal set.

Simmons-Taylor – Stated as of right now the current reports show where we with our spending last year in comparison to this year. She continued to speak to the program plan and

changes that need to be made. She gave an example of items not addressed in the program plan, like change orders and language that could be clearer. We have a 6% goal set on the plans, but it is not annual, it was based on the disparity study.

Schmidt – Stated if we have an annual utilization plan and we keep exceeding that aspirational, what happens next? How does that long term impact effect the disparity study? He continued with the 8 job duties the board has and how we should be having a robust discussion about those items each month. Then the board can take forma action to the Mayor and Common Council on the future needs and assessment of the program. Some of those duties he would like to see more on the agenda that are actionable. He further explained for a period he would put together spreadsheets that would show utilization percentages for certified and non-certified. He went on to say that if the board focuses on one topic of the 8 duties for the next meeting and so on, we can make progress. We owe that to the volunteer board to take on those duties and expand upon them.

Morris – Stated that it sounds like some of the frustration is coming from the agenda and proceeded to ask who sets the agenda.

Jones – Stated she puts the agenda together and sends it to the President of the board for input.

Schmidt – Stated we try to get some input from the board on how to set the agenda. There should be better dialog between the board and the Program Administrator on how to set the agenda.

Morris - Stated if we went around the room and asked each person what the 2024 goal is, he has a feeling we would get different answers or no answers.

Schmidt - Stated that we have never set an aspirational goal. There was some cursory talk over it but again if we keep achieving and exceeding the aspirational goals then what does that mean for the long-term health of the program? Through the conflict today we know what growth might be so let's reconsider the agenda and identify which one of these meeting items we are going to tackle.

Simmons-Taylor – Proposed we start at board item 1

Rea – Stated to his point earlier, no one knows what the goal for last year was because one was never set.

Schmidt – Stated if you look at the total's city spend with M & W certified and non-certified the city 8%.

Boggs – Stated the ordinance says certified.

Schmidt - Stated the certified spend is around .02%.

Ronalda Minnis (MWBE) - Stated that Keanna made a good point that the city cannot work with all businesses and having partners with opportunities would help. The city has 55 businesses that are not certified who is their main focus. She went on to say that she has been

assisting ODI and event after review of the disparity study and ordinance, there is a lot of confusion. Her and Cynthia will have a conversation with Claudette who conducted the disparity study to help gain clarity.

Simmons-Taylor - Stated that the program plan and ordinance speaks to all departments and not just public works. VPA would be the next department to do spend and they are at 4%.

Rea - Stated the focus was on Public Works because they have the largest spend.

Morris – Stated that we need to focus on the agenda because it ties to the mission of the board and thinks that would be a huge step forward.

Boggs – Stated this board duties sets the groundwork can concurs with Morris.

Schmidt – States he can provide whatever support to Cynthia to help with the board recommendations. Referred to Darius to regarding speaking to the director of procurement.

Lipsev - Stated that he and the procurement team would add percentages to make things clearer.

Rea - Stated that one of his concerns is that the percentage of spend outside of the region (St Joseph, LaPorte, Elkhart, ect.)

Baylis – Questioned if professional services are not supposed to be counted.

Schmidt – The goals are for the total spending of the city and professional services are included. They are not required to be subcontracted.

Morris departed at 1 hour and 11 mins.

Rea – Asked when will the board receive the annual report and the time frame on that.

Lipsev – Stated the January meeting had the data from 2023 but if there were a specific format the board would like to see it in.

Rea - Stated the date that was given was January or 22 vs 23 but not all 12 months.

Lipsev – State Mickey financial report was from Jan-Dec and the DPW report he puts together was from Jan 1st – Dec 31st

Rae – Was trying to identify how they would identify the goals.

Lipsev – Stated that the procurement report does not define sub payments and DPW report shows sub payments. He continued that he would work with Mickey to put together a succinct report containing all of the data in one.

II. Public Works/ Procurement:

- Darius Lipsey presented the DPW report.
Miller – Questioned can there be minority and women engagement on the \$8000 quote.

Schmidt – Responded the city has to solicit 3 quotes on those smaller projects and it does not have goals. We hope that everybody is taking a step in that direction.

Rea – Questioned if the city can do a QPA.

Schmidt – Stated no, it's a specific method and there would be no goals applied to supply purchases.

III. Purchasing:

IV. Old Business

-

V. New Business

- Voted on new meeting date.

Rea - Motion to vote on moving the IPC Board Meeting Tuesdays on the 3rd week.

Boyles – Second

Schmidt – Motion carries.

VI. Announcements

-

VII. Floor Open to the Public

- None

VIII. Adjournment- Vote

Notes & Action Items