

Inclusive Procurement and Contracting Board Meeting Minutes

Date: February 17, 2026 | 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 is now called to order on February 17, 2026 at 5:35 p.m.**

- BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Murray Miller, Wilbur Boggs, Gemma Stanton, Rachel Tomas-Morgan, Bianca Jones
- BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Breanna Allen
- DIVERSITY & INCLUSION: Michael Szymanski
- PURCHASING:
- LEGAL: Michael Schmidt
- INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY:
- MAYOR'S OFFICE:
- BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Reasha Donaldson, Michael Morris, Rosa Tomas



Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made and seconded to approve the January 20, 2026 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

I. Action Items – None

II. Procurement – Jones reported a total spend of \$16,882,201 in January of 2026. Out of the total spend, \$905,738 was spent with minority and women-owned businesses, representing 5.4% of the total spend.

\$34,010 with MBE

\$49,054 with WBE

\$36,910 with MBE and WBE

\$785,765 with Self-reported

The 6% utilization goal (as established by the disparity study) was not met based on certified spend alone (1%).

In public works spending, \$3,768,173 was spent of total spending, \$101,780 was spent with MBE/WBE resulting in a 2.7% utilization.

\$38,389 on MBE

\$63,391 on WBE

Board discussion followed regarding the source of the total eligible spending figure, which Jones explained was drawn from DFO spending for the full month of January. Discussion also addressed the difference between the citywide 6% utilization goal and Public Works project-specific goals, which are based on disparity study percentages assigned by NAICS code and scope of work rather than a flat 6% goal on each contract.

Regional Spend: The report highlighted that 18.2% of the total eligible spending was regional, while 81.8% was outside the region.

Board members also discussed challenges in capturing certain Tier 2 and pass-through spending outside of Public Works, noting that some M/WBE participation may not be fully reflected in current citywide reporting.

III. DPW:

Szymanski presented the January 2026 DPW Report. At the January 13 and January 27 Board of Public Works meetings, the following contracts were awarded:

O'Brien Splash Pad & Restroom – Project #125-025

Awarded to C&E Excavating in the amount of \$1,542,423.

MBE participation: 1.69%

WBE participation: 3.98%

A Good Faith Effort waiver was issued.

Demolition of Former NIPSCO Building – Project #125-080

Awarded to Ritschard Brothers in the amount of \$238,716.

MBE participation: 1.28%

WBE participation: 4.62%.

No project completion affidavits were submitted in January.

Board discussion centered on the Good Faith Effort waiver issued for the O'Brien Splash Pad & Restroom project. Szymanski explained that the apparent low bidder did not meet M/WBE goals but showed evidence of outreach to multiple M/WBE firms and included some utilization in its bid. The projected MBE spend was \$8,924 and projected WBE spend was \$5,566. He also noted that the next lowest bidder was approximately \$30,000 higher and also did not meet the goals.

Board members raised questions about verification of Good Faith Effort documentation and whether outreach claims should be independently confirmed before award. Discussion followed regarding the need for a more consistent review process and how future revisions to the program plan may reduce the frequency of these issues by shifting when and how utilization commitments and Good Faith Effort requests are evaluated.

Additional discussion addressed the tentative March 1 rollout of revised program procedures. Staff explained that the revised process is intended to give contractors more flexibility in identifying subcontractors during project performance while still holding them accountable for meeting goals or requesting a Good Faith Effort waiver at the outset when goals cannot reasonably be met.

IV. Office of Diversity and Inclusion:

Jones provided an ODI update and reported that the 2025 Annual Report had been submitted to the Mayor's Office for review. The goal is to present the annual report to the Board at the March meeting.

Jones also provided an update on Supplier Access: Public Works Project Prep, the monthly initiative designed to help business owners better understand how to engage in public works contracting opportunities. She shared that the meetings cover upcoming project scopes, how to navigate plans and plan-holder lists, and where to find opportunities. Jones noted that more than 50 registrants have signed up for the program and that participants have already begun attending pre-bid meetings and using the information shared.

Jones explained that many participating businesses are now seeking more technical guidance on bid preparation, qualifications, estimating, bonding, labor requirements, and project readiness. She asked the Board to consider potential facilitators or guest speakers who could support those conversations during future monthly meetings.

Board members discussed the need for stronger education around apprenticeship requirements and pathways for smaller contractors seeking to qualify for city work. It was noted that apprenticeship requirements have posed barriers for some contractors, and discussion included possible options such as ABC and other Department of Labor-registered apprenticeship structures.

V. New Business: None

VI. Old Business:

Program Plan revisions

Jones reported that the revised program plan is nearing finalization. Internal circulation has been completed and individual outreach to Common Council members has begun. The tentative implementation target remains March 1, pending final process alignment between ODI, Legal, and Engineering. Discussion noted the importance of clear front-end documentation, consistent contractor communication, and internal process readiness before rollout.

VII. Announcements:

VIII. Floor Open to the Public –

Alejandro Saucedo, owner of Indiana's Elite Services, addressed the Board. He shared his experience navigating supplier diversity opportunities in the region and expressed appreciation for the City's recent efforts to improve access through ODI programming and Supplier Access meetings. He stated that apprenticeship requirements have been a major barrier for his business and a project partner when attempting to bid city projects, even where bonding capacity and large project experience were already in place.

Saucedo encouraged the City to continue building practical support systems for contractors trying to scale into larger public opportunities. He also cautioned that spending reports should accurately reflect participation without overstating results, emphasizing that if numbers are low, they should be acknowledged as such so the City can focus on meaningful improvement.

Board members responded that recent discussion around reporting was focused on accurately capturing participation, particularly Tier 2 spending, rather than inflating figures. Additional discussion followed regarding apprenticeship pathways and the importance of connecting firms to clear resources and guidance.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made and approved.