

EQUAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

August 04, 2020 Meeting Minutes

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Meeting held through conference call.</p> <p>Nancy Briguglio called the meeting to order.</p>	<p>Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.</p>
<p>Minutes: June 02, 2020 and June 09, 2020</p>	<p>Nancy Briguglio called for approval of the Minutes of June 02, 2020 and June 09, 2020.</p> <p>Minutes June 02, 2020: Roger Barnes moved that the Minutes be approved, the motion was seconded by Nathaniel Alston.</p> <p>Minutes June 09, 2020: Roger Barnes moved that the Minutes be approved, the motion was seconded by Nathaniel Alston.</p>	<p>Unanimously approved</p>
<p>Certifications: June 09, 2020 through August 04, 2020</p>	<p>Nathaniel Alston moved that the applications be approved; the motion was seconded by Cynthia Gula.</p>	<p>Unanimously approved</p>
<p>HCEDA - Data Sets Information</p>	<p>Discussions and member comments:</p> <p>Vernon and Zack gave an overview of some of the economic development datasets that are available. They mentioned about datasets such as wage record files, some data includes the types of small business sectors that are seeing growth, what kind of businesses are seeing growth and which are going out of business. He added that data on race and ethnicity is usually not in that kind of data. The bureau of labor and the University of Baltimore also publishes some data, but again the data on race and gender is not available.</p> <p>Nancy Briguglio mentioned that the EBOC can look into data as to which are the top five procurement categories wherein the County spends and determine where opportunities exists for local EBO firms to determine if disparity exists. She added that the EBOC can also look into which categories of procurements are given waivers. Mr. Barnes mentioned that a disparity study is done by hiring an independent outside consultant, so that the study is credible and done by an</p>	

independent party. There are consultants that are experienced in conducting such studies. The study therefore provides an independent review of the participation of EBO businesses in the County's contracting and procurement by looking at statistical contracting data, interviews with local EBO firms to find out if they have attempted to get contracts but have failed and the study will also conduct such anecdotal research. He added that he has read a few studies and they include a lot of data and a lot of great detailed analysis of the data. Information from the study will be useful to the County to provide insights into how to increase contracting opportunities for local EBO firms.

Mahesh mentioned that he concurred with Roger Barnes, and stated that such studies are usually conducted by an independent consultant. There are very few consultants in the country that specialize in and conduct such studies. An independent study ensures that any remedial minority business program withstands scrutiny in a court of law. He added that maybe Constance can touch base more on that. During the study the outside independent consultant examines historic utilization of procurement records to examine where and what the County procures and how much is procured from EBO firms and where usually the county procures from as to how much is procured local, out of the County and out of the State, and if there is a prevalence of disparity in terms of utilization of EBO firms or not, based on availability also of such EBO firms. The consultants also look at data types such as census data, certification directories, and procurement methods and awarded contracts. Anecdotal data is collected as well.

Roger Barnes mentioned that the next step was to make a recommendation to the County Council to hire a consultant to do a disparity study. Nancy Briguglio mentioned that she will recirculate the draft letter that she and Roger Barnes have worked on and requested all the commissioners to provide their feedback and then it will be sent to Constance for review. Constance mentioned that the letter should be addressed to the County Council and also the County Executive. And that she can review the final draft letter after all the commissioners have provided their inputs and suggestions to Ms. Briguglio and Mr. Barnes.

Larry Twelve mentioned that it was good to include the Howard County Schools and Community College in the disparity study, so that the County can get a complete picture of public sector purchasing and if there are any disparities in procurement across the public sector.

<p>Purchasing Reports</p>	<p>Mahesh presented the Purchasing Report which included annual statistics for FY 2020.</p> <p>Various sections of the report to include: EBO participation, waivers, certification and outreach were discussed. A comparative summary of EBO participation in terms of spend and percentages and on the number of EBO waivers over the past five fiscal years was also presented.</p> <p>Roger Barnes shared information that the Howard County Chamber of Commerce is planning to go ahead with their Small Business Summit and is planning to host the summit this year virtually as a series of workshops on October 7th, 14th and 21st. Cynthia Gula inquired if the Office of Purchasing can also play a role at the summit. Larry Twelve mentioned that the Office of Purchasing will be involved as Dean Hof had presented at one of the workshops during last years summit and would be a part of the summit this year as well.</p> <p>Cynthia Gula asked more about cooperative purchase. Mahesh mentioned that usually government agencies use such vehicles to reduce costs and resources of procurement and piggyback a contract that was competitively bid by another jurisdiction or cooperative purchasing committee. The County still encourages utilization of EBO goals on cooperative purchases.</p>	
<p>Adjournment of Meeting at 10:05 am</p>	<p>Motion to adjourn by Nancy Briguglio.</p> <p>Next regular EBOC Meeting scheduled for October 06, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.</p>	

EBOC MEMBER ATTENDEES:

1. Roger Barnes (conference call)
2. Margaret Kim (conference call)
3. Nathaniel Alston (conference call)
4. Nancy Briguglio (conference call)
5. Neil Madan (conference call)
6. Jason Peay (conference call)
7. Cynthia Gula (conference call)

ABSENT:

1. Shahan Rizvi
2. Sharon Pinder

NON-MEMBER ATTENDEES:

1. Mahesh Sabnani (conference call)
2. Constance Tucker (conference call)
3. Vernon Thompson (conference call)
4. Larry Twelve (conference call)
5. Zack Jones (conference call)

ABSENT:

1. Dean Hof