

Diversity Commission Meeting Minutes – 01/10/14

In Attendance:

Diversity Commission Members: Donald Baker, Marcus Montejo, Paresh Patel and Marcos Ramos, Scott Saunders.

Other Attendees: Candy Boayue, Human Resources Assistant; Samuel Guy, Executive Assistant; Tanisha Merced, Counsel.

Absent: Delores McLamb

Commissioner Ramos called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. There was a quorum of Commissioners in attendance. Commissioner Ramos introduced the newest Commissioner, Mr. Scott Saunders, and the newly appointed Chief of Administrative Services; Mr. Tonney Gardner.

Commissioner Saunders thanked the Board for welcoming him and expressed his desire to learn from the new experiences he will get from serving on this board. Mr. Gardner gave a brief introduction of himself and his background. He talked about some ideas of his that he would love to implement with regards to diversity and procurement.

Approval of Minutes:

The October minutes were approved by the Commissioners.

Discussion Items:

1) New/Old Business:

- a) **Boards and Commission:** The Commissioners revisited the idea of sending requests to sitting board members, asking them to voluntarily self-disclose characteristics of diversity. Tanisha Merced, council for the board, updated the commissioners by saying they could potentially institute the system of self-disclosure of board members with approval of the County Executive, Law and the Office of Human Resources. Survey Monkey is the company that would most likely be used to conduct said survey. Commissioner Ramos put forth a motion to issue an electronic and paper survey to individual members to self-report diversity characteristics or additional questions as determined by the board. This motion was passed unanimously by the board.
- b) **EDLG:** The Commissioners elected to defer the update of the RESPECT program until they have a representative from the Office of Human Resources. Tanisha Merced and Candy Boayue are to follow up with Liz Petrick regarding said update.
- c) **Administrative Services.** Commissioner Ramos delivered an overview of the discussion pertaining to diversity within procurement for the benefit of Mr. Gardner. The drop in spend dollars for minorities from 2011 to 2012 has been the topic of late. Commissioner Montejo also mentioned our benchmark with regard to diversity spending when compared to our surrounding counties. How can we grow our minority spend dollars? How can we reach our sub-contractors to get a better understanding on this decline? Mr. Gardner indicated that he is looking into different root cause analysis. Are we reaching the right vendors? And why are we not getting the same number of participation as the State of Delaware? These are questions that Mr. Gardner and his staff are researching. Mr. Gardner invited the commissioners to an event that he, County Council, and the County Executive are hosting called the Minority Business Forum. This event will take place on February 20, 2014 at the Gilliam Building from 8-11 a.m. The State of Delaware procurement department, along with County Council, the County Executive

and most of the department general managers will be in attendance. This annual event targets minority vendors because it is a meeting where prospective vendors can find out what it takes to become a vendor with New Castle County. It also gives them the opportunity to add their business names onto the county's mailing list for all electronic blast of information for bids.

Action Items for Next Meeting:

1. Commissioners to generate sample questions to discuss for the diversity self-disclosure survey.
2. Tanisha Merced and Candy Boayue to follow up with Human Resources to get an update on the RESPECT program.
3. Ms. Merced is to researched third party surveys and report findings to board.

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m. The next Diversity Commission meeting will be held on Monday, March 10, 2014, at 4:00 p.m.