

**MINORITY, WOMEN, DISADVANTAGED & EVANSTON BUSINESS ENTERPRISE
(M/W/D/EBE)**

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

6:00 P.M.

Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilmember Bobby Burns, Councilmember Kristian Harris, Ernest Noy, Jared Davis, Michael McLean, Bonaventure Fandohan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilmember Devon Reid, Rachel Williams, Kemone Hendricks, Angela Pennisi

STAFF PRESENT: Tammi Nunez, Purchasing Manager; John Gonzalez, Purchasing Specialist; Jessica Cooper, Interim Workforce Development Manager; Neal Reeves, Economic Development Specialist

GUEST: Dr. Twyla Blackmond Larnell

PRESIDING MEMBER: Councilmember Bobby Burns

1. Declaration of a Quorum

With a quorum present, Councilmember (CM) Burns called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

Councilmember Kristian Harris motioned to approve the minutes for March 20, 2024. Seconded by Ernest Noy. All voted in favor of approving the minutes unanimously.

3. Guest Introduction

Dr. Twyla Blackmond Larnell - Research Proposal Racial Business Disparities in Evanston, Illinois: Invited to identify racial patterns in business activity and obstacles facing black entrepreneurs to recommend strategic interventions.

4. New Business

Dr. Twyla Blackmond Larnell will research to identify racial patterns in business activity and obstacles facing Black entrepreneurs to recommend strategic interventions to revitalize, preserve and stabilize supporting Black businesses in Evanston. The objective is to replicate the 1996 Business Disparity study while making notable advances by inquiring deeper into the experiences of Black business owners using various datasets, quantitative and qualitative analyses.

The committee recommended reaching out to Evanston based banks to learn more on how they support Black businesses and researching ordinances as it relates/impacts Black businesses.

5. Staff Reports

A. M/W/D/EBE Tracking Report

To be discussed during July 17, 2024, committee meeting.

B. LEP Projects:

BID 22-70 Evanston Animal Shelter Renovations, awarded to CCC Holdings, Inc. \$19,500 compensation paid to Evanston resident determined not be in LEP eligible position. To be discussed during the next meeting. Update: Currently under review by Law Department.

BID 23-26 Watermain Improvements and Street Resurfacing, awarded to Bolder Contractors, Inc. LEP compliance is under evaluation. Currently utilizing an Evanston resident in other non-city related projects to meet requirements. Resident is a full-time employee of the company. To be discussed during the next meeting. Update: Currently under review by Law Department.

LEP: Current practices of bidders reveal some prefer to pay the LEP penalty versus hiring qualified Evanston residents as the cost of the penalty is less than hiring. The committee will consider increasing the penalty from 1% to 5%. Subject to be discussed further during the next committee meeting. More information is needed to learn the negative impacts of LEP and if its not working as intended.

6. Old Business

A. M/W/D/EBE Committee Work Plan Updates:

Working Group 1:

1. Business Survey Discussion: Since release of the survey, 70 responses have been received.

7. Other Business

Neal Reeves, Economic Development Specialist: Evanston Business Directory Database & ~~MWEDBE~~-~~MWDEBE~~ Update. Economic Development staff are working to improve their knowledge and command over the business environment in the City after requests for more data and information from the City Council. The registry will collect additional data including business type subcategories, Legacy Business status, ~~MWEDBE~~-~~MWDEBE~~ status, and LGBTQIA+ identification. The data will be posted on a dedicated website. This will allow staff to better communicate with businesses.

Timeline of communication progress:

- September, 2023 - MWEDBEs (Previously identified)
- January, 2024 - State of IL Taxpaying Businesses
- March, 2024 - Business Registration Renewals
- March, 2024 - Final Opportunity to Self-Identify

Updates to the directory will be ongoing and will be refined and updated as needed.

8. Adjournment

Councilmember Burns ended the meeting at 7:28 P.M routing