



MWBE Work Group
Monday, April 9, 2012
8:30-10am
95 Perry, Buffalo, NY

Meeting Notes

Work Group Members Present:

Lourdes Iglesias
Jennifer Parker

Brenda McDuffie
Dr. Raul Vazquez (by phone)

Dolores McCarley

Council Staff Present:

Ray Witzleben (for part)
Darren Kempner

Summary of Meeting:

Darren will follow-up with Kenya to get an update on the City/County and State MWBE certification process. Council staff will follow-up with ESDs MWBE Division to get an update on the process and timetables for processing certification documents

MWBE Certification and Fast Track Issues

- The group restated its concern from prior meetings that MWBE certification applications are slow to be processed, have gotten lost or have to work through several departments, complicating approval
- The group concurred that an online system with electronic updates on the status of documents would be ideal
- The group stated the importance of a community infrastructure to help businesses with this process acknowledging that it is important to have helpers knowledgeable about the process at the table when a business is applying for certification
- Dr. Vasquez also recommended a robust telephone help desk for the certification process
- Council staff will follow-up with ESDs MWBE Division to get an update on the certification process and timetables for processing certification documents

WNY REDC Priorities Discussion with CFA Awardees

- The group concurred that any discussion on the priorities of the council with awardees (i.e. inclusion) must be passionate – the Council can't overstate the importance of getting priorities right this time around
- The group also agreed that the tone for CFA awardee agencies is set at the top and, therefore, we have to have the chief executive and/or their executive staff in the room for this discussion
- Lourdes used the example of Goya Foods in Angola to back this up
 - She spoke with the head of operations there and they don't have a supplier or workforce diversity officer, but the employees and suppliers are very diverse because the head of operations makes it a priority
- The group noted that we can state priorities, but we also have to make the awardees accountable as well

- Jennifer noted that Black Enterprise Magazine congratulates folks who have done a good job with inclusion as a possible way to do so through the Council
- The group agreed that the Council co-chairs would be the best lead for this roundtable discussion
- Brenda noted that SUNY has a separate diversity plan that impacts ECC as well
- Dr. Vasquez noted that the new health care laws health homes are an opportunity to build new, inclusive structures in WNY as well
- The group concurred that the meeting should be approximately 30 minutes in length, in a roundtable format with a meet and greet afterwards
- The group concurred that a 4pm discussion completed by 4:30pm with networking done by 5pm or so in a room where we could have a big round table with space to mingle afterwards
- The meeting invite should congratulate awardees, mention that this is a unique opportunity to make history, invite their chief executive, executive team and purchasing/contracting officer to this “special session” where they will learn about the priorities of the Council, the tools available to support those priorities and goals and set overall expectations for inclusivity
 - The tool providers should be introduced so awardees can connect names with faces, provide materials for distribution and be available after the discussion for follow-up (i.e. ESD MWBE, NYS DOL, City/County MWBE)
 - The discussion should state that this is a priority of the Governor, the Council and that this just makes good sense for business and the community
 - ESD leadership should be invited to attend
 - A packet of resources should be prepared in advance
 - All council members should be invited
 - The discussion should take place the 2nd or 3rd week in May
- How many companies/organizations would be invited?
- Should the session review all council goals or just focus on inclusivity?