

OFFICE OF EQUAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, September 21, 2022
Minutes

Members Present:

Javin Walker, Chair
Aida Vidal-Napier
Scott Johnson
Amy Angelo
Juan Pagan
Seabron Smith
Doris Pastl
Robert Lesko
Denise Albritton
Alan Gerwig

Members Virtual:

Lorna Anderson, Vice Chair
Courtney McKenzie Newell

Staff Present:

Tonya Davis Johnson, Director
Richard Sena, Assistant County Attorney
Allen Gray, Manager
Angela Smith, SBDS III
Deirdre Kyle, SBDS III
Antonia Smith, Public Info. and Outreach Coordinator
Yamel Vasquez, Contract Analyst

Guest:

Bob Schafer, Ranger Construction
Kati Cassiani, JIJ Construction
Tom Jakubisin, Wharton-Smith, Inc.

Members Absent: Carole Hart, John Elliott, Clementine Fleuranvil

Vacant Seats: None.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 8:38 a.m. by Chair, Javin Walker.

A. Roll Call

Roll called by Tonya Davis Johnson. Quorum present.

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE BY CHAIR JAVIN WALKER

Mr. Walker took a moment of personal privilege to recognize the service of Advisory Committee members whose terms ended. Certificates of Appreciation from their District Commissioner were presented to Mr. Robert "Geoff" Waite, Mr. Scott Johnson, Mr. Jerry Steinberg and Ms. Aida Vidal Napier for their many years of service to the committee and small business community. Mr. Steinberg's certificate will be hand delivered as he was unable to attend the meeting.

Scott Johnson expressed sincere appreciation for the many years that he has served on the advisory committee and the progress that he has witnessed for S/M/WBE participation. He commended the OEBO for the work that they do on behalf of local businesses.

Robert “Geoff” Waite stated that he was thankful for the opportunity to serve and advocate on behalf of local small businesses. He thanked Director Johnson for her commitment to small businesses.

Aida Vidal-Napier thanked Mr. Walker for the recognition. She further acknowledged the growth and development of the small business program. She thanked staff for their responsiveness and Director Johnson for her leadership. Mrs. Vidal-Napier stated that she was proud to have served for nine years and requested permission to continue to serve on a subcommittee for continued service.

Attorney Sena was asked if Member Vidal-Napier could participate on any sub-committee and he responded that she could attend the meetings and participate while being subjected to the Sunshine law.

B. Adoption of Agenda for September 21, 2022 Meeting

Motion by Seabron Smith, seconded by Doris Pastl. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Minutes for June 15, 2022 Meeting

Motion by Doris Pastl, seconded by Denise Albritton. Motion passed unanimously.

D. Introduction of Guests

Robert “Geoff” Waite, Bob Schafer, Kati Cassiani and Tom Jakubisin, Wharton-Smith, Inc.

II. COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATE

Tonya Davis Johnson reported that seats up for renewal in September are Seat 2, Certified Hispanic Business Owner; currently held by Ms. Vidal-Napier, Seat 10, Certified Minority Contractor; currently held by Javin Walker, and Seat 11, Associated General Contractor; currently held by Scott Johnson.

Seats 2 and 11 will have new representation. Bob Schafer, Seat 11; Kati Cassiani, Seat 2 and Mr. Walker, Seat 10. Recommendations will go before the Board of County Commissioners on October 4 and all three members will begin their terms in November.

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. OEBO Outreach Activity Report

Antonia Smith discussed the past outreach/training events. She spoke about the attendance at all the events. Chair Walker suggested the assignment of members to events to ensure participation by members of the advisory committee.

B. Small Business Certification Status Report

Yamel Vasquez presented the Certification Report and discussed the different class indicators.

Member Gerwig requested a breakdown of Professional Service CCNA and non-CCNA vendor by race-ethnicity and gender. Ms. Vasquez stated that the information would be presented during the next meeting.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Recertification Sub-Committee Update

Sub-committee Chair Pastl reported that 29 calls were made to vendors who did not recertify. Additional information to be provided at the next meeting of the advisory committee.

Member Gerwig asked about past certification interviews to understand if there are hurdles and challenges, which prevent recertification. Staff advised Member Gerwig that the role of the recertification committee is to do just that. An invitation for him to join the sub-committee was offered.

B. Committee Retreat

Chairman Walker suggested that the committee hold a retreat to discuss the committee member expectations, programming and opportunities for local small businesses. He requested that staff poll the members for the best date and time to host event.

V. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Member Vidal-Napier suggested that the committee host a meet and greet, similar to a reverse trade show providing an opportunity for local small businesses to present themselves and allow for business-to-business networking. She suggested that the event be held twice per year and should have a good mix of industries.

Member Pastl requested the next quarter list of upcoming activities. Ms. Smith will forward a copy of planned activities to the full committee. She also requested clarification of what the Sunshine Law was. Explanation provided by Attorney Sena.

Member McKenzie-Newell suggested a refresh of social media. She recommended that the OEBO tag the featured business in an attempt to get greater program and vendor exposure. In response to Member McKenzie-Newell, Ms. Vasquez announced that the OEBO has launched a YouTube Chanel and encouraged members to visit and provide feedback.

Member McKenzie-Newell announced the opening of her newest venture Crumble in West Palm Beach. More information to come about the grand opening.

Member Pagan suggested that the OEBO provide internal motivation and recognition of certified businesses on all social media platforms and in the newsletter. Member Pagan also mentioned the impact Hurricane Fiona had on Puerto Rico and stated that support was needed.

Member Angelo requested a report of upcoming expirations. She stated that this information might be helpful to encourage continued certification by businesses known to committee members. Staff will forward a monthly report to all members.

Member Johnson thanked Chairman Walker for his leadership and the OEBO for their efforts.

Member Lesko announced a joint outreach event on November 3, 2022 from Noon to 1:30pm at the North County Library. He will coordinate with Antonia Smith to finalize the OEBO's participation.

Member Albritton complimented staff on the Drive-In event and the quality of the newsletter. She shared information regarding the City of West Palm Beach Jump Start Academy, a 10-week program for local small businesses.

Member Smith commended Chair Walker, Vice Chair Anderson and the OEBO staff for their support and efforts on behalf of the small businesses we serve.

Vice-Chair Anderson suggested that the OEBO create communication that focuses on specific issues experienced by small businesses.

Chairman Walker suggested that the OEBO explore ways to feature businesses and advisory committee members across all social media platforms. In response to Chairman Walker, Ms. Smith informed the committee that there is a committee member feature in the newsletter. He also reminded the committee of the importance of participation and knowing their role as committee meetings. Chairman Walker stated that members should plan to spend more than one hour in light of the fact that committee meets quarterly.

VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Johnson thanked Mr. Pagan for the invitation to the Doing Business with Puerto Rico meeting, held by Zoom. She also thanked the outgoing members for their service to the advisory committee and to the small business community.

VII. COUNTY ATTORNEY'S COMMENTS

None

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.