



Summary

City of Seattle WMBE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Via Webex

Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021

3:00-5:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Attendees: Ato Apiafi, Anthony Burnett, Terry Calloway, Tracey Freeman, Shelley Gaddie, Regina Glenn, Eugene Hardin, Michelle Merriweather, Roger Newton, Irene Reyes, Regina Glenn

Members absent: Fernando Martinez, Ollie Garrett

City Committee Staff: Elisa Young (Facilitator), Liz Alzeer, Jesse Gilliam

Guest City Staff: Miguel Beltran

PURPOSE

The Mayor established the WMBE Advisory Committee through [Executive Order 2019-06](#) as an ongoing advisory body that provides guidance to the City of Seattle through Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) regarding practices in support of equity, inclusion and participation of women- and minority-owned businesses (WMBEs) in City of Seattle contracts. The WMBE-AC will review and recommend changes to the City's WMBE program and will provide advice to the City on WMBE issues and concerns.

- 1) Welcome and City updates - Elisa Young and Liz Alzeer – 15 minutes
 - a. Approve August meeting summary
APPROVED: Shelley makes motion to approve, Roger seconds. All approve.
 - b. Work plan overview
DECISION: Continue to review work plan and offer edits. Plan to approve at Feb. meeting.
 - c. City update
 - i. Elisa presents on five FAS focus areas for 2022:
 1. Engaging and partnering with the WMBE community
 2. Expanding contracting equity for BIPOC-owned firms
 3. Providing resources and support for WMBEs
 4. Strengthening accountability and transparency
 5. Improving City policy and practices
 - ii. Presley Palmer, new Deputy Division Director for purchasing, introduces himself.
 - iii. WMBE Advisory Committee open discussion. Discussion topics included impact of I-200 on prioritizing BIPOC/Black-owned businesses; importance of increasing share of contracting for Black-owned businesses; impacts of the \$35K cap per job for

certain blanket contracts and benefits and challenges of that cap for engaging smaller and BIPOC firms; why a focus on BIPOC-owned firms addresses disparity and also supports equity in contracting for all firms.

2) WMBE program progress update – Miguel Beltran – 15 minutes

- a. Miguel gives status update of WMBE program performance (info available at <https://www.seattle.gov/purchasing-and-contracting/social-equity/wmbe>)

3) Work group meet-ups – 25 minutes

- a. Agenda items determined by work groups

4) Work group share-outs – 25 minutes

- a. Each work group: share updates

Work Group 1:

- Phase 1: Survey groups to assess challenges
- Phase 2: Share information with City about how to best work to support WMBEs
- Phase 3: Have meetings to connect and get feedback with decisionmakers
- Early scan of survey results brings up the question: Do managers at the City understand what our needs are? Some managers do not give feedback to WMBEs on contract bids, others are not aware of what WMBE contracts their department holds.

Work Group 3:

- Reviewed documents and made a spreadsheet of challenges in public procurement.
- Discovered a commonality of these challenges was not that the policy or process was bad. It was that the procurement approach was not followed.
- Key question: How can we build accountability into the process?
- Proposals: Ombudsman, lead, performance reviews, complaint advisory group.

General Discussion:

- WMBE Advisory Committee open discussion. Topics included importance of marketing even with a blanket contract; how to find blanket contracts; how to elevate info about blanket contracts; what the City does with feedback; how to consistently train procurement authorities and direct buyers; how vendors are onboarded when they receive a blanket contract (City acknowledges this is a growth area).

5) Wrap up

2022 meetings:

- Feb. 16 3-5 p.m.
- May 18 3-5 p.m.
- Aug. 17 3-5 p.m.
- Nov. 16 3-5 p.m.