



**MBE/WBE and Small Business Advisory Committee  
Minutes**

**Regular Meeting  
Tuesday May 4, 2010**

**The MBE/WBE and Small Business Advisory Committee convened in a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 4, 2010 at 301 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Room 1029 in Austin, Texas.**

**Chair Adrian Neely called the Board Meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.**

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Adrian Neely, Ed Lowenberg, Anne Harutunian, Andrew Ramirez, Brian Walters.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of minutes from the March 2, 2010 regular meeting was postponed to the next meeting as there were only 3 members present who were eligible to vote on them.

Mr. Andrew Ramirez was welcomed to the committee.

**2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION**

Carol Hadnot, Austin Area Black Contractors Association – Welcomed Mr. Ramirez and thanked the City for allowing Public Works and SMBR to come out to the Association's general membership meeting.

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

For discussion and possible action on recommendations to City Council (2-1-163(B))

**a. Discussion regarding the Construction Phase Package of Austin Energy's System Control Center Project (Presentation from Austin Energy)**

Mr. Lowenberg recused himself from discussion on this item due to his contract with DPR. Mr. Lowenberg sat in the audience and returned to the dais when the discussion was complete.

Cheryl Mele, Deputy General Manager – Austin Energy, presented the committee with an update on the Austin Energy System Control Center Project. Austin Energy plans to return to the Advisory Committee with an update in June.

**CITIZEN COMMUNICATION**

Frank Fuentes - Hispanic Contractors Association, noted that at the Council meeting last week, Mayor ProTem Martinez made it clear that however long it took to get this process right is how long it should take, he also wanted to note that Mayor Leffingwell made an amendment to the motion that each package be brought to the full Council independently. He has asked that both of these recommendations be backed by the Advisory Committee as well.

David Smith – DPR Construction, Pre-Construction Manager for this project. The pre-construction contract for this project had zero participation goals and to date there is 11% participation and ultimately will have 13% participation. DPR recognized that assistance was needed for outreach on a City project,

so they contacted Solis Constructors. DPR had meetings with the trade associations in February and discussed what they knew of at that time for the scopes and what the project entailed. There was also an outreach meeting with the Hispanic Contractors Association. The procurement process plan is to have a one week notification to the associations prior to issuing the bid packages. There will be a three week bid period when each project comes out, and there will be multiple pre-bid meetings at different times with multiple job walks as well. The projects will be advertised in the Statesman, through the associations newsletters, through SMBR, through the plan rooms, meet and greets will be held, and plans will be available both by hard copy and electronically.

Carol Hadnot, Austin Black Contractors Association – Said that problems arise when the right people are not hired to do the job that needs to be done. There are many trades missed on the summaries. On these types of projects all the scopes of work need to be explored to maximize opportunities. Project specific ethnic goals should have been considered for this project.

Mr. Ramirez asked Ms. Hadnot and Mr. Fuentes to come to the podium to answer a question. He asked if there was a way for Ms. Mele to share the codes identified with the associations for them to review and see if there was any codes that were missed. He then asked Mr. Fuentes and Ms. Hadnot if they were available to review the codes. Both said that they were available to do this.

Mr. Fuentes clarified that the meeting held with the Hispanic Contractors Association in February was not fully an outreach meeting because the project had not yet been defined. He also said that the goals for the pre-construction phase should not have been zero.

Ed Lowenberg, Solis Constructors said he was hired by DPR to help out with MBE/WBE outreach and goal setting. He said that in February the only scope defined was demolition. Solis Constructors has not been utilized to do what they were hired to do. They were hired to go through the documents at each step to help establish goals and review commodity codes.

Jan Lawson, Director of Business Development and Contract Compliance for Austin Energy – The first step is to identify the specific scopes and trades in this project, and then we need to focus on the trades and scopes that have availability. Once this is established, we can look at the availability and set the goals. Once SMBR, DPR and Austin Energy do a review of the codes they will meet with the trade associations to review what they have found.

The committee requested that each package go before Council independently, that project specific, ethnic specific goals be utilized on each package, that the trade associations have some input on reviewing the scopes, and that SMBR continue to work closely with Austin Energy and DPR on this project.

The committee also requested that Austin Energy return with an update at next month's meeting.

#### **4. OLD BUSINESS**

##### **a. Discussion on how goals are established (Report submitted to Advisory Committee)**

This discussion was postponed for a work session to be set at a future date.

##### **b. Weatherization program update (Memo submitted to Advisory Committee from Austin Energy)**

There was no discussion on this item.

##### **c. Commodity code improvements (Report submitted to Advisory Committee from SMBR)**

The committee requested to have this item added to the July agenda with an update from Public Works. Assistant City Manager, Rudy Garza said that a memo will be provided to the committee with an update between now and July.

Mr. Lowenberg asked if there was historical information on what codes have been used and the frequency by which they are used. This will help to identify which codes are being used the most and how often.

**CITIZEN COMMUNICATION**

Alayne Johnson, Austin Area Black Contractors Association wanted to remind the committee to make sure that the association is aware when any codes are going to be deleted. SMBR will be notifying vendors when codes are going to be changed or deleted and will ensure that the vendors are certified in the proper codes.

Carol Hadnot, Austin Area Black Contractors Association said that she doesn't have a problem with SMBR having access to their contact information in the system as well because they already have their tax returns. She said the community needs assistance from SMBR to update their information.

**5. STAFF REPORTS**

**a. Monthly Report from the Small & Minority Business Resources (SMBR) Department on Request for Changes and Council Awards**

Veronica Briseño Lara presented the committee with the reports. Mr. Neely asked about the Council Awards Report from the last month where goals were not met. He asked how these were being tracked or dealt with. Ms. Lara explained that going forward she will look into having the contractors attending Council meetings to explain participation.

Carol Hadnot, Austin Area Black Contractors Association said she appreciates the efforts of staff to increase African American participation. African American participation is still not where it should be, but she would still like to commend the effort of staff.

Mr. Walters thanked Assistant City Manager Garza for allowing the staff that was present at the meeting tonight be there to participate in the discussion.

**6. AGENDA ITEMS**

**Discussion and possible action on setting agenda items for the next meeting- June 1, 2010**

- Proposed Budget for SMBR
- Discussion on how goals are established

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 on a motion by Mr. Ramirez, seconded by Mr. Walters.