

Equal Opportunity Review Commission

MINUTES

Wednesday July 18, 2018

12:00 PM

Pennsylvania Bar Institute

Professional Development Center Conference Center

Heinz 57 Center

339 Sixth Avenue, Suite 760

Pittsburgh, Pa. 15222

Commissioners in Attendance: Justin Laing, Demeshia Seals, Gonzalo Manchego, James Myers, Karen Hall, Erin Conley

Call-ins: Jennie Sweet-Cushman, Barry Nathan, Tracey McCants-Lewis, Andrea Vasquez

Staff in Attendance: Chuck, Durham, Valerie McDonald-Roberts, Emily Pontarelli, Ricardo Williams

I. Minutes are approved for June 2018

II. New Plans

- **1807-01-** City Planning, Graphic Communications Strategy for the Pittsburgh Comprehensive Plan (ThoughtForm, Inc.)

Andrew Dash and Sophia Robison, Department of City Planning, present the MWBE plan. Robison states that in reviewing applications to the RFP, the MWBE portion of the contract was weighted 10% of the total scoring. Two women-owned businesses were ranked in the top four and interviewed, one was certified, and one was not. However, they did not meet the requirements of the project. Thoughtform was therefore chosen, despite their lack of MWBE participation, which has increased since their initial submission.

A representative from Thoughtform states that they knew they had an immediate need for printing, and contracted with Sir Speedy, a WBE firm. Additionally, another portion of the contract carved out for MWBE firms was for back-end HTML development for a website they will be developing. However, they were unable to secure a firm for this portion of the work for various reasons.

Laing states that this project involves a comprehensive plan for the City, however, there appears to be little diversity in their firm. How is it that you don't feel you need assistance in that area [diversity consulting firms] for a plan that has to serve the entire City? A representative from Thoughtform explains that they have an extensive process with stakeholder research and user testing, thus creating something that is user-centric.

Seals makes a motion to not approve, Hall seconds.

PLAN IS NOT APPROVED

- **1807-02-** Housing Authority, Investment Advisor Services (Emergent)

Anthony Mannella, Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh, presents the MWBE plan for Emergent. Anthony mentions that Emergent is a certified MBE and has subcontracted with Loop Capital Markets, and Academy Securities both WBEs for 7% of the contract.

Conley makes a motion to approve, Hall seconds.

PLAN IS APPROVED

- **1807-03-** Housing Authority, Bedford Hope Center Improvements- General Contractor (Plavchack Construction Co.)

Anthony Mannella, Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh, presents the MWBE plan. The Plavchack plan exceeds the 7% WBE requirement with 13.66%, however, it does not reach the required 18% for MBEs with 11.32%. Laing notes that this work seems to be very straight forward construction work and there are many MBE vendors who could do this work. Mannella responds that one concern is that the work is restricted due the prime being signatory to the union. There is no representative from Plavshack Construction.

Hall makes a motion to not approve, Seals seconds.

PLAN IS NOT APPROVED

- **1807-04-** Housing Authority, Carrick Regency Interior (Iron City Contracting)

Anthony Mannella, Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh, presents the MWBE plan. McCants-Lewis explains that we received an update on this plan which moved the percentages from zero to 9.02%. There are no representative from Iron City Contracting. There are questions over how the letter was sent to contractors, if it was sent hard copy or through email.

Hall makes a motion to not approve, Manchego seconds.

PLAN IS NOT APPROVED

- **1807-05-** Housing Authority, Protective Coverings of Vacant Units Authority Wide (Vacant Property Security LLC)

Anthony Mannella, Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh, presents the MWBE plan. Representatives from Vacant Property Security (VPS) are there to answer questions. Mannella explains that the contract is a service contract not to exceed \$323,750 over five years.

There is a question as to how proprietary the job is of securing and removing steel doors and whether they can subcontract out to others who do this type of work. A representative from VPS explains that they are one of two firms in the country who do this type of work.

Manchego asks what work was portioned out for MBE/WBE subcontractors. VPS states they reached out to many different companies including contractors who would help with installation [with training from VPS], but could not secure a vendor.

Laing asks why the letters sent to potential subcontractors are so vague. The letters don't explain what vendors are tasked to do. VPS states they don't know exactly what the vendors would be used for at this point, because the steel doors are already on the property.

Hall makes a motion to not approve, Manchego seconds.

PLAN IS NOT APPROVED

IV. Chairman's Remarks

Laing recommends that with changes to City Code 177A, a subcommittee could look at these changes and compare them with previous policy recommendations from the Policy Committee. Laing suggests waiting until the September meeting to discuss these actions.

V. Adjournment