

# **Business Enterprise Program Council for Minorities, Females and Persons with Disabilities Meeting Notes**

## **MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

100 W. Randolph  
Room 2-025  
Chicago, IL 60601

IDOT District  
401 Main St, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Video Conference Room  
Peoria, IL 61602

401 S. Spring St.  
Room 500 ½  
Springfield, IL 62706

**Monday, August 28, 2017- 1:30 PM**

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Larry Ivory, Ngozi Okorafor, Jesse Martinez, Hedy Ratner, Emilia DiMenco, Sharla Roberts, Michael Hoffman, Khari Hunt, Beth Doria, Edward McKinnie, Sheila Hill Morgan, Denise Barreto (PH), Karen Eng, Marcus Yancey

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE**

Charisse Witherspoon

### **COUNCIL CHAIR**

Michael Hoffman, Chairman

### **COUNCIL SECRETARY**

J. Marcos Peterson

### **CMS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE**

Elias Ricks Ngwayah II, Carlos Gutierrez, Irma Lopez, Estela Oropeza, Maria Lazic, Tamara Bell, Jeanetta Cardine, Leslie Taylor, Amiel Harper, Ben Jones, Lisa Williams

### **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Margaret Van Dijk, Mark Hardy, Artheitha Monroe, A.D. Ans, Wole Adeoye, Dale Morrison, Vince Bass, Bill Howell, Rich Skinner, Carl Severinghas, Aiwn Severinghas, Erin Johnson, Cornell Wilson III, Patrick Thomas, Thomas Bowling, David Lockman, Thomas McLeary, Michelle Flagg, Rudy Sagen, Joy Johnson

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**STATE OF ILLINOIS**  
***Business Enterprise Council for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities***

100 W. Randolph  
Room 2-025  
Chicago, IL 60601

IDOT District 4  
401 Main St, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl  
Video Conference Room  
Peoria, IL 61602

401 S. Spring St.  
Room 500 1/2  
Springfield, IL 662706

**AGENDA**

August 28, 2017  
1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

- I. Welcome
- II. Call to Order
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Approval of Minutes of Council Meeting held on June 26, 2017 & Subcommittees Minutes
- V. Chair's Report
- VI. Subcommittees Reports
  - Certification Subcommittee Report
  - Outreach Subcommittee Report
  - Compliance Subcommittee Report
- VII. Posted Business
  - Discussion on council Member Participation
  - National vs. Regional Reciprocal Agreements
- VIII. Public/Vendor's Testimony
- IX. Adjournment
  - Next Subcommittee Meetings
    - Certification Subcommittee Meeting – September 25, 2017
    - Outreach Subcommittee Meeting – September 26, 2017
    - Compliance Subcommittee Meeting – September 27, 2017
  - Next Council Mtg. – October 23, 2017

**Please note: In case you need to connect to the meeting via teleconference, please use the following number and access code:**

Teleconference Number                      888-494-4032  
Access Number                                2587213722

BEP Outreach Events: <http://www.illinois.gov/cms/events/SitePages/List.aspx>

**I. Welcome**

Secretary Peterson welcomes all.

**II. Call to Order**

Secretary Peterson called the meeting to order at 1:40pm and proceeded with roll call.

**III. Roll Call**

Roll call conducted. Quorum was established. Member Eng motioned to accept members on the phones participation in the meeting. Vote taken, motion passes.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

Approval of Minutes was established.

**V. Chair's Report**

Chair Hoffman commended member Ivory for taking advantage of one of the State's remote locations to participate in the council meeting. He also thanked the council for once again having full participation.

He further talked about a report that was published in conjunction with the Executive Order that the Governor put out a year ago that was geared toward empowering and strengthening the BEP program as well as the Sheltered Market update. It is an annual report. The Chair said there was a delay in completing the report but it was submitted to the CPO and the Governor's office. He said they now have the final report which will be distributed to the council electronically and hard copy. He said he would be interested in getting feedback from the council. He said it is a thorough accounting of most of the issues that was discussed at the June 26, 2017 meeting in terms of some of the progress that have been made in the program as well as others that still need to be made. He said it will be put the agenda for discussion, review, and recommendation at the next council meeting.

Regarding the Sheltered Market, the Chair said this will need to be discussed at each of the council's meeting. He said based on the data available, the IT sheltered market was established. He also said the first sheltered market contract has been signed and that they are now actively looking for opportunities within the IT area as well as other verticals. He mentioned that the Governor had given us the direction to find another industry for sheltered market in the interim.

The Chair said another area he had asked for help with is the area of BEP outreach. He said we need assistance to improve our pool of certified vendors. He said only about half of our BEP vendors have registered with our new e-procurement system called Bid-buy. He said it is a fairly easy program and

that our BEP staff has been sending our letters to our vendors regarding registration. He asked for assistance from the council also for this endeavor.

The Chair congratulated member Ivory on hosting a successful Illinois Black Chamber of Commerce convention two weeks ago in Peoria, IL. He said he was unable to attend but made sure the BEP team was represented.

Lastly, the Chair introduced Mr. Amiel Harper as the new Assistant Director for CMS. He said he will be helping him with outreach including the oversight and leadership of the BEP program. Other areas he will be helping in are diversity hiring and all customer centric efforts for CMS. He went on to list his educational background and his working experience.

## **VI. Subcommittees' Reports**

**Certification Subcommittee:** Chair Roberts said the subcommittee had a meeting on June 24, 2017. She said items that were discussed at that meeting include review of accepting the national versus the local certification for the Chicago Minority Supplier Development Center as well as the Womens Business Development Center. She said they made recommendation that will be put forth before the council for a vote today that states that we will stick to the policy as it stands today which is excepting the local program.

According to Chair Roberts, another item that was discussed was regarding certification language within the JCAR rules that needed to be updated. She said one of the things she recommended at the end of the meeting was to send a piecemeal in correcting things that were related to certification in the JCAR rules by having Secretary Peterson compile anything that was certification related. She said as of this date she had not received anything from Secretary Marcos. Secretary Peterson said he has the report ready but we have been dealing with new personnel and seeing how we are going to approach that situation as well. Chair Roberts said they are awaiting the report from the Secretary before proceeding with their work. Secretary Peterson said with the coming of the new assistant director, he has to weigh in.

Assistant Director Harper seeks clarity on what he will be weighing on. Chair Roberts explained that the Subcommittee was reviewing JCAR as it relates to certification. She said it was during this time that she recommended that the Secretary compile a list of everything in the JCAR rules as it relates to certification and then the certification will get those rules and see whether they needed to be updated.

Chair Roberts asked Counsel Jones whether upon voting by the subcommittee on these rules changes they would be transferred over to the full council. Counsel Jones said if it is a recommendation then "yes" but if it is a certification decision it doesn't need to be brought to the full council.

Chair Hoffman said we do want to discussed this issue with the full council and see what they want to do.

**Outreach Subcommittee:** Chair DiMenco said the subcommittee met on July 25, 2017 and they focused on two areas. She said first they focused on their outreach strategy and second they focused on how they measure success. In the outreach strategy they discussed how to increase their effectiveness. She said they felt that an industry coupled with the product service strategy will be the best way to identify a company the state could be doing business with. She said that our outreach would foster cooperation with local organizations including entrepreneurial organizations such as chambers. She also said they spent time discussing how they will align with other government entities to see where there are opportunities to leverage learning and increase our outreach by collaborating with them. On measurement, chair DiMenco said they talked about how they do have to initially count how many they touched but what was really important is how many contract is won by industry. She further said success would be measure differently depending on what the industry penetration is.

Member Okorafor added that there are specific constitutional offices that are looking to collaborate with us. She commended Secretary Peterson and Outreach manager Irma Lopez for the outreach events they are having on a quarterly basis. She said they are pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order and that are very aggressive.

Member Ratner said on the outreach committee they talked about the Better Procurement Forum that Jaime Lee and the city of Chicago and the impact of the area initiative and that we hope to have a meeting with that forum's chair to talk about some of these strategies. Secretary Peterson said he hopes to get Jaime Lee to the next BEP council meeting.

Member Roberts said we do not have to have a separate meeting but instead we can participate in the one that they already have. She said the next meeting is September 21, 2017. Member Roberts said she will be forwarding the meeting schedule to everyone interested.

**Compliance Subcommittee:** Chair Okorafor said they met on Monday, July 26, 2017. She said she and member Beth Doria were in attendance and other members were not. She said at the meeting Mr. Reinhard impressed upon them that it was time to do an exemption review. She said member Doria had said in the past that this had been a long and tedious process in the past because we did not have enough members present. She said she suggested that they meet a different time to go over that level of detail that entail what an annual review of the exemption would eventually be voted on. She said they also talked about another very critical component of the BEP Council which is Goal Setting. She said talked about what went into goal setting and the BEP's

council role in that process as well as the BEP staff. Chair Okorafor asked if the BEP exemptions will be voted upon. Member Roberts said no because she does not see it in the agenda. Chair Hoffman said this is a heavy lifting and not something he is comfortable with doing in one setting or comfortable with delaying. He said after the June meeting it was his understanding that the compliance subcommittee would take a lead on this issue.

Member Roberts seeks to make clarification on two different issues. She said on the things that we need to change immediately is the JCAR Rules. Next, she said we need to look at exemptions from the universities and agencies as requested by them.

Member Okorafor said she agreed with member Roberts. She also said since members Roberts and Doria are on the compliance committee, they should try to get optimal attendance and let that smaller group go thru the pain staking process of identifying areas that no longer need to be exempt and then present it to the full BEP council meeting.

Member Hill Morgan said if the subcommittee meetings could be held back to back that would enhance attendance.

Member Roberts said she had asked several times to doodle instead of placing on the subcommittee meeting on a schedule

Member Barreto said she agrees with member Roberts. She said she travels extensively but she said she has the next meeting on her calendar because she got it far in advance. She said it is hard when they are not consulted or receive the invite far in advance.

Member Ivory said the exemption issue is very important and as soon as the date is known he will let his assistant know so he could clear his calendar and be in attendance. He said it is important for everyone to be engaged at the highest level.

Assistant Director Harper asked member Ivory whether his request is to use a different mechanism to get a consensus of available dates.

Chair Hoffman said he is happy to have us have a special meeting off the regular schedule to go thru this specific issue. He said they would work to arrange that. He said they would use a mechanism of doodle or something to have that scheduled as quickly as possible because most people schedule are already set. Next he said that things like doodle work best when the meeting is a pop up. He said he had asked his staff to get the meeting notice out far in advance. He also said he asked the council that if they have a conflict to identify it early so that we can then make adjustment. He said he rather not be doodling all these meetings if the schedule is set for the rest of the year. Chair Hoffman asked if a special council meeting would be fine or whether the

subcommittee would be fine. Member Okorafor said the subcommittees are meeting next month which is four weeks away so she proposed to have an internal BEP council meeting and then another public meeting for voting. Member Roberts gave an alternative option of having two subcommittee meetings since it would be coming to the full council for voting.

Chair Hoffman said he has full confidence in the compliance subcommittee to do the heavy lifting and that he will be meeting with BEP staff to schedule a couple of meetings via doodling over the course of the next few weeks. He asked the compliance subcommittee to have something written out to get to the council members in advance of the next council meeting.

Member Doria said rather than just inviting the members of the subcommittee she proposed inviting the members of the full council and make it open so that anyone from the full council can come and be a part of that review because subcommittee members would go thru this tedious process and then folks that do not partake in the process complain about the process. Chair Hoffman said it is a good idea and that it would be open to all who want to participate. Member Okorafor talked about considering a change in the time of the day for the meeting in order to enhance attendance because it is always scheduled at the middle of the day which is usually lunch time.

## **VII. Posted Business**

### **Discussion on Council Members Participation**

Member Okorafor talked about members' participation which has been dismal in the past. However we do have a full council meeting today. She said a proposal was made that if a member misses 3 council meetings that member's membership in the council be reviewed by whoever appoints members to this council. She said for those council members that represent state agencies, the directors of those agencies be told there has been a lack of participation. And as for the members that were appointed by the governor, the body who appoints them should reconsider their participation because we cannot continue to have meetings without quorum and we cannot act or conduct state business.

Member Doria said that being appointed to this council is a very important thing and the work of this council is extremely important. She stressed that it is incumbent upon each of us to really look and be honest with ourselves. She concluded that if we cannot commit to being an active participant on this council it is incumbent upon you to submit your resignation and let someone else who might be able to participate take your place.

Member Ratner said it is a joint responsibility not only on the members but also on the leadership to tell the members that are not participating “thank you” for your service but we cannot continue down this route.

Member Roberts said she agrees with what had been said by other members. She said the last few council meeting had been well attended but the subcommittees are the ones not being attended. She said that is why she has encouraged doodling the members ahead of meetings.

Chair Hoffman said he definitely respect those comments and agrees with them. He said for the first six months of his tenure as director of CMS, former assistant director McCullough headed the council. He said he took over after she left for a position at HFS. Upon his take over, he said he was disappointed with the participation by council members. He said he agrees with member Ratner’s point that a lot of the responsibilities rest on him and the program to make the meetings worthwhile. He further said he hope that everyone on the council believes in the council and wants to be here to participate and wants to make a difference although there is no real monetary reward. He said he expect that people joined the council with the best intentions. He reminded the council that we had not missed quorum for quite some time since he took over. He said he understands that the subcommittees are the ones that are having problem with attendance. He said it was their intention to have a lot of work being done in the subcommittees and if attendance is a problem, it has to be addressed. He talked about the lack of participation of statutory members from various agencies initially and how he had to reach out to the heads of those agencies to ensure full participation. He said he will start attending the various subcommittees' meetings. He said he will invite some of the directors to the council meeting so they can see some of the good work their representatives are doing and the value of it. He said we have to stress to the governor’s office the importance of this council and also having the vacancies fill.

Member Hunt sought clarity on the participation and attendance of the subcommittees. Chair Hoffman said one could participate via video conference from any state facilities in case you cannot physically be presence in Chicago or Springfield. Secretary Peterson said member Eng is a great example of using the state facility in Schaumburg which is not too far from where she works and was able to participate in the subcommittee meeting.

Member Roberts said she thought she heard in the last meeting that members could attend the subcommittee meeting by phone if there is nothing to vote on. Counsel Jones said if you do not have quorum, you cannot take any final action. He said if everyone meets telephonically then you cannot have quorum. He said you have to be physically present to have quorum. He said if the subcommittee is not taking any final action on anything, it is fine as long as you post the meeting on the website. He reminded the council that the subcommittees’ meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act. Chair

Hoffman stressed that it is better to call in then not have quorum at all. Counsel Jones reminded the council that dialing in from a state facility is considered for quorum.

Member Ivory said he thinks it is important to take time to celebrate successes. He cited the success with Charles Harrell and IT Architect.

Member Ratner informed the council that she had spoken to Secretary Peterson about some recent legislation that would have major impact on our business and said that member Doria has had a major role regarding this issue. She asked member Doria to elaborate on this issue.

Member Doria said in this legislative session, her organization, the Federation of Women Contractors and the Hispanic contractors put together “The Agenda for Growing Illinois Businesses”. She said it consisted of earmarking four private sectors businesses to report on their diversity spend. She said much to her surprise and happiness all four of those bills came out of their respective committees on a unanimous vote and pass the overall general assembly and were signed by the Governor last week. She said it covers telecom, cable, internet, railroad, institutions of higher education, and anyone receiving edge tax credits will now report on their diversity spend. She said it is important because the minute you shine a light on their diversity spend in a public way, there is a very deliberate focus by those private institutions to make certain that they up those numbers. She said in the past they passed similar legislation on the hospitals and utilities companies. She said they saw a huge jump in the utilities companies’ diversity spend. She also said next year the hospitals association will be required to publish their diversity spend they have noticed a push by the hospitals to increase their diversity spend.

Member Roberts said this is what she had been advocating for the council to be informed of all legislations before the general assembly that affects BEP.

Chair Hoffman said we will make this a part of our practice going forward to inform the council of ongoing legislation that affects BEP. He said they do track bills every week.

Member Yancy asked what the name of the bill was. Secretary Peterson said it was HB-2976.

**National versus Regional Reciprocal Agreements:** Chair Roberts said they agreed that they would only accept the local certification rather than the national certification.

**New Business:** Member Roberts talked about a sheltered market annual report that was given to the CPO’s office since August 3, 2017 and the council members have not seen it yet. She said those are things that she as a council member would like to have.

Chair Hoffman said there was no attempt to prevent council members from getting the report but it was due to time factor as they were running against the deadline by the Executive Order to provide it to the CPO's office and the Governor's office. He said he had hard copies to pass out today which will be followed by email out to the council members.

Member Roberts said she also requested to get a copy of the JCAR Rules that was submitted to JCAR but she never received it. She also reminded the Chair that she has requested a report from the Comptroller's office regarding the 15 dollars per contract and how it was spent. She said according to the law the comptroller's office should have been doing outreach in conjunction with us therefore we need to see what outreach have been done and provide report on how much money have been collected.

Member Ivory informed the council that Senator James Clayborne was on the call and they had just discussed a piece of legislation that he had coauthored related to what member Doria was talking about. Senator Clayborne told the council that he appreciates the Governor signing the legislation and he is looking forward to the Council implementing it. Counsel Jones told the Senator that it was good working with him and that it is going to add some extra teeth to the BEP Act. Senator responded by saying going forward he is looking forward to having all contracts having an inclusion for minority, women, latinos, veterans, and that we make sure that everyone has an opportunity to enjoy the tax dollars they paid.

Secretary Peterson said he spoke with Bola Delano and she say roughly they have around twenty four to twenty six thousand dollars for outreach and they we are working together to come up with a plan on how to facilitate that. He said we do have monthly meeting with the Comptroller's office to make sure that these BEP funds are utilize in the right way.

In reference to what Senator Clayborne just spoke about, Member Roberts talked about the contract related to the State of Illinois Internet RFP that went out without a BEP goal and she wants to know how this and other IT contracts can go out without a goal.

Chair Hoffman said this contract was recently brought to his attention. He said we do look at every contract very carefully. He said we try to make sure that every contract above \$250 thousand dollars does or either contain a goal or is review by our office to ensure that a waiver is given and that there is a valid reason for the waiver. He said that process was followed with this contract. He said the Department of Innovation and Technology (DOIT) has been innovative not just in their approach to information technology but also in their approach to diversity as well as to the BEP program. He said they worked very closely with the chief procurement office on an IT rationalization contract which led to creating a prequalified pool of vendors. He said in

addition when CMS approached them about Information Technology Vertical being the first area for a sheltered market designation, they eerily jumped on board and were active working thru that issue and supported us thru some compliance issues.

Regarding this specific contract, Chair Hoffman said it went thru the normal review process and when it was brought to his attention had some questions. He said the information he received from the agency is that the way this contract is set up did not lend itself to be able to have a BEP goal on it. He said subcontracting was not allowed in the RFP because of the criticality of the service and requirement to keep that in house for this tier 1 internet access. He said he had spoken to the leadership of the Department of Innovation and Technology and he is going to ask them and the compliance subcommittee to hear directly from the people who drafted the RFP and the rationale behind why there were no goals assigned to it and then the compliance subcommittee can brief the full committee on it so that we are aware.

Member Roberts said she has the contract before her and reading the solicitation it said subcontract is allowed. She said it has what is required and it has: In-house call center maintenance; help desk staffing level; due process and repair.

Member Roberts said she is no expert either. She said it looks like there are areas in which minority and women owned businesses can participate. She asked how we are going to approach this moving forward when we are no IT expert but yet we are making decisions that have impact on the minority community and we are signing on waivers. She said she believes we failed the minority and women owned businesses on this contract. She said we should not wait until September 28, 2017 to act but instead look at it now so that if we need to amend the contract in order to include BEP goal.

Member Martinez said he appreciates the fact that this council takes on tough issues head on. He said he likes the statement that the director said. He said he likes to question the agency that initiated this contract and ask them for their justification whether we agree with them or not. Then we can bring the full report once we are informed.

Member Roberts said her only concern is time sensitive.

Member Okorafor said they were going to have a meeting with two agenda items: Exemption review and this contract.

Member Roberts asked when is the due date for the contract. Secretary Peterson said September 6, 2017. Member Roberts said we have a meeting set for September 28, 2017. She said it would be too late. She proposed that a meeting be held before September 6, 2017 before it is too late and it cannot be amended.

Chair Hoffman proposed scheduling a meeting with the Compliance subcommittee so everyone can have the accurate information and reviews it; provide a recommendation to the subcommittee chair and himself, if there is a necessity to call a special meeting or for us to work with DOIT on delaying the implementation of the contract. He said right now no one on the council has a copy of this contract except member Roberts.

Member Okorafor said she is disturbed by the fact that only member Roberts has a copy of the contract and even notified by member Roberts about this contract prior to the meeting. She said she is the compliance subcommittee chair and knows nothing about this contract. Therefore, according to member Okorafor, they are not all informed.

Secretary Peterson said he will send the correct information because that was not the final draft.

Member McKinnie said given the fact that the Chair was told that there were no contracting available when in fact there are subcontracting available, who has the authority to issue an addendum postponing the bid date.

Chair Hoffman they will make sure that the appropriate documents are verified and the correct ones are provided to the subcommittee and get their feedback on it. He further said that in terms of amending the contract that would fall on the agency that drafted the contract.

Member Martinez said this case scenario has played out to a longer culture of what the BEP council is about. He said the fact that the council can go thru an exercise, question the individuals, the entities that are setting these goals and they understand that there is going to be scrutiny on further contracts is worth playing out. He further said this will allow the council to question those individuals who then will be more cautious in the future about the goals they set or rather their due diligence can justify it.

Member Ivory sought clarity on the fact that this is an IT contract that has no goals on it.

Counsel Jones responded by saying that this is not a contract but instead an RFP that is presently out on the street.

Chair Hoffman stated that it has been concluded that the compliance subcommittee will work with staff and get a doodle out today and get multiple meeting times this week to get the subcommittee together to review this get the appropriate documents to the subcommittee.

## **VIII. Public/Vendor's Testimony**

Mr. Charles Harrell II, President and CEO of IT Architect Inc. expressed his concerns about the IT RFP that is out on the street without a goal. He asked why CMS granted a waiver without BEP goal. He read a description of the RFP. He said the question is whether there is any qualified BEP firm to participate in this contract. He said this is the second go around for this telecom RFP. He said his firm participated in one of their contracts. He said there were no BEP goals but it happened that the telecom firm brought him in as a subcontractor. He urged the council to take action because he along with other firms would like to participate in this contract. He reminded the council that time is of the essence.

Mr. David Lockman, Chief Operating Officer, Obama Energy his discouragement over the IT RFP that had been put out on the street without a goal. He said this is not the first time this has happened. He said this has been going on for decades. He said instead of going thru a process as member Martinez had proposed, we should make the big guys wait and delay the RFP. He further said that there should not be a contract coming out of the state without a BEP goal attached. He said for council members to have a copy of the contract is an atrocity because the RFP is on the street.

Mr. Bill Howe, representative of Revere Consultant of Richton Park, IL said they are an IT company and can provide the exact type of services that the RFP requires and they would like to have an opportunity to bid on it. He said we are looking at a situation whereby we have 5 days to act. And he is concerned whether that is enough time to for the process to work going thru your subcommittee, coming up with a recommendation, getting it acted upon in time to extend the due date beyond September 6, 2017. He asked the chairman whether there was a way to be able to get the September 6 date extended immediately. Chair Hoffman said he will not answer the question but will follow up with the procuring agency following this meeting. He said all members understand the urgency of this issue.

Mr. Wole Adeoye of Victory Pharmacy of Decatur said he had been in the presence of the council three time s and have sounded the alarm that his business would go under if there is no action with CVS, the Insurance Company. He said he had two pharmacies in Decatur and was about to open the third one in Springfield. He said the city gave him land and he was about to start when he had the opportunity to sign up with Caremark Cigna thru the BEP program. He said he believes he was signing letter of intent but the letter said nothing about the contract, agreement, or reimbursement. He said after signing the letter of intent, he did not see CVS or Caremark. He commended Paul Cerpa for helping him during that time. He said because there was no contract, the insurance would pay what they want to pay. He said he lost a lot of money. This led to the closing of his pharmacies in November 2016. He

said he believed that when one works hard in this country, you will be rewarded. Sadly he said it was not the case. He told the council that what happened to him, he does not want it to happen to anyone else. He told the council that if they sincerely and intentionally want to help small businesses, the letter of intent is not enough. He said the council need to make sure that there is an agreement contract between the prime and the pharmacy vendor.

Laura Sanchez, CEO of Squad Work, a full service IT company told the council that she wanted to know more about the mentor protégé program that the Governor had mentioned last year when he announced the IT Sheltered Market on August 24, 2016. She said she a minority in the IT sector and she believes there is no hope for her without the mentor protégé program. She wants to know who the contact person is for the mentor protégé program and how she can be a part of it.

Chair Hoffman said the letter can be given to him and that they are currently working on the mentor protégé program.

Deli McGovern, President and CEO of Current Technology and Consulting and she concurred with former speaker Laura Sanchez. She believes that mentor protégé program would help her company get contract.

Michele Flagg, President and Owner of Redacre Solution, Inc. said she was at the last meeting and recommended that having an exemption class be eliminated. She said she wanted to know the current process of BEP goals prior to being advertised. Also she said she has noticed a trend of BEP goals decreasing from 20% and she has a listing of BEP contracts that have no goals. She wants to know why this is occurring. She asked that the BEP council identify potential RFPs that could be sole source. She recommended that the director of DOIT be invited to the council meeting so that he can meet IT firms they could work with.

Mr. Patrick Thompson, President of VEYA Inc. from Champaign, IL told the council that over the last three years he had lost over 1.2 million dollars in contracts. He said one was due to the budget and the other was due to material deficiency for a contract at Peoria Aviation for not submitting form 26 when they were already registered with IPG. He also has issue with the Champaign County which he said 28% of all state contracts pass thru Champaign yet they do not see any. His other issue is that he was let go from a contract at the Governor's mansion because some of his employees had prior convictions. He wonders why they were let go when they only do concrete work. He said he needs an explanation of why these things are happening in the BEP program. He said his last issue was with the University of Illinois. He said he was a subcontractor on a project at the University of Illinois in Champaign. It was a half a million dollars contract. He said they received a notice of intent to award contract. It was approved by the board. The contractor back out. He termed this action as institutionalized racism and discriminatory. He said he

has been to the board and also the diversity officer but it was to no avail. He said he will complain to the bitter end. He said it has cost financial burden on him. He told the council he is going to be looking if there is going to be a subcommittee or discussion on why these state agencies are not following the legislation on making sure that minority contractors are able to bid as prime contractors. He asked the council whether there was a sheltered market in construction.

Chair Hoffman said right now the only sheltered market that was declared is in Information Technology. He further said that we are evaluating the further expansion of that right now.

Member Doria said that one of the reasons why they are very careful when determining sheltered market is that almost every court has struck down sheltered market for construction.

Thomas Bowling, President, Obama Energy said minority companies are already overlooked and not given the opportunities to get on certain contract you will never know their ability. He said everyone should be given the same opportunity to submit their paperwork and see if they are qualified or not.

#### **IX. Adjournment**

Member Doria motioned for adjournment. Member Okorafor seconded. Vote taken, motion passes.