



**Business Enterprise Council
OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, July 28, 2020
1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**

Minutes

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Alex Bautista; Emilia DiMenco; Bola Delano; Jesse Martinez; Sharron Matthews; Hedy Ratner

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Karen Eng

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

N/A

COUNCIL SECRETARY

Michael Merchant

CMS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Kori Acosta; Steve Booth; Radhika Lakhani; Nicole Mandeville; Mike Merchant

In accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120) and the
Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140) the above meeting is open to the public

BEP Council Outreach Subcommittee



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OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, July 28, 2020
1:30 pm – 3:30 pm
Room 4-404 JRTC
Via Teleconference Number - 888-494-4032
Access Number - 2587213722**

AGENDA

- I. Welcome
- II. Call to Order
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Posted Business
 - Approval of **February 10, 2020** Outreach Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
 - Update on One-Pager Language
 - Update on Onboarding File
 - Update on Pending Legislation at the Committee and Council Meeting
 - Update and Review of Outreach Strategic Plan
 - Update on Key Performance Indicators
- V. Define Action Items
- VI. Upcoming Business Enterprise Council and Subcommittee Meeting dates:
 - Next Council Meeting – Monday, August 24, 2020
 - Next Subcommittee Meeting – Tuesday, September 29, 2020
- VII. Public /Vendor Testimony
- VIII. Adjournment

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I. Welcome

Chair DiMenco welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Call to Order

Chair DiMenco called the meeting to order at 1:34 pm and proceeded with roll call.

III. Roll Call

Roll call was conducted. Quorum was established.

IV. Posted Business

- **Approval of February 10, 2020 Outreach Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

Member Ratner motioned to approve the minutes. Member Matthews noted an edit that needed to be made. Member Martinez seconded. All agreed. The minutes with the edit were approved.

- **Update on One-Pager Language**

This item was skipped.

- **Update on Onboarding File**

Chair DiMenco asked Ms. Lopez for the status of Member Bautista's onboarding work. Ms. Lopez reported she has not heard back from Member Bautista. Chair DiMenco asked that this be kept as an open item. Member Delano requested that due to the length of time this has taken the present draft be shared for them to review and provide input. Member Matthews agreed and noted she was to provide historical input to the document. Chair DiMenco requested a new section called Open Action Items be added to the agenda. Member Bautista joined the meeting. Chair DiMenco relayed the discussion to him. Member Bautista agreed and suggested they meet within the following days to discuss the onboarding file. Ms. Lakhani requested to attend the meeting. Member Bautista accepted. He noted that Member Matthews has much historical information to share.

Mr. Merchant introduced and welcomed Ms. Mandeville, the new BEP Associate Deputy Director and a veteran. Chair DiMenco vouched for Ms. Mandeville's training at Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) and BMO Harris. Ms. Mandeville affirmed she is benefiting from both. She stated she was previously at the Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs as program manager for five years. Ms. Mandeville expressed her excitement and said she is looking forward to working with the team and meeting with everyone and thanked them.

- **Update on Pending Legislation at the Committee and Council Meeting**

Mr. Booth stated he had no problematic pending legislation affecting BEP to report. He said the program is operationalizing portions of SB177 and they are preparing to bring together their

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legislative agenda for the next year. Chair DiMenco asked if members had any questions. Mr. Booth noted that the last session dealt mostly with COVID-19 and related complications. He pointed out that the program has been doing great work during these troubled times to support their vendors and said the general assembly has made note of that.

Member Bautista asked if legislative ideas submitted are digested then passed to the Governor. He noted that in the past legislation has passed that either has a direct or tangential effect on their work which he finds out about later. Member Bautista added that there is value to coordinating and courtesy briefing, given the wisdom of members on the BEP Council, Subcommittees and CMS leadership share with each other what important legislation is being advanced. He pointed out that Member Doria had made efforts in the past to advance some very important legislation. Member Bautista asked Mr. Booth what is their practice and how does he see it being done. Mr. Booth noted that he came on in September of last year. He said BEP program staff make legislative suggestions which are proposed to the Governor's office, then to the General Assembly. He stated that if their group would like to submit legislative suggestions that is something they would have to contemplate, and it should be discussed.

Chair DiMenco refined Member Bautista's question and asked how can they harvest all the ideas that are being elevated and to which they can contribute towards in moving forward. She outlined that they don't know about legislation until it is already done or is too late and added how can they find out. Member Ratner confirmed that the issue is concern over not learning about legislation in time to have input and provide support on proposed legislation impacting BEP. She asked Mr. Booth how then the Council could know about proposed legislation on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Booth responded that historically CMS has tended to react more so than propose legislation. Member Ratner replied that that is what they would like to see change. Member Delano stated belief that the skill set of most people on the council is being used and the statute states the Council are supposed to be experts making a contribution to how women and minority businesses can access the various opportunities within the state. She said that what they see are external partners making suggestions and the office running through with those suggestions and not bringing them to the attention of the council. Member Delano said not to keep repeating it, but they hear after the fact and in fact there has been some legislation that has been unfavorable to these businesses. She mentioned that she and Mr. Booth have had these conversations where there needs to be a reverse package and she knows the new Associate Deputy Director is on the phone and that's one of the first things he needs to take over in making sure that the council is involved in whatever legislation is being submitted. Member Delano pointed out they are in the front lines just like he is and if legislation doesn't favor them it's very difficult for them. She said if they could reverse things and keep the council more involved it would be a better way of working.

Member Matthews stated her agreement with everything said. She acknowledged she is in a more advantaged position for BEP as she is in the internal legislative committee in her agency that works closely with their legislative team in Springfield. She said they are provided a lot of information. She said additionally the secretary who is the director of their agency asks their leadership team to provide legislative suggestions. Member Matthews noted she would like the opportunity to also provide insight within the Council. She pointed out that this is where she received the information in the last minutes on 2 pieces of legislation that she spoke to. Member Matthews proposed some type

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of organizational piece where they have legislative harvest time, would review and be able to propose, given how the rhythm goes. She stated they should be able to schedule time where they can give input and set up review mechanisms for when things come through. She said she would be very interested in working with whomever on that.

Chair DiMenco called for realistic next steps. Member Bautista offered that he represents a state agency that's very concerned about non-discrimination especially in vendor relationships. He affirmed he is very respectful of the governor's prerogative and CMS leadership's responsibilities to provide leadership, support and that they have a role to play as partners. He indicated that the two interests he sees are that CMS has the benefit of their collective and individual wisdom. Member Bautista asked what is the procedure or protocol that Mr. Booth, CMS leadership can say works for them in terms of receiving their feedback, so they know they can get together as a group, brainstorm and submit their ideas. He demonstrated that for anyone who wants to individually submit, here is the procedure to use. Member Bautista commented that the other thing is ongoing updating throughout the legislative process, so this would be where Mr. Booth notifies them when that is the right time, then get their position filed. He asked for the optimal process. He noted because for example Member Matthews wouldn't advance legislation within her agency but would bring it up with CMS leadership, so if she has come up with some good ideas within the DHS structure, how is CMS leadership going to find out about those ideas?

Member Bautista asserted his concern is about ideas going to the right place. He stated the complicating factor is when CMS leadership is presenting ideas to Governor's office it's all confidential until vetting is completed so he wants to be respectful of that process. Member Bautista requested that they be polled on whatever ideas are being presented to the Governor's office but advocated for the procedure for all of them to brainstorm or submit individually so CMS can receive it. He specified how does that get to CMS leadership, to inform their internal choices, and eventually become notified. He asked what is that cycle is like.

Member Matthews acknowledged that is all wonderful, but she had questions about why the BEP Council would not be informed about what CMS is thinking about taking to the Governor's office that directly affects BEP. She asked how it comes out and who makes the final decisions. She pointed out they are not involved with that, it is the prerogative of each agency, but as far as not being aware and not knowing about it in advance gives her cause to pause.

Mr. Merchant agreed and noted that is the same concern he believes they are all bringing up and everybody should be informed. He said if CMS is running something the council should know, even if anyone at DHS or even any of their partners, or anybody is running it because as a council they need to have a concerted effort. He acknowledged that sometimes people will have their own agendas, but said he believes they all need to agree on what is in the best interest of the council and unfortunately that system has not been set up in the past. Mr. Merchant added that he is newer as well and given what happened this year, they were not really able to put anything in place. He agreed there does need to be a process and stated they should revisit this to figure out how they can all coordinate all of their efforts. Mr. Merchant highlighted that the council is an extremely important sounding board and their role is to be bringing these suggestions because they have their ear to the ground and are their subject matter experts in BEP issues and have great ideas and understand where some of the deficiencies are. He thanked Member Bautista as well.

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Mr. Merchant stated he doesn't have the answer for the best solution but they are right that there needs to be a unified presentation of legislative agenda and if there are other pieces of legislation that they may hear about then they should all know in case it is something affecting BEP then they can all start to think about a strategy for defending against something they may think is harmful to BEP efforts. He illustrated that it is kind of both ways, they need to work together defensively and offensively.

Member Bautista suggested they leave this with CMS leadership to respond with a proposal. Chair DiMenco stated that is one option and another suggestion is to make sure they socialize the idea before they get there and have it as a full council meeting agenda item and get full input on how better to advocate and collaborate on issues that impact BEP CMS.

Member Martinez cautioned that they have to be careful as to where they might fit in and where they might stand out to make a big impact based on strategy. He said he thinks the fact that the council represents different agencies and legislation impacts agencies differently and they have organizations, businesses that might be on the opposite view. Member Martinez explained that they have contractors that do business with them at CDB (Capitol Development Board), mechanical contractors, who are the complete opposite of their general contractors where the delivery method is a huge issue. He said how they deliver the project versus what side of the aisle they sit on. He pointed out that is the type of information they need on the table so they know where they might fit and where it may be dicey. Member Martinez stated he just wants to make sure it is represented in a way that represents various interest groups and it fits the entire council and is good for diversity overall. He said their role is pretty defined but sometimes they get those not so obvious sides of the aisle where they might have to be cautious. Member Martinez stated they have to be flexible enough to understand strategy, especially in legislation.

Member Bautista stated Member Martinez stated that very well and that he too wanted to communicate that the council stay out of the strategy but give CMS what they need. He said they at DHR (Illinois Department of Human Rights) run quite a bit of legislation for civil rights and they email all internal staff to submit ideas, then their internal DHR legislative senior team of which he sits on vets them all and identifies what they are going to advance, then they go through their vetting process with the Governor and eventually notify all their staff. Member Bautista reiterated that they want to protect the Governor and senior staff's prerogative, not do strategy but give ideas, concerns, talking points, pros and cons so that they can have their collective wisdom as they represent them in this process and he wants to be really clear where he is coming from.

Chair DiMenco pronounced that the next step is for general discussion at full Council or to give it to CMS leadership on this committee to recommend a process to make this work. Member Matthews recommended they do both because just to bring up the topic is not enough. She added that in order to be proactive which is what she believes Chair DiMenco is saying they should have someone from CMS demonstrate what the process would be to facilitate their input. Chair DiMenco affirmed they have those two action items. Ms. Mandeville proposed that hearing what everybody saying, they send a note to a point of contact, herself, consisting of an aggregate of the ideas discussed so that they can have a flow of communication between CMS staff. Chair DiMenco pronounced that as a third action step, for subcommittee members to give their ideas to Ms. Mandeville, the Associate Deputy Director of BEP for further consideration and messaging. Ms. Mandeville agreed stating the

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purpose is to have a single point of contact for the sake of continuity. Member Matthews avouched that would be great and indicated the need for a timetable that fits with the legislative flow. Ms. Mandeville said she will work with the legislative team to ask for the drop-dead dates they have and for feedback, knowing that the Governor's office wants proposals drafted and sent to them within a specific timeframe. She stated belief that it may be a little late for the current deadline, however moving forward they will be sure to communicate that with the team.

Member Delano said that is great but told Ms. Mandeville be careful what she asks for because so many ideas will come to her. She suggested that the simplest thing to do is just have it as an item on their agenda and if anything comes up at that particular moment, share it with everybody at the Council meeting and they are made fully aware. Member Delano stated that whatever happens in the backroom..., can happen, just as Ms. Mandeville said there is a timetable and they've missed this one, so they need to run for the next one. She pointed out that a lot of the bureaucrats are talking because they all have their allegiances to state, but business sector members may also have ideas, they can mention those ideas, and all can start working through that so that they don't make it too complicated.

Member Bautista agreed. He added that perhaps Ms. Mandeville can put out a call to the full board so they can share what they are thinking because other members will give their ideas. He also expressed that he is a fan of sharing, also of the collective bouncing ideas off each other so that at least there is a point in time where they are hearing all of the ideas and at the same time they can provide better priority to those ideas, balancing that collective and individual sharing. He said he is therefore in favor of the initial two action items. Chair DiMenco restated there are 3 items, the topic as a line item at Full Council, CMS will begin coming up with a process on how work together to facilitate legislation, Ms. Mandeville has requested they share ideas with her, and CMS should decide if they should solicit ideas at this point in time from the whole board.

- **Update and Review of Outreach Strategic Plan**

Chair DiMenco remarked that the webinars with Mr. Pineda are very good. She added that she would like for Ms. Lopez to share how many people are participating because at the [WBDC](#) (Women's Business Development Center) they have 5 times as many people participating as they would in a live event. Ms. Lopez mentioned that the entire outreach strategy is under review in light of COVID-19. She reported it has had an incredible amount of response, received favorable feedback and believes that is what is most important is #1 they are touching on specific procurement opportunities with different agencies and #2 it's ½ hour. Chair DiMenco remarked that these are individuals they have always wanted to come speak and it is great that Ms. Lopez has engaged them. Member Ratner chimed in that it is exactly what they wanted to do, she has done it, and that is marvelous. She declared her hope that council members participate because this is where they have had so much criticism in the past from both the public and their own council membership.

Chair DiMenco suggested that if agenda allows, at the next council meeting Ms. Lopez be allowed to give an update and maybe a one pager on all the webinars she has done including speaker, topic, and how many attendees. Ms. Lopez added that to her point that is one of the items they have been trying to revisit on their outreach for road show. She informed them it has greatly increased their vendor attendance because it doesn't limit anybody who can't drive 6 hours to the other end of Illinois. She

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said they can just jump on the webinar in the comfort of their own home or office and participate. Ms. Lopez reported that they have learned the key words that vendors want to hear are procurement or purchasing. She said they try to bring people to address those topics specifically. Ms. Lopez reported that when they do road shows they tap into local and work with compliance to recognize high spend in that region being visited to bring state agencies to speak on purchasing practices. She highlighted Rockford where they attempted to bring in the Rockford Airport representative but didn't have any luck. She said Rockford local government did come and speak of opportunities made available for diverse businesses. Ms. Lopez stated that is something they are trying to work on to tighten up and present in a better way to make it more fluid. She cited the need to be more competitive in their virtual events since everyone is pretty much bombarded with virtual information. Ms. Lopez reported that the priority right now are the chats and road shows. She said they are also working to add more dedicated monthly events, for example their Juneteenth event that the Director put together was highly successful, as well as their Women's History and Black History Month events. She stated all of those were very well attended, very successful events and they are working hard to perfect them as best they can, to reach as many of their vendors as they can to participate.

Member Matthews proclaimed kudos to Ms. Lopez and her team. She stated this is a new approach to outreach marketing and her strategy of putting up positive marketing spin that they didn't have before. Member Matthews said the only thing she wanted to say, not as a criticism because this is a new initiative that is truly needed to get out the positiveness that is going on and to highlight the program in different ways, is that 2 of those events she didn't know about until they were almost happening, and she wasn't sure why. She stated she did attend them, but it was only by happenstance that she found out and was able to free herself up to go. Member Matthews asked and assumed that in the future they will get more notice. Ms. Lopez assured her that is one of the items they are trying to address. She explained that because of the way things have happened they sent these out last minute but that is one of the things the Director made very clear is they need to give their vendors and attendees much more notification, more time to put this on their calendar. She stated Member Matthews comments were duly noted and appreciated.

Member Delano asked who are the target groups. Ms. Lopez replied that communications are going out to their vendor database, council members, over 100 partners consisting of economic development centers, chambers of commerce, sister agencies and the like. She outlined that more and more publications in Southern Illinois are including their events. Ms. Lopez commented that ideally, they would like to add vendors who are not in their system to increase their numbers, in turn increasing opportunities and higher goals on their contracts. She said she hoped the message gets shared. She stated they put out a weekly newsletter in which upcoming events are showcased and links to the public events calendar is always included. Ms. Lopez said council members should be receiving them as well. Member Delano confirmed she receives them. She stated the reason she asked the question is that the grass roots organizations still don't get this information, the people in the know do. Member Delano stated it is not a criticism but that they have a whole array of people who ask for this information and they forward it but sometimes they come a bit late and they can't really share the information. She suggested that maybe an action point for a future date should be to align their various databases, so they have a wider audience because it will open up the opportunities. Member Delano said don't really get the information and maybe they could work on compiling some databases and possibly later do some in a different language. Ms. Lopez stated they have done a few webinars in Spanish, but it would be nice to increase the number of languages that

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this information is available in. She mentioned that the procurement part is not translated into any other language, however this where some of their PTACs and SBDC's are able to provide bilingual services. Ms. Lopez said she is excited about sharing each other's databases and would welcome that because it would really help in spreading their message. Member Bautista noted he is loving the emails from BEP sharing the news. Chair DiMenco noted repetitive information becomes top of mind.

Member Bautista asked if they are using contact management software and assuming if they are then they have a distribution list that is segmented by demographic, so if they were to share databases, would they share addresses or push communication through their own groups because they have permission from people to push through their stuff and would probably want to amend their notices. He said that would be something they would work through and can talk about that later. Ms. Lopez said Mr. Booth was very instrumental in helping them work with Mail Chimp. Mr. Booth said they realized at the outset of COVID-19 they would need to shift very quickly from in-person to the virtual paradigm. He explained that because the purchasing process can be quite cumbersome, he ended up teaching himself to code HTML in one day in order to facilitate this and created an email template that the program could use for a recurring vendor support message. He stated Mr. Pineda and Ms. Lopez learned to manipulate the format. Mr. Booth reported that in the long term a CRM is something they would like to bring on, but in the meantime, they are using the HTML template. Member Bautista said that is phenomenal that they were able to implement this so quickly. He mentioned that the only recommendation for the future is he would look toward service-specific emailing, for example the compliance subcommittee as they learn about tips, they could pass them on through the compliance newsletter that then pushes out to all of the active vendors and creating an exchange between the primes and sub primes down the road can be explored.

Member Matthews highlighted that she would like to see more pre-bid conferences, meet and greets are fine, but in terms of motivating folks to come out whether it's virtual or maybe one of these days they will meet in person again. She added that until then it's going to be more important to have pre-bid conferences. Member Matthews cited that if they can encourage or even make them mandatory over a certain amount because quite frankly that's the breakdown. She said they do all they can and there's a lot to do. Member Matthews stated she is very excited about the new things that are happening with the new administration of CMS and the staff, however it breaks down to did their BEP vendors actually make contact and either become a prime or sub-contractor and that's what this is about. Member Bautista interjected that is brilliant. Member Matthews proclaimed that they have not maximized use of the pre-bid conference tool and when that happens people will connect, receive information on who was there to follow up with, and that's what making this whole connection is about

Member Delano stated that is why she brought up grass roots because they are still preaching to the choir and now need to get a bigger congregation who are the people outside who don't know about the bidding process and they are all accountable to give numbers. She said there has been a lot of merging here and there, but the reality is the numbers not as good as should be and if they don't get more people, it's the same people getting contracts and all that, then they are not really doing what they are here to do in a way. Member Delano told Member Matthews she liked what she said and that is where they need to be, pre-bidding and bringing people in. She related that she was on the phone with an existing contractor who cited Member Matthews one of the main people who helped

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her about 8 years ago. Member Delano said she mentioned her at a pre-bid meeting she was at and she was a minority businessperson who has now exploded but she's doing a lot of work.

Member Martinez stated that people at CBD all have mandatory pre-bids or just pre-bid meetings. He said the only way they are going to get any business on the table is to actually offer the opportunity. Member Martinez explained that is where he does his best networking. He stated the primes are coming for the project the minority firms are coming for the partnership opportunity. Chair DiMenco asked how do they advocate for this. Member Bautista interjected that he is really excited about this not just because of what Member Matthews said and that Member Martinez stating it works, but that virtual pre-bid meetings close the gaps on distance and if they could just log in it's easier and can close so many gaps in the process.

Mr. Merchant stated he is bringing up a great point. He explained that his understanding, correct him if he is wrong... he has made that push at BOSS and asked why haven't they done more pre-bid conferences, but his understanding is the CPO's (Chief Procurement Office) office has pushed back on that and limited it to mandatory pre-bid conferences if site-specific and cited another reason he couldn't think of at the moment. Chair DiMenco stated she was not surprised. Member Bautista stated that it could be shared with the vendors or primes that this is good faith effort, because that gets evaluated especially when they are not meeting goals. He said there is a way to incentivize, motivate, explain to them that whereas they may not be able to make it mandatory right now, they the Council now deem the holding of a pre-bid virtual meetings substantial good faith efforts to identify responsible firms, while they work out a regulatory scheme to make it mandatory. Member Delano pointed out that's why the council is there.

Member Martinez illustrated that when CDB does their outreaches they showcase future projects because they know vendors are there looking for opportunities, so they teach them about their process. He added that if CMS can showcase in their outreach potential bidding opportunities, potential contracts coming up, give information that they need to know, promote what's coming, it's not a pre-bid per se but maybe this is their little loophole and obviously the CPO will advise to what extent they can offer information. He said he doesn't think it's any violation to say they have something out there or to tell them to start thinking about the teams, so they are inviting competition and making them aware at the same time without calling it an official bid which they do successfully at CDB.

Member Bautista pointed out that eliminates two common problems he hears about from minority vendors, that they got approached to submit two days before close and they don't even have the time to generate the data, and from companies that they are tired of hitting up the minority vendor and keep getting no's and they ask who can they push this out to. He reaffirmed that if there is something out there that gives that up and coming information it could really help the minority firm and help the vendor get a better sense of what the real availability is, so he likes that idea also.

Member Matthews brought up that in the chats Ms. Lopez asks folks to do some forecasting and they are supposed to be doing that in the agencies, some are, some aren't. She said that apparently Member Martinez has it down like an art. She said in a prior position as assistant director at HFS (Healthcare and Family Services), in addition to forecasting they would also provide information on history of purchasing with the agency by major and minor object code going back 5 years so folks

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could see trends so they would be able to see whether they were the agency to spend time with, so that was very helpful too.

Ms. Lopez wanted to add that one of the things she learned from Mr. Richie is how vendors lit up when they heard actual items being purchased when he came and told them how the Department of Corrections are looking for locks, window latches or tiles. She said they don't want to hear they purchase professional services or just food, they want to know actual items. She detailed that one that was very successful was the Department of Children and Family Services. She said she learned they are the largest purchaser of cribs in the state. Ms. Lopez pointed out that for vendors for them to be specific to what they sell, that information is golden. She stated that forecasting is part of their training when they do presentations and they encourage their vendors to go to the procurement bulletin boards and see what agency is buying what from who, research their primes, most of what they buy runs in cycles and advises them to stay informed and up to date and more importantly stay registered with the procurement bulletin boards.

Member Matthews told Ms. Lopez that the new Fast Track certification process is wonderful. She asked Ms. Lopez how it will impact what she is doing and that it is great that she has people coming over from the city and the county who understand how the system works and how that will impact those who are still holding on waiting for BEP to live up to its promise to them and have been certified for a long time? Member Matthews commented she is concerned about equity, about numbers of course and availability, capacity for resources for the state. Ms. Lopez asked to clarify if she meant how it affects people applying for full certification as opposed to fast track. Member Matthews clarified she meant how it impacts outreach, if at all.

Ms. Lopez responded that she finds it is an incredible opportunity for the vendors already certified with the city or the county and said it has resulted in some other entities trying to find out how they can get into something similar. She said that some of these entities don't even have a certification program, so they are reaching out to ask how to start their own, then hopefully have a type of understanding much like entities currently recognized by BEP. Ms. Lopez responded that in terms of outreach it's all a matter of letting many people know about the program, it's benefits and advantages because no matter how you certify with BEP, all a vendor or agency knows is that you are currently certified and that's all that matters to them. She expressed her excitement about increasing their numbers and potentially opportunities for their vendors. She explained that they try to educate their smaller vendors as best as they can about the procurement process and speak about the Small Business Set-Aside Program.

Ms. Lopez gave an example that as of last year the mandate for Illinois Community Colleges has been better enforced so they have been under a lot of pressure to increase their diversity spend and a representative from Moraine Valley Community College took it upon herself to create a list of purchasing staff which she provides to her and she shares the list with vendors. Ms. Lopez detailed that the colleges request a capability statement to keep on file they can pull up when they have an opportunity. She added that she tells vendors to tap into community college's procurement pages because although they are mandated to have BEP spend, they are not mandated to post on the higher education bulletin board. Ms. Lopez said she also tells them to take the time to research different diversity supplier programs wherever they are available, but with the state the Small Business Set-Aside Program is the best for them and is a race and gender-neutral program available

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to businesses that fall within certain size standards. She conceded that it takes a lot of work, networking and learning for vendors to tap into these resources. Ms. Lopez added that she tells vendors that networking will make them a successful business.

Member Delano commented she always comes to these meetings from the grassroots agenda and stated she likes the idea they have Fast Track certification however they have 102 counties and only one is part of this certification. She said they need to consider how to include other counties. She stated they have about 3,000 communities and asked how this affects central and downstate because if they are trying to get minorities on board, and maybe the opinion is that there are more minorities in Chicago and Northeast Illinois is right or wrong, but there are in central and downstate Illinois and they shared that information with some of their contacts there and some were concerned that they weren't aware of all this. She said that in terms of their coordinated efforts in getting the message out for BEP and small business they might be looking at some future innovative ideas, but she just wanted to get it out there that there are others who want to get involved. Ms. Lopez remarked that is a good point and that the Director has made it clear she welcomes new partnerships and has encouraged other governmental and certifying entities to reach out to them. She said it is a matter of starting that conversation and making sure their programs align and noted that oftentimes BEP surpasses other certifying entities in size standard.

Mr. Merchant commented that they have to ensure that whichever organization certification they rely on has run a thorough check on the vendors. He said they are very confident in the work of the city and county. Member Delano concurred and pointed out they do have SBDC's (Small Business Development Centers) throughout the state of Illinois so they need to align each other so that that works. Member Bautista interjected that he knows that there are a lot of local units of government that won't meet BEP standards, but it would be a really good idea if they could push out an invitation to them to consider State of Illinois certification. Member Delano said that is the point. Member Bautista said they could find out what the barriers are, and he has heard some say they will never pursue state certification because they ask too many questions, are too rigorous or whatever the case may be. He stated the goal is to increase the number certified and if they got them to information share how many are known to them they would have a really good sense of what it might look like to get them on to their process which leads them to data analytics and things like that.

Chair DiMenco declared to Ms. Lopez that she has received feedback ranging from holding more pre-bid conferences to how to advocate for that, how to get more certified businesses onto the food chain here and suggested they leave all these ideas with her and she can give them an update at the next meeting on things she has done that will facilitate increasing the number of certified MWBEs in the process. Member Martinez stated that fast certification benefits CDB tremendously when the minority bidder realizes their certified only through the City of Chicago and they get recognized before the bid date or during the cure period. He said a lot of these companies do go downstate to do the work. He noted that fast recognition during bid time is crucial to them and is going to save him a lot of headaches for good faith efforts determinations in the cure period. He asked where they are in the Fast Track process so that they can put it in their bid documents. Mr. Merchant informed him that it is up and running and they haven't gotten some of the technology in place to get it running smoothly but Mr. Gutierrez is processing. Member Martinez asked what additional information do vendors need to submit for Fast Track certification. Mr. Merchant responded they

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need to submit a copy of their city or county certification and a signed affidavit. He said Ms. Lopez is in contact with Mr. Gutierrez so they can be processed quickly.

- **Update on Key Performance Index**

Mr. Nolan stated his purview is the KPI project he oversees for 8-9 different CMS bureaus. Mr. Nolan explained there are 5 KPIs for BEP, new applications started, applications certified, percent of goals, budget, percent of success against goals in terms of agencies actually procuring. He noted that the one most relevant to this subcommittee is certifications started and that refers to new applications rather than the No Change Affidavit applications. Mr. Nolan explained that they look at the new, fresh applications, reciprocal, and Fast Track. He stated that compared to last year they have had a 10% uptick and there is probably some noise in that data because of the way it is captured and that they can only look at applications that were eventually completed, so there is some backlog going on there. He added that the uptick has been more linear this year, so last year they were saying 100 applications started a month for the first 5 months of the year, this year they say it started at 90 and edge more up to 150 or so. Mr. Nolan explained there seems to be some growth. He reported there was a dip in the winter, although it seemed to have started more in August, then continuing straight throughout the year. He added that he does not know if that is just part of a regularly occurring seasonal dip, associated with the different types of goods, sort of micro economic business cycles, Chicago or Springfield or where ever if they have different industry bends that follow patterns like that. Mr. Nolan concluded that in that regard it looks like BEP is getting more certifications started, although he added that the metric is very limited.

Mr. Nolan explained he views the outreach component as having 3 different pieces of a funnel; at the top of the funnel is this general awareness, what is BEP, how do you complete an application, that's not BEP, getting business with the state is BEP. Mr. Nolan outlined that messaging, broader word of mouth, getting it out into the zeitgeist, that's the awareness stage. He said that this KPI, measuring applications started is the first kind of engagement that follows the applicant taking real serious positive active steps themselves, taking some ownership of the process. Mr. Nolan pronounced that the final part is commitment which he sees as them finishing the application. He pointed out it is not an easy process, it takes some willingness and engagement to click start application and it takes a whole other level of commitment to finish one of these applications with the caveat of the Fast Track, which are expedited applications. Mr. Nolan reported they are looking at potentially identifying a backlog in the funnel and said that getting them to finish the application is more of a sales type of engagement which he would like to identify as a future or narrower KPI.

Member Matthews told Mr. Nolan she is glad he was added to the team. She asked that in terms of general awareness, how is he collecting the data. She said as far as commitment, she recommended being careful because as far as a KPI, it is a shared one and not all Ms. Lopez's department unless there is technical assistance that is given. Member Matthews explained that it is one thing to encourage and say "oh you can do it, it's not that hard" and another thing, back in the day they provided technical assistance to vendors in completing the process but that was part of their certification component at that time and not so much the outreach although it took the outreach to get them to that point, so she would say that is a shared KPI. Mr. Nolan responded he asked that question before and it is indeed in Ms. Lopez' purview exclusively but said he may be mistaken. Member Matthews put forth that as a member of the outreach subcommittee, she would not be

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comfortable with that being totally on Ms. Lopez's division. She detailed that the applications are technical, require time and he is talking about the sales pitch. Chair DiMenco interjected that Mr. Nolan stated there is more work to be done with applications finished and that CMS may be interested in that but that he differentiated marketing from sales. Mr. Nolan responded that sales may be a problematic term but that he was stating it more in the way Member Matthews stated and the way he understood it was that it wouldn't be on the certification team's purview because there would be bias involved if they were both the person helping someone complete an application as well as the person adjudicating whether it was valid or not.

Member Matthews affirmed she has issues with that in terms of resources because she has not known the outreach component of BEP to be known to provide that level of technical assistance or have the resources to do so. Ms. Lopez confirmed Member Matthews is correct. She said that their practice in general is to direct them to an SBDC or PTAC, however she stated that she and Mr. Pineda field questions daily on the phone and via email because if they send a question, they provide them with that information. She added that she and Mr. Gutierrez worked together to provide that information line by line on their checklists. Ms. Lopez explained that because the Secretary of State's office does not require vendors come in with all the documents to support business structure, a lot of times it comes as an absolute surprise to their vendors that BEP requires it, so first and foremost they direct them to the PTAC for more in-depth technical assistance but they are constantly providing information when they ask because it will take the same amount of time to direct them to the SBDC or PTAC than to answer those questions. She confirmed that they do not have the bandwidth to sit down with the vendor and walk them through an application and that the chances of a vendor coming in with everything they need in one sitting are close to none, so not only do they not have the time, equipment and staff to sit one on one with vendors, it would just take up the whole day to sit down with a vendor and the SBDC and PTACs are better equipped as they run cohorts, training workshops and are much better equipped to provide one on one technical assistance. Member Matthews offered that perhaps what they need to look at as one of the KPIs in this area is referrals given as opposed to being responsible for the delivery which would be more fair and realistic until they do get a technical assistance department that can do that, to actually consult at that level and they are part of Ms. Lopez's chain. She declared this is her recommendation.

Member Bautista stated they are going to continue this conversation. He said if Mr. Nolan could email a fact sheet of what are the KPIs he is thinking of or if they have been finalized what they are that would be great. Member Bautista commented that he likes and agrees with the framework about applications started which does give them a KPI of their market and for example if they have a thousand vendors that start an application, they have somehow reached a lot of people. He explained that if they didn't finish the application then Mr. Nolan is using sales which he kind of likes because the sale didn't close. Member Bautista detailed that then what he would want to know is that if a thousand started but only a hundred completed, 10%, those 2 data points tell him that something is going wrong. He said it could be that some of the questions were frightening, some were too extensive, or they didn't understand but at least those 2 metrics tell them something is wrong, and they can drill in and drill down and inform outreach. Member Bautista countered that he understands that Member Matthews is saying she does not want this to be a key performance indicator of the efficacy or importance of outreach and he would agree with her, that does not give them the efficacy of outreach but it gives them a little sliver of the process, so in a future conversation he would like to have a more nuanced discussion of the performance indicators.

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Member Bautista said when they started early on having the conversation about analytics, they have 2 goals; one is KPIs around outreach and they had some very powerful robust conversations about analytics globally. He said Chair DiMenco, Members Delano and Ratner he believes stated they wanted to know the big data piece, how much money is being spent, what is the percentage by industry, all the analytics that then would help them understand where they should target outreach, where they should target compliance, so that he feels the analytics are for the entire enterprise of BEP along its life cycle and he is not sure if that is the next step or if they are already doing that now. He stated they discussed bringing in comptroller data to make it accessible to their analytics group here. Member Bautista noted he wanted to make sure they have those points that they can link up to and really engage in data driven decision making.

Mr. Nolan replied that Mr. Gutierrez and the Director are working together to do industry cross tabs in addition to location and demographics to see who they can maybe get more targeted. He said he would send them the KPIs and apologized for not being able to stay longer because he had another meeting to go to. Chair DiMenco declared the conversation would continue with CMS to not only help them with outreach but with targeting what they should be in conducting targeted outreach. Mr. Merchant agreed.

V. Define Action Items

1. BEP Council receiving updates on pending legislation as a line item at Full Council
 - a. CMS will begin coming up with a process on how work together to facilitate legislation
 - b. CMS should decide if they want to solicit at this point in time ideas from the whole board
2. If the agenda allows, Ms. Lopez be allowed to give an update and maybe a one pager on all the webinars she has done including speaker, topic, and how may attendees

VI. Upcoming Business Enterprise Council and Subcommittee Meeting dates:

- **Next Council Meeting – Monday, August 24, 2020**
- **Next Outreach Subcommittee Meeting – Tuesday, September 29, 2020**

VII. Public /Vendor Testimony

Chair DiMenco asked if there was public/vendor testimony. There was none.

VIII. Adjournment

Member Ratner moved to adjourn. Member Delano seconded. The meeting adjourned at 3:37 pm.

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