



**Business Enterprise Council
OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, September 29, 2020
1:30 pm – 3:30 pm
Location: Webex Videoconferencing**

Minutes

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Emilia DiMenco; Alex Bautista; Bola Delano; Karen Eng; Sharron Matthews;

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Jesse Martinez; Hedy Ratner;

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

N/A

COUNCIL SECRETARY

Radhika Lakhani

CMS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Kori Acosta; Radhika Lakhani; Irma Lopez; Nicole Mandeville;

**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



**Business Enterprise Council
OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Location: Webex Videoconferencing

Webex Meeting Number (access code): 133-299-1202

Password: StnWNmhr724

Dial from a video system or app 1332991202@illinois.webex.com

Join by phone - [+1-312-535-8110](tel:+13125358110) United States

AGENDA

- I. Welcome
- II. Call to Order
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Posted Business
 - Approval of July 28, 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. Open Action Items
- VII. Suggestions for full Business Enterprise Council meeting agenda item(s)
 - Next Council Meeting – Monday, October 26, 2020
 - Next Certification Subcommittee Meeting – Monday, November 23, 2020
 - Next Outreach Subcommittee Meeting – Tuesday, November 24, 2020
 - Next Compliance Subcommittee Meeting – Wednesday, November 25, 2020
- VIII. Public /Vendor Testimony
- IX. Adjournment

**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



I. Welcome

Chair DiMenco welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Call to Order

Chair DiMenco called the meeting to order. Ms. Acosta performed roll call.

III. Roll Call

Roll call conducted. Quorum was established.

IV. Posted Business

- **Approval of July 28, 2020 Outreach Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

Chair DiMenco opened the floor to a motion. Member Martinez motioned to approve the minutes for the July 28, 2020 with an additional proofreading. Member Matthews seconded. All agreed. The minutes were approved.

- **Update on One-Pager Language**

Ms. Lopez stated she could review the One-Pager with Ms. Mandeville and have the graphics team work on it. She confirmed they would see it at the next meeting. Member Matthews commented that it should be more of a marketing tool if it is to be distributed, so they need for it to be a bit more attractive. Ms. Mandeville stated they are open to suggestions. Chair DiMenco recommended they review the minutes where it was discussed. Ms. Lopez stated that original draft document is from October 2019. Ms. Mandeville said they will submit it to COMMS before the next BEP Council meeting and do an abbreviated version as well.

- **Update on Onboarding File**

Member Bautista stated he added to the outreach section, left a section open for Member Matthews to add historical information, and asked that they meet next week. Member Delano asked Member Bautista to send them what he has because they need to make sure this document is ready for Ms. Mandeville and her team. Members Bautista, Matthews and Delano confirmed they will meet from 3-4:30 pm on Wednesday to work on the Onboarding File.

Member Bautista stated he added a section on DEI, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Member Matthews noted there is a Chief of Diversity in the Governor's office and that there is some legislation from Representative Walsh on DCEO (Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity) becoming more involved and having an office of inclusion there. Member Bautista explained that the Governor's office hired consultants to train the Governor's cabinet in DEI, which as Chief of Staff of DHR (Department of Human Rights) he attended. He described that it provides a common understanding of DEI for all of the agencies and said he was impressed by the way they were able to communicate the information to make it relevant to both experienced and newer agencies. Member Bautista stated that all of the agencies are developing DEI plans which are due

**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



October 1st and that 4 agencies were selected to present at the cabinet meeting. He said that the plans were tailored approaches. Member Bautista stated that at DHR they are trying to add some DEI principles to their vendor registration process and will share this with the subcommittee because it furthers their work. He highlighted that they are marketing and communicating in as many ways possible in their vendor registration work, redesigning their vendor registration homepage to link to BEP and others because they continue to find that they have vendors who still struggle to understand the whole landscape. Member Bautista stated the training will eventually be brought to state employees. He noted that a lot of this has happened as a result of the outcry for social justice after what happened with George Floyd and Brianna Taylor. He said that although this work is highly specialized it is in the heart of trying to advance opportunity, so this is a very good time for their work to be understood.

Member Delano stated it is a great idea, but they also had employment plans for all agencies and there was no accountability. She commended DEI for what it's supposed to be, adding that they can do all the plans and initiatives they want but the problem is accountability and people's feet being put to the fire in terms of deliverables. She asked whether in relation to BEP this is an internal or external tool, because there are two sides to this, one is this administrative tool or on the other side of it what are they doing for the residents of Illinois. Member Delano asked what is the plan for accountability. She explained that in the certification meeting the other day they discussed the very aspirational goals that were set for certification, which is fine, but they may not be able to deliver them. Member Delano demonstrated that if for outreach they are saying they can't reach all the minorities, what is the accountability if they can't. She added what's the accountability for those that get certified and don't get contracts and for prime contractors who don't use vendors from the BEP pool? Member Delano stated it all ties into what they are doing here, what are the key performance indicators, and how do they link into this big plan. Member Delano ended by pointing out that there has been no accountability on the employment plans.

Member Bautista responded that he wanted to make sure he is not being misunderstood. He added that he is in no position to critique a governor's initiative. Member Delano replied neither is she. Member Bautista outlined that they are all now on the same page regarding DEI. He said the other thing is that agencies identify where they can do work and initiate things. He suggested for them to clearly assess how their work fits into DEI and celebrate. Member Bautista recommended they look at what are their opportunities with DEI and see what is and what is not for them.

Member Delano clarified that she is not objecting to what the Governor is saying. She stated that they have gone around these circles before and they just have a different name. Member Delano explained that the emphasis of her point is they need to make whatever system is recommended more accountable. She asserted this is critical to the success of this initiative. Member Delano added that what they haven't got is a system to address with penalties which should be done and the reason she brought up employment plans is because those are recommended by statute. Chair DiMenco thanked them for their comments and asked Member Bautista the name of the consulting group because WBDC is looking for someone to help with their work. Member Bautista stated it is the Morton Group.

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

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



Chair DiMenco summarized they were 1.) supposed to send feedback to Ms. Mandeville, 2.) CMS was supposed to see what the process would be to help facilitate legislation and 3.) that legislation should always be a line item at the full council. Chair DiMenco proclaimed those actions items are still open and they should discuss those at the next meeting then that should go to the full council and that even before that it should always be line item at the full council meeting. Member Matthews stated they had also discussed possibly setting up a legislative committee, even if it is ad hoc because these things come out of the blue sometimes and there needs to be a quick response. Chair DiMenco said she only recalled that she and another member had a legislative committee in their agency. She stated that needs to go to the full council.

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

Ms. Lopez stated they prepare this document annually and their objective is to increase membership in the program and their participation in procurement. She said the targets are industry-related, partner and specific groups. Ms. Lopez reported the disparity study found a significant gap between certification and procurement which they are hearing more and more from vendors. She explained this resulted in the Procurement Chats and their emphasis on telling vendors about the 5 procurement bulletin boards. Ms. Lopez stated they also showcase sister agencies who accept BEP certification such as McCormick Place and Chicago Public Schools. She noted their events have generated a lot of interest and that vendors like to see what agencies are buying, for instance she learned that DCFS is the largest purchaser of cribs. Ms. Lopez presented last week for the CCWIS system pre-bid meeting, where she helped them identify BEP vendors. She reported they had about 50 people via webinar and in person. She highlighted the certification webinars, which include trainings on how to complete the full, recognition, and no change affidavit applications. Ms. Lopez stated that until they have one for Fast Track certification, they have been asking those on the webinar training to raise their hands if they are certified by the City of Chicago or Cook County and then detailing the work-around for them for Fast Track certification. She said the vendor submits a copy of their certification letter and signed affidavit, which is then assigned to an analyst for processing.

Ms. Lopez outlined she has eight upcoming BEP Chats, in October there will be an exporting webinar, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce will be showcasing a few of their programs with [IDOT](#) (Illinois Department of Transportation), their [SBDCs](#) (Small Business Development Centers) and [PTAC](#) (Procurement Technical Assistance Centers), and they will speak either in Spanish or bilingual depending on the audience. Ms. Lopez said Ms. Mandeville is co-hosting two events with the Deputy Director of DCEO speaking on FastTrack. She reported they are co-hosting an event at Northeastern Illinois in partnership with Representative Delgado and Senator Aquino offered both in English and Spanish. Ms. Lopez demonstrated their Operational Review Report from January to today, revealing their partnerships with the Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council ([CMSDC](#)), Mr. Richie from the Department of Human Services and Christina from Bauman Saks 10,000 Businesses. She reported they have reached 1551 attendees in their webinars for the year and have made great strides with the virtual approach.

Chair DiMenco told Ms. Lopez that relative to where they were a year ago, this is great. She stated that one of the issues discussed at the last meeting was getting information out in time, asked if progress has been made, and what are the challenges she is facing. Ms. Lopez replied that there has

**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



been progress in in that these events are a priority for Director Forde, and they desire ideally a six-week lead time. She said the amount of work has become a little difficult but is not something that has been put aside. Ms. Mandeville explained that historically they have not had enough lead time but they are working on it, she prefers 12 weeks, the team has been working on getting together a quarterly calendar, they are working on being more intentional with their outreach efforts, and they realize that those in this meeting have recognition partnerships with them, so she is asking for their support to open doors where they have no access. Chair DiMenco stated that earlier notification will make it easier for them because they have to incorporate it into their publications. Ms. Mandeville asked if they have any drop-dead dates to their communications. Chair DiMenco stated theirs is one month.

Member Martinez said a lot of their virtual [CDB](#) (Capital Development Board) meetings have been successful, they are popular again because they have projects, and encouraged them to take advantage of Webex, who are the most effective because people don't have to travel anywhere. He noted that they have prime minority and women owned engineering and architectural firms who are being selected at a rate of 40% to 30% because CDB has work and they can complete. He said it takes these outreach efforts, being upfront, taking these anchor companies, asking them why they are not bidding as a prime and shame on them if they are not bringing a minority woman owned as a subcontractor.

Member Matthews suggested doing more forecasting and said her agency is starting an initiative where they can get at 6 months in advance to a year of the types of contracts vendors can count on and are going to try to do some marketing and build capacity. She stated that is one of their goals for this year and also to do training of all the 100+ procurement staff and hundreds of sites throughout the state in their agency. Member Matthews said they are going try to get them involved and the DEI movement will help.

Member Bautista said that one way they can drive publication of an opportunity is through social media and if Ms. Lopez tags DHR she will make sure to retweet her. He stated he has already shared with their PIO their commitment to fostering BEP events and said he will have someone email their handles to her. Member Bautista said they have a large circulation. He stated they hope to have electronic registration for vendors implemented by the end of the year so they can obtain their RDHR number and make the list available to Ms. Lopez around December-January. Member Bautista stated they want to create a list serv where members will have opt-in choices.

Ms. Lopez asked Member Bautista what happened to the policy that all vendors regardless of how many employees they have and wanting to do business with the State must be registered with IDHR. Member Bautista said he will ask their legal team if they have made a decision on that rule. He asked if there was anything they can do to identify who is ready to take that next step and target programming to them. He said the mentorship program would not replace what this is doing. On that point Member Matthews asked for the status of the Mentor Protégé Program. Chair DiMenco suggested they discuss the topic under new business. Member Matthews proposed that they meet more regularly because they have much more to attend to as Member Delano proclaimed to get them off the ground and moving. Chair DiMenco agreed but added that they need to get more done in between the meetings. She also suggested this topic be discussed under new business. Ms. Lopez thanked Member Martinez and his team for getting a lot of qualified vendors to BEP. She said his

**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



office contacts her daily to confirm the status of new certifications and if more agencies reached out to them to find qualified vendors or bring them into the system that would greatly increase participation in the program.

- **Update on Key Performance Indicators**

Chair DiMenco asked if they had any update on KPIs. Member Delano asked if they had not received the key indicators. Chair DiMenco confirmed they did not. No one had any updates. Chair DiMenco asked that they have them next time. Member Matthews noted that there was a KPI assigned to Outreach which she had discussed was unfair and perhaps more appropriately assigned as an administrative function or personnel. Member Delano agreed. Member Matthews stated it was the one that detailed how many contracts resulted from outreach. She said it is unfair and inappropriately assigned to Ms. Lopez because she has no control over procurement. Ms. Lopez replied that they must have taken the feedback into account because she hasn't had any conversations with Mr. Nolan about contracts resulting from outreach efforts. She said they are trying to find a way of capturing the number of vendors who enter the system as a result of outreach efforts. She reported that Mr. Nolan set up a way for her to go into the system daily to enter the number applications received. Chair DiMenco remarked that as Member Delano passionately stated earlier about accountability, they do need to memorialize in writing how they will hold themselves as the outreach subcommittee accountable. She said because their job is to help all of them to be successful and achieving the fundamental vision of this council. She stated they have to figure out the measures that work for them. Member Delano asked whether it was Mr. Kuchuris' team that were doing the key performance measures. Mr. Kuchuris stated they have working with Ms. Lopez on KPIs to track attendance, who from these events apply, and finally who is certified. Chair DiMenco said they will memorialize those in writing. Mr. Kuchuris commended the subcommittee for establishing accountability and KPIs for themselves. Chair DiMenco and Member Delano stated they should do that for the whole council.

V. Define Action Items

1. **Mentor Protégé Program;** Member Matthews stated that the Mentor Protégé Program would be a great marketing piece for them, attract more companies and be a reason for them to certify. She noted that the other piece they do not discuss is what to do with the almost 1800 they started out with before they started all these efforts. She pointed out they are the ones complaining they are not getting any work and said the Mentor Protégé Program would be good for them, to help them get where they can and inspire them to stay in the program. Member Matthews stated it's great they are bringing in new folks and they need to keep the ones they have and help them. She stated they are the ones at BEP meetings complaining they can't get any work, so that is why she would like to get that back on track and offer it to those who are already working with them. Member Matthews added she would like to be part of the group that sets up that program. She said they have to look at how to get the big primes to it, marketing, the selection process, and things like that. She noted they still don't have a director for that program, but they could help get that underway. Member Matthews

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



commented that a company doesn't want to be thought of as protégé and they should come up with a better name.

2. **Survey;** Mr. Kuchuris suggested a running survey of those vendors who have dropped out or did not get a contract. Chair DiMenco listed that they survey changes and people who don't renew their certification. She said item is to pull together a task force on how to work with these vendors either through the Mentor Protégé Program or some other curriculum to help them win contracts. Ms. Mandeville suggested they do both. Chair DiMenco agreed.
3. **Make opportunities more accessible;** Member Delano outlined there is a maze of actually accessing those opportunities. She said they discussed the 5 bulletins, Bid Buy, and IPG which they need to look at internally to streamline that system. She explained that she tried to do it herself so she could understand what their clients are going through and discovered that if she didn't know the system she couldn't make it. Member Delano stated that there are people abusing the system because they are in the know and those who just don't get it. She said maybe they could do an internal system to see how they can upgrade or improve it to make it more accessible.
4. **Curriculum to teach vendors how to pursue a contract;** Chair DiMenco added that every agency has its own process which is overwhelming for a smaller company to navigate. She stated that one of the things they do with federal contracts or City of Chicago is they have a curriculum that teaches which agency they are going to focus on and have them actually pursue a contract. Chair DiMenco added to what Member Matthews stated that doing it one on one, only reaches so many people but if you have a curriculum before you put them in the Mentor Protégé Program, they have a baseline to start with. She said the ideas presented today, getting more certified, reaching more but also getting more to bid on contracts and getting more wins are very critical in measuring success and they need to work towards it more linearly.
5. **Fast Track;** Member Matthews brought up an issue she said she brought up in the Compliance Subcommittee meeting and will bring it up in the Council meeting, that the Fast Tracking system is wonderful, however it only covers City of Chicago and Cook County and they have 101 counties. She said that some come from outside the state are used to systems and having the resources. She pointed out they still have those 1700 who were here with them and are saying they didn't get anything. Member Matthews stated the other thing is they can appear to be xenophobic because of where they are concentrating. She said she proposed a way to deal with this to Mr. Merchant 6 months ago before they knew about Fast Track. She stated they need to have a response and acknowledged that most of the protected classes are concentrated in Cook County but there are pockets in other areas. She said she assumes there is no legal angst that could be brought towards them. Member Matthews pointed out that this is the Outreach Subcommittee, she didn't even know about Fast Track, which is an innovative approach, but until she heard about Fast Track it was never discussed before it was put into the works.

Member Bautista asked for an explanation of Fast Track. Ms. Mandeville explained it is reciprocity, but they have recognition with other entities like the WBDC (Women's Business Development Center), Chicago Transit Authority and IDOT which have reduced paperwork

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



requirements while Fast Track has 2. She clarified that it is a review, not a full certification, including a signed affidavit attesting their good standing (a copy of their certification with the City of Chicago or Cook County) and stating their gross receipts for the year. She stated that it is only being done with City of Chicago and Cook County she believes because it was the low-hanging fruit not intended to alienate any parts of the state. Ms. Mandeville requested help getting access to other parts of the state and that if they have ideas about who they need to be connecting with, they need those intros, and that a warm handoff is better than a stray phone call from someone they may not know.

Chair DiMenco gave another example that if county accepts a city certification that counts towards their numbers, but it doesn't mean they are certified by the county. Ms. Mandeville confirmed that alternately Fast Track does mean they are certified with BEP but added that it is only good for a year. She said that true reciprocity is a dual flow back and forth. Member Martinez pronounced that he is very grateful for Fast Track and that it has helped CDB tremendously. He commented that the city and county vendor pool are a lot larger than CMS'.

Member Bautista asked that if when CMS chose to provide this privilege he assumes they determined those certification processes are reliable. Ms. Mandeville responded she would say yes. Member Bautista asked whether the only thing standing in the way of other entities participating in such a program is for them to call CMS or CMS reaching out to those target communities. Ms. Mandeville responded that they are actively exploring other entities to have either reciprocity or recognition agreements but one of the points of concern is whether their certification process gives them a level of comfort with the State's process is stricter than most.

Member Bautista reporting hearing some businesses are afraid of the Illinois process and some certify elsewhere knowing the state will accept it. He put forth that they should invite all these other certifying bodies to join the Fast Track program and that they would need to know the criteria they need to meet in order to be eligible. Member Bautista stated he believes they will reform and that there should be an audit process. He said he would like to see that as an initiative. Member Bautista said there are vendors in downstate and central Illinois he does not want to see left out and to also have them come partake in Chicago opportunities rather than having only Chicago vendors coming to downstate and central Illinois.

Ms. Lakhani stated she agreed the issue of rubber stamping is a concern of theirs. She said they currently want to start with entities who have enough in common with their certification procedures that they can move forward. Ms. Lakhani noted that this process just started a few months ago and understands that times are different. She pointed out that the federal judiciary landscape has changed quite a bit and not favorably towards programs like theirs and they want to avoid an unfavorable finding, so they have to make sure they are meeting the requirements they hold for BEP vendors. Ms. Lakhani explained this is like a pilot, they are looking to expand it, but have to learn to crawl before they run.

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



Member Delano stated she just wanted to make them aware that they may be double-counting which now may work for state funding but can be quite interesting when it comes to federal reporting and things like that. She said this could be a topic they return to at a later date and need to be conscious of.

VI. Open Action Items

- a. Chair DiMenco requested at least a draft of the minutes before full Council.
 - b. Discuss double-counting of certified vendors
- X. Upcoming Business Enterprise Council & Subcommittee meeting dates:**
- Next Council Meeting – Monday, October 26, 2020
 - Next Certification Subcommittee Meeting – Monday, November 23, 2020
 - Next Outreach Subcommittee Meeting – Tuesday, November 24, 2020
 - Next Compliance Subcommittee Meeting – Wednesday, November 25, 2020

VII. Public /Vendor Testimony

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

VIII. Adjournment

Member Delano moved to adjourn. Member Matthews seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.