



**MINORITY, WOMEN & EVANSTON BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (M/W/EBE)
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, January 20, 2021
5:00 P.M.
Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ald. Peter Braithwaite, Joshua Gutstein, Jessica Oldani, and Michael McLean, Nasutsa Mabwa, Jesus Vega, Ald. Robyn Simmons

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kemone Hendrick

STAFF PRESENT: Interim Admin. Services Director/CIO Luke Stowe, Purchasing Manager Tammi Nunez, Interim Deputy City Manager Sharon Johnson, and Management Analyst Tasheik Kerr

PRESIDING MEMBER: Ald. Braithwaite

1. Declaration of a Quorum

No quorum was present. Michael McLean called the meeting to order at 5:16 pm. Ald. Braithwaite motioned to suspend the rules to permit members to convene via virtual meeting. Second by Nasutsa Mabwa and approved 4-0 (roll call taken).

Jessica joined the meeting at 5:38 pm

Jesus joined the meeting at 5:31 pm

Ald. Simmons joined at 5:36 pm

2. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the Minutes as presented from November 18, 2020 made by Ald. Braithwaite and seconded by Nasutsa Mabwa. Motion passed unanimously 5-0 (roll call taken).

3. Guest Introduction:

Lisa Degliantoni, the founder of Evanston Made, stated she is seeking out events and opportunities for member creatives to take their businesses to market. Lisa inquired whether the Committee knows of partners that might need support/services provided by members of Evanston Made.

Michael McLean noted Evanston Made is having the type of events the Committee is interested in pursuing. Michael inquired about Evanston Made's plans, the organization's potential to expand, and challenges the organization face as it pertains to its events. Lisa responded that Evanston Made works with over 300 people. Evanston Made gets a lot of demand and has information on what people need as it pertains to small businesses and creatives.

Luke added that the parking division has received inquiries related to the uses of the City's garages. There might be opportunities to leverage underutilize garage spaces.

4. Old Business

A. Approval of the 2021 Meeting Schedule

Motion to approve the 2021 Meeting Schedule made by Ald. Braithwaite and seconded by Jesus Vega. Motion passed unanimously 6-0. (Roll call taken).

Meeting schedule approved as follows:

January 20, 2021
February 17, 2021
March 17, 2021
June 16, 2021
July 21, 2021
September 15, 2021
October 20, 2021
November 17, 2021

B. Evanston Procurement Vendor Event Update for 2021

Nasutsa noted the planning subcommittee discussed holding an event but did not conclude on the format or where to hold the event. Michael added the planning subcommittee discussed small business development and how to increase exposure for small businesses that do not have storefronts. Michael suggested the group develop strategies that do not require large gatherings. Michael also suggested investing in a technology that could get the message out. Ald. Braithwaite suggested the planning subcommittee considers holding the event next year.

Luke suggested moving forward with a "how to do business with the City of Evanston" video. Joshua suggested a series of two-minute videos. Tammi mentioned there was a suggestion to do a virtual event.

C. Final Follow Up for Alterations to the Website

Luke noted the City's website developer position is currently vacant. Luke provided a summary of the updates to the website. Luke mentioned the Evanston business registration website is being developed.

5. STAFF REPORTS

A. M/W/EBE and LEP Tracking

Sharon Johnson mentioned the Water Quality Lab Project, budgeted at 1.4 million, was at 26%. As of March, the project decreased to 11%. Sharon surmised there might have been double counts of other programs associated with the project. There were two Evanston residents on the project.

The 2020 year ended with 36% subcontractor diversity reach against a target of 25%.

Transactions in the LEP Penalty Fund as of 12.31.2020 are as follows:

- There were a total of seventeen ED Entrepreneurial Small business invoices in the amount of \$39,231 that impacted the LEP account for Sept 2020. No additional activity after Sept.
- One LEP penalty amount for \$3,760.00 was credited from Amber Mechanical Contractors for the Chandler Newberger Phase 2 project.
- One invoice from Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse in Oct. was deducted from the account in the amount of \$6,268.50 and Albion Developers contributed \$50,000 to the Local Employment Program.
- Previous LEP Balance was \$19,592.00 / Year End Balance is \$73,352.59 as of Dec 31st Renovation

Sharon reviewed the Local Employment Program status of the Robert Crown Community Center.

6. New Business

2021 Committee Goals / Outlook Discussion

1. **Apprentice Program with ERW**
Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse is merging with Rebuilding Exchange in Chicago. The company plans to focus on sustainability, workforce training, and environmental education.
2. **Under 20K Spend for Local Economy**
Ald. Braithwaite shared that staff is looking into where the City spends funds that are under \$20,000 and that there might be opportunities for the City to procure services locally.
3. **Racial Equity Review for Minority / Women / Evanston Based Businesses**
Sharon suggested the Committee considers incorporating a racial equity framework into its meetings and decisions to enhance programs and services.
4. **Miscellaneous**
Luke provided an update on the V-Link software platform. This platform would allow large buyers to conduct a search on what is available locally and to compare prices. Luke noted the company has met with some Evanston-based organizations.

Michael McLean inquired whether there are incentives for businesses that enter this platform to hire and source locally. Nasutsa noted this platform is best suited for retailers, not businesses that provide services or franchises. Jessica added that the need for this platform was to enable contractors to find subcontractors and for all Evanston businesses to be searchable and identifiable. Jessica noted this platform may not provide sole proprietors the option to advertise their services. Ald. Simmons mentioned that In-Stores has a platform that meets the needs of some businesses. Ald. Simmons requested the Committee get a presentation from In-Store. Nasutsa added that the fee structure of some of the platforms may be prohibitive. Nasutsa suggested having one platform instead of multiple platforms. Michael suggested the Committee considers an Angies List type of platform.

Ald. Simmons inquired about the categorization of the City's BIDs and RFPs. Tammi responded that the City provides a quarterly list of available BIDs and RFPs. Ald. Braithwaite inquired about the City's purchasing software. Tammi provided an overview of the purchasing process.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

No other Business

8. Adjournment

Nasutsa motion to adjourn, seconded by Ald. Simmons. Motion carried unanimously 5-0 (roll call taken). Meeting ended at 6:27 pm.