

**MINUTES OF THE NASSAU COUNTY MINORITY AFFAIRS COUNCIL**  
**JANUARY 13, 2020**

The meeting of the Nassau County Minority Affairs Council was held on Monday, January 13, 2020 at approximately 6:30 pm in the First Floor Conference Room at One West St, Mineola, New York.

The following members were present at the meeting:

Nadine Burnett, Acting Chairperson  
Isma Chaudhry  
Gabriela Guzman, Secretary  
Kyle Rose-Louder  
Arthur Vernon  
Debra Wheat-Williams

The following members were absent at the meeting:

Charles Dickens  
MelRose Corley  
William Watson

Upon determining that a quorum was present, the Acting Chairperson Nadine called the meeting to order and welcomed the board members.

Acting Chairperson Nadine led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Secretary Gabriela called the roll.

First, upon a motion made by Arthur Vernon and duly seconded by Isma Chaudhry and Gabriela Guzman, the council members voted unanimously to adopt the agenda of the meeting of the governing body of Nassau County Minority Affairs Council of January 13, 2020.

The presentation from the Commissioner of Department of Public Works, Kenneth G. Arnold, P.E. and the Administrative Officer, Elizabeth Kobel is an effort from the council to understand how the County performs procurement services to the community. The following is an overview given by the Commissioner of Department of Public Works, Kenneth G. Arnold, P.E.:

**Department of Public Works**

The Department of Public Works (DPW) handles public bid contracts and professional services. The public bid contracts are awarded to the lowest bid. The professional services contract is given to the best value. There are two areas of contracts DWP handles: capital work and maintenance work.

**Capital Work**

- MWBE, DBE, and SDVOB are given based on the funds and best efforts.
- Best efforts means there needs to be proof of who did they talk to, what they told you and work with Office of Minority Affairs (OMA). OMA is invited to all pre-construction meetings.
- Registered vendors are able to see everything in the portal. Any bidder should separate the proposal and the technical package first in order to understand if the vendor can perform or do the job. Any subcontractor can see who is taking the bids on the job and can call that contractor directly. Every week the bid list gets updated to connect with the bidder.
- Professional services is more technical, you can get more contracts because of the connection.
- State projects have project specific goals. For example, the Bay Park Sewage Plant has an aspirational goal of 20%.

The current expenses on MWBE is \$93 million out of \$660 million.

- The challenge is county funded money – less number of MWBE, DBE, and SDVOB firms because there is no goal established yet.
- DPW holds meetings with prime contractors and minority vendors as a networking opportunity to encourage the initiative of increasing the participation. The administration requests DPW to hold meetings, for example, the Matrimonial Court had an attendance of approximately 11%.
- State funded projects must meet MWBE, DBE, and SDVOB goals. In the case of a prime contractor not being able to meet these goals, the county will withhold payment.
- Payments are not performed promptly. Minority firms are unable to work on late payments and required capital funding to do the work. There is a new claim payment system to track better how much work MWBE firms do. For example, the winner bidder for the Policy Academy project is WBE.
- The reason why the County does not have MWBE, DBE, and SDVOB goals is due to not having a Disparity Study.

#### Maintenance Work

- The bid process is through purchaser.
- The County funds these type of contracts. There are good faith efforts. Part of the contract requirement is an Apprenticeship Program.
  - The Apprenticeship Program must be state approved. There must be a Project Labor Agreement. More education is required for subcontractors to understand what the Apprenticeship Program is. The contractor and subcontractor must have one approved by the state, mainly anything that deals with construction with skill trades like carpenters, electricians, and plumbers. The union is doing the hiring and sending the workers for training at specific locations, which may be hard to get to for some. The Apprenticeship Program was established during the Suozzi's administration and was amended to include graduates during the Mangano's administration. It is a COUNTY law.

#### County Work

- County employees handle this area and sometime even have a Community Benefit Agreement for certain projects.

DPW must also meet goals for the Federal Transportation Administration. In 2019 DPW was shy of their goals, for 2020 is in a good place. DPW is not managing the HUB project. The HUB project has a union requirement, not an apprenticeship program, and Kenneth is not aware of the MWBE requirements. The Community Benefit Agreement will be used to represent the community.

The council discussed with DPW options to participate with unions to train locally and use locations such as Nassau County Community College or BOCES to assist. As of today, any contract must have a NYS Apprenticeship Program (COUNTY LAW), the county legislature can change that law. Each town has an apprenticeship law as well. DPW can benefit from OMA to assist in educating contractors and subcontracts about the Apprenticeship Program and bonding.

On the professional services side, the firms are selected based on qualitative characteristics. Best technical firm gets the job. A company must have a resume, experience and productivity as part of County policy. There is no latitude for a start-up to get work with the county. Majority of the time a firm will win the contract for professional services if they have good resumes, have performed similar projects, staff, technical proposal and size of the firm.

DWP handles all the construction for all county projects as far as buildings go. The grounds and maintenance work for County projects is handled by the Department of Parks, Recreation & Museums. Nassau Inter-County Express (NICE) and Nassau University Medical Center (NUMC) bid out their own work, DPW has no relation to manage their projects. The Court buildings are managed by New York State and the jails are maintained by the Correctional Office and any capital work is done by DPW. The Department of Transportation has specific goals based on the population. The last administration was looking at this and did no work. Legislature does allow project specific goals.

In addition to the presentation, DPW shared documents with the council: PowerPoint presentation, the New York State Contract Reporter printout for open ads, and a bidder's list sample.

## Executive Director Lionel Chitty's Report

Upcoming events are:

- Black History Month on February 26, 2020
- Event with the Department of Human Services Office of Youth Services pending date.

Strategic Plan:

1. Increasing participation of MWBE and SDVOB countywide, education, and outreach.
2. Job development, cross training and affordable housing
3. Cultural awareness and diversity inclusion.

Executive Director Lionel informed the council the Office of Minority Affairs has launched an MWBE application to self-certify, and search query for reporting purposes. The Diversity Study is still in progress to choose the vendor. A proposal's conference was held and ten (10) businesses attended. Five (5) questions were submitted and the responses are due on January 31, 2020. The award date is scheduled for February 28, 2020. The Disparity Study is being handled by Deputy County Executive Evelyn Tsimis, Deputy Director Regina Williams, Executive Director Lionel Chitty and the Procurement Office. Executive Director Lionel will be the project manager for both counties, Nassau and Suffolk, during the disparity study. A historical data of MWBE lists must be reviewed and updated to make sure businesses are active.

Executive Director Lionel stated two new positions were filled by Victoria Roberts as Program Supervisor, and Lynne Poole as Special Assistant. In total, there are six (6) employees in the Office of Minority Affairs at this time. No report was provided in this meeting for the total number of certifications from December 10, 2019 up-to-date. The year-to-date data is still pending.

Executive Director Lionel expressed his view upon a question asked of his first 100 days in office by a council member. The most difficult challenge has been completing a significant game plan, solidifying the strategic plan, and proper staffing.

Acting Chairperson Nadine stated that the next item on the agenda was to adopt and vote on posting the Minutes of the Office of Minority Affairs Council meeting on December 9, 2019 for the public. A motion was moved by Arthur Vernon and duly seconded by Gabriela Guzman to adopt and post the minutes for public viewing for the meeting held on December 9, 2019 with all the necessary corrections. The motion carried unanimously.

Acting Chairperson Nadine stated that "**Old Business**"- **Item 8a** Working Groups to update on meetings held in December 2019. No updates were provided at this meeting. All Working Groups should meet at their own schedule: **Working Group 1 – Goals and Objectives, Working Group 2 – Research Team, Working Group 3 – Office of Minority Affairs History, and Working Group 4 – Bylaws and/or work with resolutions.** Council members are getting a lot of information and understanding the Office of Minority Affairs mandates by getting the briefings of other County departments. Previously, the council had the Procurement Office's presentation on December 9, 2019, Department of Public Works on January 13, 2020, and the next presentation is Parks, Recreation & Museums scheduled on February 10, 2020.

Acting Chairperson Nadine stated that the next item on the agenda was to inform the council of the need to re-organize the Minority Affairs Council leadership. Secretary Gabriela Guzman announced to the council she will not be able to continue to be part of the Minority Affairs Council within the next few months. Kyle Rose-Louder informed the council Deputy County Executive for Government Relations and Communications Mike Santoramo is in charge of seeking government council members and getting legislative input for some appointments. Executive Director Amy Flores from Office of Hispanic Affairs already submitted two names and is waiting for more. Mike Santoramo is already working on several council appointments throughout the County agencies.

**Public Comments:**

Marc Rigueur – Huntington, NY

**Public Announcements:**

- Arthur Vernon reminded the council members of the following events for 2020:
  - January 19, 2020, *Interfaith Service* at the Second Baptist Church in 2050 Grand Ave, Baldwin, NY 11510.
  - January 20, 2020, *Annual Scholarship Awards Luncheon* on Dr. Martin Luther King's holiday at the Long Island Marriott 101 James Doolittle Blvd, Uniondale, NY 11553. There is a \$75.00 cost for a ticket.

The next public meeting will be held on Monday, February 10, 2020 at 6:15 pm at the First Floor Conference Room at One West Street, Mineola, NY. There will be a special presentation of the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation & Museums Department Eileen Krieb to the council.

There being no further business, upon a motion made by Arthur Vernon and duly seconded by Debra Wheat-Williams the council members voted unanimously the meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Gabriela Guzman  
Secretary

**Revision Date:**

**Voted On:** Monday, February 10, 2020