



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD - DEIA+ TASK FORCE

Joint Subcommittee of the Labor Committee & Justice and Social Services Committee
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois

MINUTES – Approved as Distributed on September 23, 2024

DATE: Tuesday, August 20, 2024
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Shields-Carter Meeting Room
Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana, IL 61802

Committee Members:

Present	Absent
Benjamin Beaupre	Donald Owen
Jason Benda	
Barb Bressner	
John Farney	
Akua Forkua-Sekyere	
Jacqueline Kalipeni	
Cecelia Phillips	
Kathleen Robbins	
Jilmala Rogers	
Heather Rumble	
Irene Weathersby	

Others Present: Michelle Jett (Director of Administration), Samantha Carter (County Board Chair), and Megan Robison (Recording Secretary)

Agenda Items

I. Call to Order

Chair Rogers called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

II. Roll Call

A verbal roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum

MOTION by Mr. Benda to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Farney. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

IV. Public Participation

Aaron Ammons, County Clerk, spoke about diversity being a major issue his entire life and listed his qualifications for speaking about diversity. He mentioned County Board Resolution No. 4872 Endorsing an Economic Development Policy from 2004, it has been twenty years since that resolution was passed and he believes the County still has a lot of work to do. This is an economic discussion for him, and he wants to see the group that he represents, the African American Community, have access to all the

same opportunities. He mentioned the current County building projects not having diversity goals. Mr. Ammons wanted to impress upon the Task Force that diversity, equity and inclusion goes beyond staff and should include vendors and contractors.

Patrick Thompson, President/Owner of VEYA Inc., gave some background on his construction company and his work around diversity. He is here to talk about minority contracting and he believes that his company would not be used if the state didn't have diversity goals on their projects. The State of Illinois has an Equity and Inclusion Program, and he would like to see the County adopt this program as other municipalities have done.

Antwuan Neely, local contractor, listed some of the projects he has worked on in the area. He wanted to share the idea of "if we build it, they will come" because most people only go where they feel welcome. He shared a variety of ways to focus on diversity. He would love to be included in the conversations on ways to grow a diverse program.

V. Communications

Chair Rogers asked the members to go around the room and introduce themselves.

VI. New Business

A. Mission/purpose for Task Force

Chair Rogers read a statement about the mission/purpose for the task force members.

B. County Purchasing Policy and RFP Process Overview

Ms. Jett gave a brief overview of the County's purchasing policy and why they are required to complete the RFP process. She showed them an example of an RFP and what sections this Task Force will need to complete. She suggested the members begin thinking about their immediate expectations they want from a company. Then she moved on to the evaluation of any proposals they receive because this Task Force will be creating the grading tool. She showed an example form, different items that can be included and explained how the scoring of each company would work.

Mr. Benda asked about the differences between an RFP and an RFQ. Ms. Jett explained that she is using the term RFP as a general term and the Task Force could decide if this would be better suited as an RFQ (Request for Qualifications). He also asked some clarifying questions about the grading tool and Ms. Jett explained that her example was very basic, and the Task Force would be able to control how the evaluation is written and completed, and then would have a larger discussion about the scores before a company is chosen.

Ms. Rogers asked if vendors and contractors could be included in this process. Ms. Jett stated that it could be included, explaining they could write a section that is geared more toward staff and another that is geared towards vendor contracting diversity.

Ms. Carter would like to add a contractor as a member of the Task Force and would like to see the County hire a DEIA Officer. Both of these items would be done by resolution of the County Board.

C. Necessary Resources

Mr. Farney and Ms. Robbins would like to see examples of other RFP's that were written for DEI work.

Ms. Carter had originally asked for someone from the City of Champaign Diversity Equity and Inclusion Department to be on this Task Force. Ms. Jett explained that due to time constraints they were not able to be a member, but they are willing to come and give a presentation.

Ms. Kalipeni suggested they explore what the State of Illinois has in place, as suggested in public comment.

D. Next Steps

Mr. Farney suggested the next meeting should be used as a study session to see what others have written into their RFP's.

Mr. Benda reminded everyone they are charged with presenting an RFP to the County Board at their December meeting. He also emphasized the statement made in public comment about a welcoming environment and believes that is the end goal for this process.

Ms. Kalipeni requested the statistics for the County building projects that were mentioned in public participation. Ms. Jett will be gathering the Project Labor Agreements, statistics from the building projects and the annual statistics from all vendors.

Ms. Carter suggested contacting Larry Ivory and Will Kyles as they are great resources and she shared that she does not like the deadline as it takes a lot of time to gather all of the information. Ms. Jett explained that if the Task Force needs more time, they can extend the deadline out further.

Task Force members agreed they would like to review information at their next meeting and then have presentations at the following meeting.

Ms. Rogers asked for information about the bidding and recruitment processes along with additional information about Resolution No. 4872.

VII. Other Business

A. Date of next meeting

The Task Force members discussed the dates they will be unavailable next month. The clerk will try to work around those dates and find a date for the next meeting in September.

VIII. Chair's Report

None

IX. Adjournment

Chair Rogers adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.