City of Schenectady
Affirmative Action Advisory Board
MINUTES
City Hall, Room 106

April 21, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dave Chetram, Vice Chair
Ellie Pepper, Secretary
Kanema Haynes
Adriel Linyear

MEMBERS ABSENT: Hector Ramirez, Chair; Jennifer Eaddy-Garvin, Rev. Arnetta Dix

ALSO PRESENT: Councilwoman Marion Porterfield

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:17pm by Vice Chair, Dave Chetram.

Approval of Minutes: The March 2016 minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve, Kanema Haynes, second by Adriel Linyear. Accepted by unanimous vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

Annual Report:
Board members agreed that the public meeting held on April 19th to present the report to the community went well. We received comments and suggestions from those in attendance. We discussed the following comments and suggestions:

- The Board should reach out to Schenectady School District regarding their recent review of affirmative action and development of policies. This could be useful as an example of best practices.
- City of Schenectady Firefighters need to be certified paramedics. This is different from most fire departments where the required certification is as an EMT. Paramedic certification is more difficult and restricts applicant eligibility, especially given that the certification is not offered locally.
- The city requires all who bid on construction work be able to bond themselves for the full amount of the contract. This is impossible for MWBE firms that are small or new and trying to grow. NYS OGS allows for a waiver of this requirement on state contracts with MWBE firms. We discussed the possibility of this being done in some form for city contracts with MWBE firms. Participants also suggested that MWBE goals be included in the contracts.

We discussed ideas for addressing the issues brought up at the public meeting:

- Bonding for contracts for smaller MWBE- Is this a role that MCTAP could fill?
- It will be important for the city to earmark advertising funds to get the word out particularly around public service job openings.
- Is there any possibility that SCCC would consider offering a paramedic certification course.

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It will be difficult for the board to go forward with any specific recommendations before receiving the promised response to our report from the mayor. The main recommendation is that the city hire a dedicated Affirmative Action Manager. Councilwoman Porterfield reported that the city is seriously considering it for the upcoming CDBG funding year.

Board Vacancies:
The Board has not received any update as to the status of appointment by the mayor.

Committee Reports:
MWBE- None
Anti-Discrimination- None
Recruitment and Hiring- None

NEW BUSINESS:

Board members discussed sending a Letter to the Editor of the Daily Gazette pointing out the lack of coverage of the annual report or the public meeting. Ellie Pepper will write a first draft for the board to review and edit. As Chair, Hector Ramirez will then submit in for publication.

Densel Morris of Miracle on Craig Street has requested a letter of support for the project. Board members discussed and agreed that although the project is laudable, it is not suitable for the board to provide a letter of support.

Annual Goals:
This item is tabled until the board receives formal response from the mayor.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Affirmative Action Advisory Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 19th @ 6:00pm.

Submitted by Ellie Pepper

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