



Minutes

Legal and Regular Meeting of the SEDD DBE Expansion Committee

March 2, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

A meeting of the DBE Expansion Committee of the Southside Economic Development District was held on Thursday, March 2, 2023, in Room 117 of Stubbs Hall on the ULM Campus at 10 a.m.

Present were: Tony Little, Roosevelt Wright, Jr.

Absent was: Preston Hopkins

Community Advisory members present were: Rev. Elijah Brass, III, Robert Jordan, Aalaya Cooper, Mrs. Jackie Slack, and Sonya Jacobs, the SEDD consultant.

Councilman Carday Marshall was in attendance.

There was a quorum.

After an invocation by Rev. Brass, Mrs. Jacobs gave an update on the SEDD DBE grant application. She said the grant writer has prepared the application and is securing endorsement letters from various representatives. The application is for \$3 million over four years through the Minority Business Development Agency, with the initial \$750,000 expected in the fall of this year if approved.

The grant being sought is made possible through the Biden Administration Cares Act to train DBEs to receive certification, get licenses, and other particulars.

The deadline for submission was originally February 28, 2023, but has been extended to March 7th by the agency, and the number of recipients has quadrupled, increasing SEDD's application approval option.

She reported that the program, if funded, will be housed in the 1711 Arizona Street facility. Initially, an RFP for roof repair will go out in about two weeks. Advertisements for the RFP will run in the Monroe Dispatch, Free Press, and the Newsstar for three weeks. Additional funding for the renovation is being pursued. The goal is to begin renovating the Arizona facility by the 4th quarter of this year.

Since the grant goes directly to a government entity such as SEDD, a consortium is being formed to meet the granting specifications that will be under SEDD control.

Mr. Little noted that if approved, the grant will make it possible to provide 30 capital opportunities and assist 200 new startups in developing partnerships that will help them become sustainable.

Mr. Little led a discussion about setting up a series of mixer meetings with major Southside stakeholders in which we hear their concerns and expansion plans and seek ways for SEDD to help them. The mixer meetings will be coordinated through the DBE consultant in cooperation with other business groups.

Mr. Marshall commended the committee and said, "the more we gel," there will be greater understanding SEDDs' work. He cited several areas and businesses that can be helped if the committee is successful in its work.

After 1:17 minutes of deliberation, the meeting adjourned.