



Minutes

Of DBE Expansion Committee of the Southside Economic Development District in Legal and Regular Session in the ULM Campus Stubbs Hall Room 219, 700 University Avenue, 71201.

April 13, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

A meeting of the DEB Expansion Committee was held on April 13, 2023, at 10 a.m. in room 219 of Stubbs Hall on the ULM Campus.

Committee members present were: Tony Little and Roosevelt Wright, Jr.

Absent was Mr. Preston Hopkins. Advisory committee members present were: Rev. Elijah Brass and Robert Jordan. Mrs. Jackie Slacks was absent. Also present were: Aalaya Cooper (Assistant to Ms. Jacobs) and Mrs. Betty Ward Cooper.

There was a quorum.

Rev. Elijah Brass gave a prayer.

Chairman Little gave an overview of the committee's function and welcome Mrs. Cooper. He queried support for a revision in the committee's meeting schedule from the Thursday before SEDD regular meetings to two weeks prior. It was decided by common consent to continue our current schedule for the short term.

Grant Application update:

Ms. Aalaya Cooper dialed in Dr. Dorothy Naim, who gave an update on the Dreams grant application. Dr. Naime told the committee the original \$3 million application was scaled down to avoid a local match requirement. She notified us that the Dreams application was submitted on March 10, 2023, and we should be informed whether we are approved by July, with operations to begin in October.

She also reported that the number of applicants that will be funded has been expanded to 231, meaning that the SEDD application has an improved chance of funding.

She explained the grant would assist new businesses and expand opportunities for existing businesses with a loan assistance capacity.

Update on the renovation of the Arizona complex.

Ms. Aalaya Cooper, on behalf of JDS Consulting, explained the process used to get bid quotes from qualified contractors for the roof. She said JDS contacted businesses in state and local databases that were licensed for roof work. The consultant received two bid quotes, one of which was submitted after the deadline. JDS recommends that the quote of R.K Contractors for roof work which includes architectural shingles and trusses for a pitched roof. Their bid is \$48,399. They require a 72-hour notice before they begin. Ms. Cooper noted R.K. Contractors is a minority-owned company.

Mr. Jordan gave insights on the strengths and weaknesses of types of shingles and shared input that Rev. Brass echoed.

It was moved by Mr. Wright and seconded by Mr. Little that the R.K Contractors bid be recommended to the SEDD board for approval. The motion carried.

Mr. Little led a discussion about setting up a series of meetings with major Southside stakeholders about expansion plans, needs, and concerns. He said many businesses are successful in their own right but work independently of others; SEDD plans to help them network and work together.

Stake Holder collaboration event: May 5, 2023

Ms. Aalaya Cooper noted the JDS is planning a small business and stakeholder collaboration with SEDD and the Black Chamber of Commerce that will be held at the African-American Museum on Friday, May 5, 2023, at 6 p.m. Its purpose is to promote networking among businesses and to identify companies to participate in a focus group that will be asked to identify needs and methods for future business initiatives. She said there are about 60 sponsors for the event.

Mr. Wright asked whether the collaboration event was a SEDD-sponsored event; Ms. Cooper said it was a collaboration between the Chamber and all stakeholders.

Mr. Little closed the meeting by noting that there are many businesses in the community, but they work independently. He said SEDD's goal is to help them network together.

After 50 minutes of deliberation and discussion, the meeting adjourned.