

**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
OFFICE OF EQUAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY (OEBO)
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

**WEDNESDAY
8:30 A.M.**

**50 SOUTH MILITARY TRAIL
WEST PALM BEACH, FL**

MEMBERS:

Juan Pagan, Chair
Christine Roberts-Kelly, Vice Chair
Denise Albritton
Lorna Anderson
Amy Angelo
Kati Cassiani
Clementine Fleuranvil
Ilan Kottler
Robert Lesko
Courtney Newell
Doris Pastl
Jacqueline Ramirez
Bob Schafer
Seabron Smith
Javin Walker

COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Nicole Davis, Contract Analyst, OEBO
Tonya Davis Johnson, Division Director V, OEBO
Megan Harp, Administrative Assistant II, OEBO
Antonia Smith, Outreach and Public Information Coordinator, OEBO

PRESENT VIA WEBEX:

Deirdre Kyle, Small Business Development Specialist III, OEBO
Theresa Lawrence, Small Business Development Specialist I, OEBO
Richard Sena, Assistant County Attorney I

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE STAFF PRESENT:

Jillian Zalewska, Deputy Clerk

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Lorna Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

a. Roll Call and Introduction of Guests

Ms. Harp called the roll.

Present: Denise Albritton, Lorna Anderson, Kati Cassiani, Courtney Newell, Juan Pagan, Doris Pastl, Christine Roberts-Kelly, Bob Schafer, and Seabron Smith

Absent: Amy Angelo, Clementine Fleuranvil, Jacqueline Ramirez, and Javin Walker

Via Webex: Ilan Kottler and Robert Lesko

Mr. Sena reminded the committee that there needed to be a finding of extraordinary circumstances for remote participation, and this would require approval by the members attending in-person.

MOTION to allow remote participation due to extraordinary circumstances. Motion by Juan Pagan, seconded by Seabron Smith, and carried 9-0.

b. Adoption of Agenda for September 18, 2024

MOTION to adopt the September 18, 2024, agenda. Motion by Seabron Smith, seconded by Juan Pagan, and carried 11-0.

c. Approval of July 17, 2024, Minutes

MOTION to approve the July 17, 2024, minutes. Motion by Denise Albritton, seconded by Christine Roberts-Kelly, and carried 11-0.

Ms. Harp noted a correction to the members list in the May 15, 2024, minutes.

II. Committee Member Update

Chair and Vice Chair Vote

Ms. Anderson opened the floor to nominations.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Javin Walker joined the meeting remotely via Webex.)

MOTION to allow Javin Walker to participate remotely due to extraordinary circumstances. Motion by Juan Pagan, seconded by Seabron Smith, and carried 11-0.

Mr. Smith nominated Christine Roberts-Kelly for the position of committee chair.

Ms. Newell nominated Juan Pagan for the position of committee chair.

Ms. Davis Johnson closed the floor to nominations.

Ms. Roberts-Kelly declined the nomination for chair.

Mr. Pagan accepted the nomination.

BY WAY OF A ROLL CALL VOTE, the appointment of Juan Pagan as committee chair carried 12-0.

Ms. Roberts-Kelly accepted the nomination for vice chair.

BY WAY OF A ROLL CALL VOTE, the appointment of Christine Roberts-Kelly as committee vice chair carried 12-0.

Ms. Davis Johnson stated that Mr. Pagan and Ms. Roberts-Kelly would serve as chair and vice chair for the remainder of the meeting. She thanked Mr. Walker, the outgoing chair, and Ms. Anderson, the outgoing vice chair, for their service to the committee.

Ms. Davis Johnson stated that Ms. Albritton, Ms. Angelo, Ms. Newell, and Ms. Pastl were approaching the expiration of their terms on the committee. She reported that candidates had been nominated to fill the upcoming vacancies in Seats 5, 9, and 14.

On behalf of OEBO, Ms. Davis Johnson presented a certificate of appreciation to Ms. Pastl.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Jacqueline Ramirez joined the meeting.)

Ms. Davis Johnson stated that Ms. Ramirez had been appointed to serve in Seat 12.

III. Old Business

a. Outreach Activity Report

Ms. Antonia Smith provided an overview of events outlined in the outreach activity report and discussed several upcoming events.

b. Small Business Certification Report

Ms. Davis summarized the information provided in the vendor status report.

IV. New Business

a. Recertification Sub-Committee Report

Ms. Pastl and Mr. Pagan discussed the vendors they had contacted and the outcomes of their communications.

Ms. Pastl noted that the vendors appreciated receiving the calls.

Mr. Pagan stated that he had invited the vendors to attend the committee meetings.

Ms. Davis Johnson requested that the committee vote to approve the 2025 meeting schedule, which was included in the agenda packet.

MOTION to approve the 2025 meeting schedule. Motion by Seabron Smith, seconded by Christine Roberts-Kelly, and carried 12-0.

V. Committee Member Comments

Mr. Smith discussed a program that enabled individuals to become eligible for a \$10,000 small business loan by participating in a workshop and earning a certificate. He also informed the members that the 2025 Shining Stars Awards Gala would take place on June 14th at the Indian Spring Country Club.

Ms. Newell thanked the committee for allowing her to serve and said that she would continue to support their efforts.

Ms. Anderson requested that the committee consider establishing payment protections for small businesses. She discussed her experience having difficulty obtaining payment from a prime contractor.

Ms. Davis Johnson spoke about the Construction Contract Prompt Payment Law in the Florida Statutes. She said that OEBO would take action to ensure that subcontractors knew how to contact OEBO if they needed assistance.

Ms. Pastl thanked the committee for allowing her to serve. She also recommended that Ms. Roberts-Kelly be selected to chair the Recertification Sub-Committee.

Ms. Roberts-Kelly thanked the committee for appointing her as vice chair and said that she would be happy to chair the Recertification Sub-Committee. She also reminded the members of a requirement that businesses submit a beneficial ownership information form to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network.

Ms. Cassiani thanked Mr. Walker and Ms. Anderson for their service as chair and vice chair. She also responded to Ms. Anderson's comments by discussing the process utilized by the City of West Palm Beach to ensure that subcontractors received payment.

Ms. Davis Johnson explained that Palm Beach County contracted with prime contractors and that subcontractor payments did not appear within the contract management system.

Ms. Albritton thanked the committee and spoke about her experience serving as a member. She said that she would continue to advocate for small businesses.

Ms. Ramirez stated that she was honored to represent the Small Business Development Center on the committee.

Mr. Schafer stated that delayed payments to prime contractors by the County contributed to the issue of subcontractors not receiving payments. He encouraged subcontractors to communicate with the County regarding remuneration issues.

Mr. Pagan spoke about a discussion with a vendor who was not being awarded bids due to a lack of experience.

In response to Mr. Pagan's comments, Ms. Cassiani offered her assistance. Ms. Davis Johnson stated that any vendor who bid on a project and was not awarded could request a debriefing session with his or her OEBO specialist.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Ms. Cassiani left the meeting.)

Mr. Walker congratulated the new chair and vice chair. He thanked Ms. Anderson for serving as vice chair and thanked Ms. Newell, Ms. Albritton, and Ms. Pastl for their service on the committee. He also said that he wished to assist with establishing a procedure for ensuring that subcontractors were properly remunerated.

Ms. Davis Johnson noted that Mr. Lesko had left the meeting.

Mr. Kottler thanked the committee for the opportunity to serve and said that he looked forward to participating.

VI. Director's Comments

Ms. Davis Johnson thanked the members whose terms were expiring and welcomed Mr. Kottler and Ms. Ramirez to the committee. She also noted that Ms. Fleuranvil had been reappointed.

Ms. Davis Johnson stated that the OEBO ordinance would undergo a slight revision to conform with recent changes to the Purchasing ordinance. She said that a stakeholders meeting would be held before the proposed amendments were presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). She also discussed a workshop that Planning, Zoning and Building was hosting the next day at the Kravis Center and stated that the annual Palm Beach Partner's Business Matchmaker Conference & Expo would take place on Friday, September 20th, at the Kravis Center.

Ms. Davis Johnson said that OEBO would continue to submit quarterly reports. The department was preparing to present the fourth quarter report and would then submit the annual report to the BCC. Finally, she congratulated Mr. Pagan and Ms. Roberts-Kelly

and said that they would be provided with information about their duties as outlined in the ordinance.

VII. Assistant County Attorney's Comments

Mr. Sena welcomed the new committee members and thanked the individuals whose terms were expiring. He reminded the members that a description of the committee's duties could be found in Sec. 2-80.28 of the Code of Ordinances. Mr. Sena noted that one of the committee's responsibilities was to present an annual report to the BCC.

VIII. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

IX. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Seabron Smith, seconded by Courtney Newell, and carried 10-0.

At 9:43 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.