



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE UNEMPLOYMENT TASK FORCE

**ALD. ASHANTI HAMILTON, CO-CHAIR AND ALD. TONY
ZIELINSKI, CO-CHAIR**

**Deborah Blanks, Sedgwick Daniels, Ald. Joe Davis, Joe
Fahey, Pam Fendt, Curt Harris, Wendell Harris, Ralph
Hollmon, Carl Jaskolski, Ossie Kendrix, Marc Levine, Arturo
Martinez, Gerard Randall, Michael Rosen, Tim Sheehy, Julia
Taylor, McArthur Weddle, Lenard Wells and Ken Wheeler**

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Tuesday, September 28, 2010

12:00 PM

Room 303, City Hall

Meeting convened: 12:10 P.M.

*Members excused: Ralph Hollmon, Marc Levine, Ken Wheeler, Wendell Harris,
Gerard Randall, and Julia Taylor*

1. Review and approval of the minutes of the Sept. 14th meeting.

*Mr. Wells moved, seconded by Mr. Rosen, for approval of the minutes. There were
no objections.*

**2. Suggestions from members relating to solutions to African American male
unemployment.**

*Edward McDonald and Fred Royal, Social Development Commission, spoke on the
Build Milwaukee Initiative. This initiative would potentially create 11,000 jobs and
involves about 35 individuals and organization. The jobs would be created on
Milwaukee's north side (60th St. on the north, the river on the east, Burleigh St. on
the west and Highland Ave. on the south). Forty percent of the funding would
come from existing finance and grant apparatuses at the state/county/city levels and
60% from federal funds. He would be willing to do a PowerPoint presentation at the
next meeting and can provide some information to Ms. Elmer. It can then be
reviewed by the body prior to its next meeting in two weeks. He can also provide
information on the Mason-Tillman Act to Ms. Elmer prior to the next meeting, which
has been successful in bringing in jobs to other cities. Mr. Wells said that he has
some concerns with taking money from one group to aid another as information
needs to be obtained on who will be hurt if funds are being moved.*

*Ms. Blanks would like to have criteria set up as to how these programs will be judged
against each other, particularly in short-term versus long-term results. Ald. Hamilton
noted that many of these studies have been done and they're now being filtered
through policies and recommendations and the issue will be how to implement these
programs and bring people to the table. Ald. Zielinski encouraged Ms. Blanks, Mr.*

Wells and Ms. Fendt to form a subcommittee to create the standards by which proposals will be judged.

Mr. Jaskolski and Ald. Zielinski discussed creating a database of African American males seeking employment. Mr. Jaskolski will provide information on this issue prior to the next meeting. Mr. Jaskolski is concerned about how to add individuals who are no longer seeking employment as they've given up hope of finding a job.

Mr. Carl Harris was concerned that the City must judge how successful its programs are in relation to the amount spent and how appeals are handled of contractors denied work with the city. Mr. Harris, Ald. Zielinski and Mr. Kendrix will form another subcommittee to look at the issue of city contracts and the appeals procedure.

Mr. Rosen said that one of the tasks that this body must do is create goals and he mentioned Mr. Levine's suggestions that were submitted to this body and are contained in the Council file. Mr. Rosen will meet with Ms. Blanks relating to this issue as part of the subcommittee. Mr. Rosen said that this body seemed to be working on connecting people with existing jobs, which must be improved, but won't meet the employment goals. This body must also find a way to create jobs that currently aren't in existence.

Ald. Davis said that in the late 80s and early 90s that a study was already conducted on racial disparity and the problem has only increased since then. Ald. Davis cautioned that race-based programs can't just be used to guard one's own fiefdom. Ms. Fendt asked if the body wanted to create concrete goals, such as to decrease unemployment to some percentage rate. Ald. Hamilton agreed and noted that there needs to be a finished product that offers specific solutions that offer short-, mid- and long-term solutions and a way to gauge the success of these programs.

Mr. Wells said that he would like to hear from other individuals at the table relating to their experiences as he wasn't aware that City programs weren't functioning as they were set up to function. Mr. Wells will be submitting proposals for the next meeting relating to employment of individuals who were previously incarcerated.

3. Current city programs and their status - MORE ordinance, EBE programs and city contracts.

Mr. Kendrix provided members with a summary of the MORE ordinance; the final numbers will be submitted to the Common Council and the Mayor's Office in October. This program established a resident preference program on City projects and also apprenticeship requirements. The City works with Workforce Development to offer a first-source employment program, although there is no requirement that employers hire these individuals. To date, since the ordinance was implemented in August 2009, there were two developers with large projects that have participated in the program. The Dept. of Administration also works with the Dept. of City Development and tracks minority participation in its contracts. In 2007 the City released the Mason-Tillman study relating to the effectiveness of its disparity programs. Phase one of the study has been completed and it's anticipated the second phase will be completed in December of this year. Phase one is available on the City's web site or Mr. Kendrix can e-mail it to individuals. After completion of phase II, a decision will need to be made if the program will remain race and gender-neutral or will take race and gender into account. The City did receive a diversity award for the MORE ordinance. The number of certified firms has been increasing, partly due to the poor economy, as individuals create new companies as a result of layoffs. Approximately 36% of those companies are African American.

Ald. Davis noted that African American businesses need to be made aware of these City programs and capacity needs to be built so that African American owners can take advantage of these programs. Ms. Fendt said that many other cities, including Chicago, have race-based preference programs, rather than merely disadvantaged. These programs can be structured to be legal. Ms. Fendt will forward this information prior to the next meeting. Mr. Kendrix can provide a list of those cities which have race-based programs as well as those that are race-neutral. Mr. C. Harris said that some of the programs, such as Emerging Business Enterprise programs, benefit white males and white firms more than African American males and African American firms. Ms. Blanks said that it would be interesting to see data on African American firm utilization prior to Crossen and after Crossen. Mr. C. Harris noted that the African American Chamber of Commerce does inform contractors of City and other public programs aimed at minority firms; he feels that appeal fees prohibit anyone from appealing the City's decisions. Mr. C. Harris is concerned that contractors who are aware of programs are also running into roadblocks to participate in these programs. Ald. Zielinski is happy to meet with him and Mr. Kendrix to tweak the ordinance; Mr. C. Harris thinks the program needs to be race-based. Ald. Davis cautioned that federal regulations, which are always changing, need to be looked at; he is aware that the federal lead-abatement regulations just changed.

4. The role of education - Milwaukee Public School, UWM and community colleges.

Ald. Zielinski believes that MATC and Bucyrus International were working cooperatively to train welders. Mr. Martinez can have someone familiar with this contract e-mail the information to Ms. Elmer. Mr. Sheehy will obtain information on the prospects for welding jobs in the future. He will also provide that information to Ms. Elmer prior to the meeting. Mr. Sheehy spoke to the chair of the MATC board about jobs that are being exported from the region as there is no local workforce. He can provide some data prior to the next meeting about future opportunities and the possibility of creating accelerated educational programs. Mr. Fahey said that the reality of individuals in demand, such as skilled welders versus beginning welders, be delineated. Mr. Wells noted that MATC is physically not set up to handle the demands that exist for training.

Jeff Lemon, unemployed resident, said that contractors who don't hire local residents should be punished.

5. Definitions of terms relating to unemployment, joblessness, long-term unemployment and joblessness and related terms.

This item was not discussed due to time limitations.

6. Set next meeting date and agenda.

October 18th at noon.

*Meeting adjourned: 1:25 P.M.
Linda M. Elmer*

Staff Assistant