

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS BRIAN WORRELL, BREADON, COLETTA, DURKAN, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FITZGERALD, MEJIA, MURPHY, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER, AND LOUIJEUNE



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING EQUITY IN CITY CONTRACTS

WHEREAS: The Disparity Study in City Contracting commissioned by Mayor Walsh analyzed over 47,000 contracts awarded by the City from 2014 - 2019 and reported that of those contracts, 11% were awarded to minority- and women-owned businesses, and only 0.4% reached Black businesses.; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Walsh's Executive Order Establishing Equitable Procurement Goals in Support of Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses in 2021 set city goals for MWBE contracts at 25% (MBE 10% and WBE 15%); and

WHEREAS, The Executive Order also required that every department must develop and submit a plan for racial- and gender-conscious goals in procurement; and

WHEREAS, Under Mayor Wu's administration, the City of Boston relaunched the Contracting Opportunity Fund with an additional \$800,000 to support small, local businesses in bidding on City contracts as part of a broader initiative to address discrimination and achieve annual spending goals of 25% for women and minority-owned businesses; and

WHEREAS, The City of Boston allocated \$151 million, or 14%, to certified MWBEs for contracts during the 2023 Fiscal Year, marking a substantial increase from 6% in the 2022 Fiscal Year, and contributing to the City's goal of 25% discretionary spending with diverse firms; and

WHEREAS, The 2023 Contracting Opportunity Fund disbursed approximately \$750,000 to 51 recipients, with grants of up to \$15,000 each, aiming to enhance operational capacity for small, local businesses pursuing City contracts across priority sectors; and

WHEREAS, Through the Contracting Opportunity Fund, the City awarded support to certified women (WBE), minority (MBE), veteran-owned (VSBE), and small and local businesses (SLBE) within the City of Boston that wish to compete for City contracting opportunities in 2023; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Wu initiated the Supplier Diversity Program Week to further create transparency around supplier diversity and share the City's progress, the Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion (OEOI), Departments of Supplier Diversity

(DSD), and Procurement Department will soon release a report on equity in City contracting; and

WHEREAS, Many private enterprise businesses have procedures in place to assist MWBEs through application processes and policies to resize and restructure contract opportunities to allow for increased MWBE participation; and

WHEREAS, The City of Boston has made progress towards its goals and will benefit from continued collaboration as we continue to strive to make City contracts more equitable; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the status of increasing the procurement of city contracts by MWBEs and that representatives from the Mayor's Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion, Equity Cabinet, and the public be invited to testify.

Filed on: January 24, 2024