



**Minutes from the African American Employment Plan Advisory Council Meeting
Tuesday, January 31st, 2012
1:00 P.M. – 3:00P.M.**

**At the following public site:
James R. Thompson Center, Suite 4-404
CMS, Director's Video Conference Room
Chicago, IL
And
William G. Stratton Building, Room 715
CMS, Director's Video Conference Room
Springfield, IL
And
Teleconference**

Council members in attendance: William N. Burch, Arlene Coleman, Arthur J. Gass, Nina Harris, Catherine Lamberg, Sidney Logwood, Irene F. Weathersby.
Council members absent: James Compton, Vincent Gaddis and Archie Lawrence.

Non-council members in attendance: Tasha Cruzat, Cory Foster, Darryl Harris, Denise Reed, Fred Stewart and Lisa Williams.

Call to Order/Welcome/Roll call/Introductions

Arlene Coleman, Chair of the AAEP Advisory Council called the meeting to order at 1:10PM and welcomed everyone to the first quarterly AAEP Advisory Council meeting of the calendar year. Statewide Services Manager Cory Foster completed the roll-call; the Council achieved quorum for this meeting.

Minutes

Chair Coleman requested Council members to review the minutes from the fourth AAEP Advisory meetings held on November 29th, 2011, to determine if there were any necessary amendments or corrections. Seeing no amendments, a motion was made to approve the November 29th, AAEP Council Minutes by Member Harris. The motion was second by Member Logwood. The motion to approve the minutes was unanimously affirmed by voice vote.

Old Business

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Chairwoman Coleman called on Cory Foster to provide the Council with highlights and a general overview of the 2012 AAEP, being submitted to the General Assembly effective February 1st, 2012. Mr. Foster reported the State ended the 2011 calendar year +41 in African American employees compared to the 2010 calendar year. He also reported the Executive Summary outlined the Council activities and accomplishments during this reporting period. The Demographic section included the 2010 U.S. Census Data and a gender analysis. Mr. Foster discussed the annual report encouraged state agencies to utilize Dunne-Fellow Internships & establishing outreach strategies with Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) to assist with targeted recruitment of qualified candidates as part of the 2012 AAEP Action Plan and Objectives.

CMS Chief Operating Officer Tasha Cruzat and the Governors Director of Diversity Darryl Harris added that the CMS Mobile Assessment Center Initiative was a huge success in East St. Louis and Berwyn and expressed that Acting Director Weems was looking forward to deploying this strategy to other underserved communities throughout the State. Member Lamberg also indicated she was in attendance at the initial launch of the Mobile Assessment Center Program and that it was well received in her district.

All Members agreed the AAEP was well crafted and documented the efforts and goals of the Council. The Chair concluded the Council work begins today towards building on the success of the 2012 AAEP.

New Business

Toll Highway Authority, Illinois State – Roundtable

In accordance with the 2012 AAEP Action Plan and Objective 4.4, Chairwoman Coleman defined the purpose and format of the Roundtable discussion, which calls for meetings with agency heads & senior leadership of State Agencies to review the tenants of their African American Employment Plans in an effort to provide guidance by reviewing current employment strategies undertaken in implementing their AAEP; identifying current challenges to increasing the number of African Americans and minorities in the workplace and providing suggestions/recommendations of targeted strategies to increase the number of African American Employees in the workplace.

Ms. Lisa Williams, Chief EEO/AA Officer for the Illinois Highway Tollway Authority was introduced to discuss the status of their African American Employment Plan. Ms. Williams reviewed the tenants of their plan and provided an overview of the number of African Americans currently employed at the Tollway in addition to outlining the diversity percentages of their workforce. She reported currently African Americans comprise 13.3% of the Tollway's workforce. She highlighted significant improvement towards achieving parity related to addressing underutilization was largely the result of the Tollway hosting a Diversity Symposium during August 2011. Director Harris added upon

discussions with the Governor's Office and the Tollway many of the recommendations were being implemented already also contributed to the marked improvements in the agency's overall outreach efforts.

Ms. Williams also discussed the Tollway's targeted recruitment strategies and outlined the methods of communicating existing job opportunities as a priority for Executive Director Kristi Lafleur. Council Members devoted substantive discussion towards understanding the Tollway's challenges with recruiting qualified minorities and the means of distributing job announcements. The Council agreed to partner with the Tollway in an effort to broaden the Tollways targeted recruitment plan of qualified candidates for positions such as Skilled Crafts and front line staff serving as Toll Collectors by disseminating job announcements.

Council Members encouraged the Tollway to revamp and standardize the use of Internships as a viable option of recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified candidates for underutilized positions. Additionally, the Council recommended the composition of the Tollway's Interview and Selection Panels be reflective of the diversity in the State as a means to strengthen and standardize their hiring processes throughout the agency.

The Chair conveyed the Council's strong belief that a diverse workforce in an inclusive environment will improve individual and organizational performance and result in the state delivering quality services to customers, clients, taxpayers, and other stakeholders.

Chairwoman Coleman also expressed the Council's gratitude for Ms. Williams' presentation of the Illinois Tollway Authorities African American Employment Plan and reaffirmed the Council interest in partnering with her agency to recruit, hire, train and retain qualified candidates.

Adjournment

Seeing no further business Chairwoman Coleman opened the floor for a motion to adjourn the first quarterly AAEP Advisory Council meeting until April 24, 2012. The motion to adjourn was made by Member Weathersby and second by Member Gass. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote and the AAEP Advisory Council meeting was adjourned at 2:40PM.