



N/NE Business Navigator RFP Review Meeting – August 9, 2017

Prosper Portland ~ 222 NW 5th Ave. ~ 9:00 a.m.

Members present: Leesha Posey, Karis Stoudamire-Phillips

Members not present: Dorcie Johnson, Randy Mattson, Irene Minnieweather, Maurice Rahming

Prosper Portland Staff Present: Tory Campbell, Katherine Krajnak, Amanda Park, Yvonne Lu

RFP Proposers:

MicroEnterprise Services of Oregon (MESO)

Professional Business Development Group (PBDG)

The Soul District Business Association (SDBA)

Teach Me To Fish (TMTF)

Urban League of Portland (ULP)

Summary of comments:

- Committee Member 1:
 - MESO's proposal was strong, except they didn't address their relationships to African American organizations and how they plan on collaborating with African American organizations in their proposal. MESO was also the only proposal that spoke specifically to being a navigator, the other proposals did not.
 - PDBG: Most of their budget went towards software. Has concerns about the membership aspects of their organization and whether this may be confusing or a barrier to businesses looking to access referrals and basic business assistance. Also, concerned about their organization being mostly construction related
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 - Is concerned with the proposals offering themselves as providers versus utilizing them as a navigator. We are funding a navigator not a program.
 - Appreciated TMTF's door-to-door approach, but their cultural competency was problematic.
 - Would like to ask TMTF questions about their proposal. They didn't answer questions, and offered a lot of narrative. Did appreciate the door to door strategy for engaging businesses or potential business owners.
 - Home-based businesses addressed by TMTF was a good idea that others didn't touch on.
 - No one spoke to the one-on-one connection with people.
- Committee Member 2:
 - ULP is an organization that is trying to be more of a facilitator for the African American community. Disclosure: Committee member sits on the board of ULP.
- Prosper Portland employee 1:
 - Would those organizations that have the connections to the African American community do a better job to connect to the African American community, or would the organizations with expertise do better?
- Prosper Portland employee 2:
 - For the organizations without a strong business background, it's not necessary for the navigator.
 - MESO and ULP are strong in different areas. Their combined expertise would be a plus. Sees this scope as someone going out into the community versus sitting at a front desk. Nobody really addressed this issue.

Summary of questions to ask RFP Proposers:

- Committee Member 1:
 - PDBG: They used the word membership a lot. Would clients need to become members of their organization?
 - ULP: Do they have a plan to start to connect with other providers and branching out to other organizations and collaborating with more partners?
 - Do we ask the organizations the same questions?
 - Can we see where MESO and ULP line up in their budgets, if we are considering them as partners?
 - Are any of the organizations willing to collaborate on this scope? Question that should be asked of everybody.
 - Does MESO have a strategy to partner with culturally specific organizations such as NAACP, PAALF, ULP, Coalition of Black Men, etc.?
- Committee Member 2:
 - Can we help MESO and ULP come together, and perhaps partner up?
- Prosper Portland employee 2:
 - Instead of recommending a partnership between MESO and ULP, can we point out the gaps in their proposals and ask how they would address the gap?
- Prosper Portland employee 3:
 - SBDA: How will they manage all of their contractors together?
 - If TMTF only made it to the fourth choice of one person's list, and on no other committee members' lists, do we still want to meet with them?
 - How does each organization's proposal address the navigator scope?
 - How do the organizations plan on finding businesses in the community?

Summary of Follow Up

- Prosper Portland will follow up with calls to the 4 committee other members to get their feedback one on one
- Prosper Portland will find a time for interviews with all proposers; we will aim to have at minimum 4 of the 6 committee members present