

Sweatfree Purchasing Consortium Interim Steering Committee

September 2, 2009 1:00-2:00pm Eastern, 10:00-11:00am Pacific

Attendance

Farshid Yazdi, Los Angeles
Roxanne Dietz, Pennsylvania
Galen Leung, San Francisco
Carmen Herrera, San Francisco
Chip Gavin, Maine
Bama Athreya, International Labor Rights Forum
Bjorn Claeson, SweatFree Communities (facilitator)
Eric Dirnbach, Workers United
Liana Foxvog, SweatFree Communities (note-taker)

Minutes approval

August 2009 minutes were approved.

Consortium status

Have received payment from: Austin (TX), Ashland (OR), Milwaukee (WI), and Pennsylvania

Have received form from: Austin (TX) and Ashland (OR)

Chip announced that Maine has confirmed intent to join and expects to send in paperwork soon with payment to follow.

The membership form is available for download under "how to join" at www.buysweatfree.org.

Eric shared that an Executive Order on Sweatfree Procurement including Consortium membership is expected from New York State.

PA independent monitoring contract status update

Roxanne is still waiting for paperwork from Ohio to execute the contract. In 60 days public entiteis should be able to issue purchase orders against the contract.

Another independent monitor has called asking when the next enrollment will be open and is interested to apply. That could be posted in December so PA could consider the application in early 2010.

DOL letter

The letter Rep. Mike Michaud sent to the Department of Labor went first to the Employment Standards Administration, which delegated to the Wage & Hour Division.

We are still trying to identify appropriate point of contact for Consortium.

Next steps: Chip Gavin will follow up with Kim Glas. Eric will contact Mary Beth Maxwell. Meghan Uzzell, Julie Su's suggestion, is also possible.

Cost-sharing options

At our August meeting, Paul Stembler's main concern was who pays the monitor, saying that it can be difficult for states to pay out money received from other states. He recommended that **the simplest, cleanest, least cumbersome option would be for the Consortium to pay the monitor for services rendered to its members.**

Income to pay for those services would primarily come from a multi-state apparel purchasing contract. Fees could also come from those public entities that are charging a percentage-fee on apparel vendors. But the Consortium would not bill its members for each piece of work undertaken by the monitor.

Stembler emphasized that we would need an accounting system as strict as that used by the most strict member public entity.

Next steps: Bjorn to inquire with pro-bono accountant to see if she can develop consortium accounting system in consultation with member states and cities. Note: support for initial work on this cost-sharing option is not the same as endorsement of the option, which will be evaluated further when details are available.

Multi-state apparel purchasing contract

A year ago Maine had offered to lead the development of a multi-state sweatfree apparel purchasing contract using the Consortium's standards but has not yet been able to move ahead on it. As far as we know no other state has initiated this work.

This contract may be a NASPO contract and as such could be discussed at a NASPO meeting. It is unclear whether this is included in the agenda of the September NASPO meeting. Currently Massachusetts is leading a cooperative apparel purchasing.

Next steps: Chip will convene a conference call on the topic to take place sometime during the week of Sept 14-18. Send invitations to: Massachusetts, Austin. Bjorn and Chip will consult before the meeting.

Founding meeting proposal

Comments from the group on the proposal:

A good summary, could potentially be shortened to one full day if needed.

It will be important to establish an official governing board soon, with defined operating procedures. The people eligible to serve on the governing board would be members along with labor/human rights representatives.

The face-to-face meeting should be of the board of directors. Following the meeting there could be a time for non-members to participate.

This year SweatFree Communities annual conference will be in Washington DC in November. The face-to-face Consortium meeting could be held Thursday, November 5 or Monday, November 9 (adjacent to the conference weekend).

SweatFree Communities is planning a forum on federal sweatfree procurement for Friday, November 6, before the conference starts, and welcomes participation in that forum.

Next steps: Members of the group will look into their availability for Thursday, November 5. Members of the Consortium should think about whether they are interested to join the Board of Directors, and let Bjorn know. Bjorn will inquire with members who are not part of this group.

Database

SweatFree Communities' most recent teleconference for procurement officials included significant questions and discussion about the vision for the Consortium's database. Based upon comments received during and since the meeting, Bjorn drafted an outline (included with the agenda) and is seeking input from the group.

Discussion: Bjorn clarified that "contract options" under member-only service means that the Consortium could designate particular contracts either as "transparent contracts" or "sweatfree compliant contracts" allowing others to piggyback such contracts should they wish to do so.

Next steps: a working group of Bama, Carmen, Bjorn, and others will meet before the next Interim Steering Committee meeting. Bjorn will convene a conference call meeting.

Next meeting

Wednesday, October 7, 1:00-2:00pm Eastern, 10:00-11:00am Pacific