



METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE AIRPORT AUTHORITY

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METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE AIRPORT AUTHORITY BOARD CLARIFIES SMALL, MINORITY & WOMEN OWNED BUSINESS PROGRAM'S TEMPORARY SUSPENSION

NASHVILLE, TN. (September 21, 2006) At the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority's (MNAА) board of commissioners meeting yesterday, the ten-member board voted unanimously to temporarily amend the MNAА's Small, Minority and Women Owned Business (SMWBE) program, which previously established specific percentage goals to award MNAА's local construction and service contracts to small business, women and minority-owned businesses. This amendment, which suspends percentage goals, came on advice from legal counsel due to recent federal court challenges nationwide that have ruled against agencies whose diversity goals were not based on specific data showing discrimination.

The MNAА SMWBE program, which was established voluntarily by the board of commissioners in 2002 as a vehicle by which to foster and promote small, minority and women owned businesses in the local community, has been very successful in ensuring SMWBEs be provided adequate opportunity to compete for work on locally funded airport projects and expenditures. For fiscal year 06, an overall goal of 6.29% was established, and participation well exceeded that goal by almost 14%, for a yearly total of 19% SMWBE participation.

While the program has been praised for building bridges of opportunity for SMWBEs in the metropolitan statistical area in which the Nashville International Airport is located, in light of the current court challenges, the board has requested a disparity study be undertaken of MNAА's contracting history. Meanwhile, the board has requested the MNAА staff to provide monthly reports that details the amount of contracts awarded to SMWBE firms, without a specific percentage goal in place. Also at the board's direction, Authority staff was asked to prepare an analysis to determine the amount of time it will take to complete the disparity study, as well as a proposed scope of work.

The board emphasized its strong desire to see the consistent results and continuation of minority participation in all local airport contracts. "The Authority has been and continues to be fully committed to maximizing opportunities for minority inclusion in all aspects of the airport's business," stated Raul Regalado, MNAА's president and CEO.

The MNAА was established in 1970 and owns and operates the Nashville International and John C. Tune General Aviation Airports.

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