

**COMMITTEE OF BLIND VENDORS  
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES  
June 11, 2021**

**The meeting was held via Zoom**

**Roll Call** – Attendance was taken. A quorum was present.

**Members Present:**

Mac Carnes, Lynn Florence, Vice Chair, Todd Freeman, Jerry Grimes, Larry Hall, Chair, Buster Mayne, Chris Miller, Justin Purvis, Cramer Schneider, Todd Stephens, and Ronnie Wheatley.

**Staff Present:**

Corey Marcum, KBE Director, Jennifer Wright, KBE Assistant Director, Janice Jackson, Recording Secretary, Jason Wathen, Food Service Coordinator, Stuart Boggs, Vending Coordinator, and Dondra Meredith, Deputy General Counsel, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

**Vendors Present:**

George Bouquet, Martin Caldwell, Tim Davis, Katherine Gore, Randy Hester, and Angela Stevens

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m. by Chair Larry Hall who announced that the meeting had a two-item agenda, discussion of the FRRP plan proposal and discussion whether to keep or relinquish the Capital vending stand. He said that only committee members would be allowed to speak. Any others may speak during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Chair Hall asked Dondra Meredith to speak about what had been decided by the cabinet on the interpretation of “otherwise compensated”, as stated in the FRRP legislation.

She reported that the only things the Secretary/ Lt. Governor believes should be considered in the definition as “otherwise compensated” are unemployment insurance benefits above \$10,000, and any local or state grants, such as the Team Kentucky grant. She said PPP loans would be excluded. The value of the GFS orders for vendor inventory loss does not need to be declared as it was in goods and not a cash payment to vendors.

Corey Marcum shared with the committee the formula that was devised based on the committee’s recommendation that the FRRP funds be distributed completely and equitably. He said that each vendor’s setaside reports were used to determine their 2019 gross sales, plus commissions. The same figures were ascertained for 2020 and subtracted from the 2019 amounts to determine each vendor’s lost revenue.

As Kentucky was not allocated enough funding to compensate every vendor for their total loss, he said he worked with the allotted amount and came up with the figure of approximately 14.5% to expend all the available funds. That is the percentage that it takes to distribute the funds equally to all vendors who incurred losses in 2020. He said those vendors who did not experience a loss in 2020 would not be eligible to receive FRRP funds. This includes the three vendors with teaming partners. He said some vendors will have more than others based on the missed opportunities in 2020.

Justin Purvis asked Ms. Meredith if anything from 2021 would be counted in this equation. She said no. He also asked if an SBA loan is considered compensation. She said nothing that would have to be paid back would be considered.

Todd Stephens asked about using the inventory money because he has not been able to use his funds yet and is concerned the

window to use it will run out before he is back in his facility. Mr. Marcum said the time to use the money has been extended until June 30, 2022. He said the inventory product and the FRRP funds are mutually exclusive. Mr. Stephens said he was concerned that if he cannot use all his inventory funds by the deadline, but the other vendors could, it would not be equitable.

Ms. Meredith said she understood what Mr. Stephens was saying and if the inventory money was not going to all be spent by the deadline, the committee could vote to factor that into this plan. She said all the cabinet was saying was that those goods did not have to be counted in this plan.

Cramer Schneider asked Mr. Marcum to explain the formula again. Mr. Marcum said, he took gross sales and commissions from 2019 and subtracted the gross sales and commissions in 2020 from 2019 to get the amount of loss and the amount received would be 14.5% of that difference. That way, the weighted average is equal for everyone.

Chair Hall asked for any public comments. There were none. He said the vendors have been waiting a long time to receive a plan and he felt like this was a fair way of distribution. He asked for a motion to vote.

Todd Stephens made a motion to accept the previously circulated plan, with the adjustment for PPP loans and unemployment benefits under \$10,000 excluded from the definition of "otherwise compensated".

Ms. Meredith pointed out that the vendors will have to sign an attestation letter certifying any funds received, prior to getting their money.

Ronnie Wheatley seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Marcum told the members that the Finance Cabinet is redoing the basement of the Capitol. KBE has a snack stand there which has not been used in years, as Finance Cabinet has moved most of the employees over to the Capitol Annex. The committee needs to decide whether they would like for the agency to pay to redo the area of the unused stand or release it back to the Finance Cabinet. KBE would retain the vending machines in that area.

Chair Hall said that there are just a few people working in the Capitol and that it increased some during the three months that the legislature is in session but was not enough to sustain a vending stand.

Ronnie Wheatley asked that if they moved a lot more people in, down the road, would we have the chance to get it back. Mr. Marcum said that Finance has no plans to have more people come back in the future. Chair Hall said that we always hate to give back space but since they are trying to consolidate the people from the Capitol to the Annex, it won't be a viable money maker.

Todd Stephens made a motion to turn the area in the Capitol back over to the Finance Cabinet and leave space to house soft drink and snack machines.

The motion was seconded by Jerry Grimes. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Marcum said the agency will soon need to help enroll vendors in the eMARS system so they can be in the state vendor system to enable them to receive their automated FRRP payments. Some vendors who have previously filed for travel reimbursement will already be in the system.

Lynn Florence asked about the process for the attestation letters. Ms. Meredith said she would work with Mr. Marcum on them.

Todd Stephens asked that the attestation form be sent through DocuSign instead of mailed, as DocuSign that is accessible.

A motion to dismiss was made by Todd Stephens and seconded by Lynn Florence.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.