



## **Small Business Advisory Council Meeting – Minutes**

**Wednesday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, 11:00 a.m.**

Todd Colquitt, CSI - Business Advocate, called the meeting of the Small Business Advisory Council (“SBAC” or “Council”) to order shortly after 11:10 a.m. at the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce located at 300 Madison Avenue, Toledo, OH. The following Council members were present, along with Mark Hamlin, CSI – Director of Regulatory Policy:

- Lonnie Alonso
- Mike Baach
- Michael Canty
- Michael Flowers
- Rick Fedorovich
- Lorraine Walker

Brian Dicken, VP Advocacy & Public Policy – Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce, welcomed the Council to open the meeting. Messrs. Hamlin and Colquitt then proceeded to provide status updates on topical legislative and regulatory items, including separate pieces of legislation that would amend the rule codification process, and one signed into law that satisfies the State of Ohio’s financial obligations to the federal government for the financial assistance it provided to Ohio’s unemployment compensation system during the previous economic recession. Mr. Hamlin then moved on to provide a status update regarding the project to modernize the Ohio Business Gateway, noting that the State had withdrawn, amended, and resolicited its Request for Proposal in order to develop a stronger pool of responses than resulted from the original RFP. Discussion then turned toward that of workforce development, with the Council expressing an interest in having the topic covered in greater depth at a future meeting.

Following a break for lunch, Wendy Gramza, President – Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce, briefly addressed the Council and the meeting attendees, highlighting Toledo’s strong economic base of manufacturing and transportation infrastructure and the work being done to improve upon them. After Ms. Gramza ended her remarks, Mr. Colquitt provided a brief overview of CSI’s and the Council’s respective roles in improving Ohio’s regulatory environment.

Next, a representative from the Ohio Department of Taxation provided the Council and attendees with a presentation on the applicability of the manufacturing exemption to the state sales tax.

Council and audience members asked a number of questions regarding the nature of the process in determining the tax's applicability throughout the manufacturing process. The comments and questions focused on the complexity of and the amount of time involved in ascertaining the official amount owed rather than the amount itself.

The next topic of discussion was an overview of Ohio's energy landscape and current changes impacting it. Beth Trombold, Commissioner – Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, remarked on the impact cheap natural gas derived from the hydraulic fracturing of shale in Ohio and elsewhere has had on shifting power generation away from coal. There was additional discussion on the need for a balanced array of cost effective energy sources to lessen the impacts of price volatility in any one source, and the evolving nature of the electrical grid toward one integrating distributed power generation.

Following Commissioner Trombold, Gregory Williams, Deputy Director and State EEO Coordinator – Department of Administrative Services, gave a presentation on the State's Minority Business Enterprise ("MBE") and Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity ("EDGE") programs. In addition to covering the background and purpose of the MBE and EDGE programs, Mr. Williams highlighted the different options to become a certified MBE or EDGE provider. He discussed the annual process by which state agencies create plans with projected expenditures and set-asides by product area that can assist MBE and EDGE firms in identifying particular opportunities to compete for state contracts. He also identified various resources within the Ohio Development Services Agency that make financial and non-financial assistance available to small businesses regardless of certification status.

Lt. Governor Mary Taylor then joined the Council and remarked on the progress that Ohio has made in improving its regulatory climate and the contribution that CSI and the Council have made in that regard. She then unveiled the "Small Business Toolkit," a new online resource that is a "how-to" guide and information resource on participating in the rulemaking process. She underscored its goal of making participation in the State's regulatory processes and contacting CSI for assistance easier to understand. After a brief demonstration of the Toolkit, there was general discussion amongst the Council, the audience, and the Lt. Governor regarding the anticipated improvements that will result from modernizing the Ohio Business Gateway and also the abstruse manufacturing exemption from the sales tax.

There being no further business, the Small Business Advisory Council adjourned at approximately 4:40 p.m.

### Future SBAC Meetings in 2016

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings will occur at the Riffe Center, 77 S. High Street, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor, Columbus OH, 43215. Meetings will start at 10:00 a.m. Eastern. This schedule is subject to change depending on the needs of the Council. Scheduled meetings are set to occur on:

- Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>
- Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>