



U.S. Small Business  
Administration

## **Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development December 6, 2023 - Meeting Minutes**

### **Members Present:**

- Timothy Green, Acting Associate Administrator, Office of Veteran Business Development (OVBD), Small Business Administration (SBA)
- Eric Asmussen, Chief Senior Investigator, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), Department of Labor (DOL)
- Mathew Blum, Associate Administrator, Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP), Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
- Scott Jensen, Executive Director, National Veteran Small Business Coalition (NVSBC)
- Lisa Oliva, Deputy Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), U.S. Department of Treasury (Treasury)
- Fran Perez-Wilhite, Program Manager, North Carolina Military Business Center (NCMBC)
- Michael Phipps, The American Legion
- Cordell Smith, Deputy Director, Acquisition & Policy, Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

**1. The Quarterly Public Meeting of the IATF was called to order at 1:03 PM on 12/06/2023 –** by Timothy Green.

### **2. Meeting Highlights:**

- a. Welcoming Remarks** –Timothy Green welcomed members to the meeting.
- b. Presentation 1 -OVBD Updates: Presented by Timothy Green**, National Veterans Small Business Week updates included: Boots-2-Business Instructor of the Year Award, Chamber of Commerce Veteran Roundtable, Veterans Institute for Procurement in Rockville, MD, Opening of the Veteran Business Outreach Center Program in Los Angeles, CA. Associate Administrator Green also discussed testimony on Capitol Hill Before Senate Small Business Committee:

- i. Timothy Green highlighted events that SBA Administrator Isabel C. Guzman attended in support of OVBD.
- ii. **October 30-November 3, 2023** – During the 10<sup>th</sup> annual National Veterans Small Business Week, 284 events were held across the country. SBA Administrator Guzman participated in five of those events to show her dedication in supporting the veterans’ community.
- iii. **October 30, 2023 – Boots-2-Business (B2B) Instructor of the Year Awards** – Administrator Guzman participated in B2B Instructor of the Year Award with a pre-recorded video. She recognized the B2B Instructors, five VBOCs, and other resource instructors’ partners of the year during the ceremony.
- iv. **October 31, 2023 – Chamber of Commerce Veteran Roundtable**- Administrator Guzman attended a roundtable hosted by OVBD at the U.S. Chambers of Conference. The Administrator spoke with and listened to veterans, veteran service organizations, and veteran business owners, and discussed the challenges and the successes of their businesses and how the SBA can help them.
- v. **November 2023 – Veterans Certification Program (VetCert)**- Administrator Guzman led a roundtable in Rockville, Maryland at the Veterans Institute for Procurement. The Administrator discussed the roll out of the VetCert Program.
- vi. **November 2, 2023- Opening of the Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) in Los Angeles, CA**– The Administrator traveled to Los Angeles, CA to participate in the opening ceremony of the VBOC.
- vii. **November 15, 2023**- Timothy Green testified on the Capital Hill before the Senate Small Business Committee. He cited the strong support that OVBD received from the House and the Senate for the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), specifically B2B.

### 3. Member Updates:

- a. **Lisa Oliva, Procurement Officer, Office of Small and Disadvantage Business Utilization, U.S. Department of Treasury Report:** Announced that the Department of Treasury is in the throes of launching a Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB’s) Connects Program to champion SDVOSB’s and propel procurement equity. The program launched about a month ago and is part of the OSDBU’s 50 State Initiative to bring economic resiliency across the nation. The Treasury’s OSDBU will go to every state to ensure that small businesses can receive the requisite resources that they need to continue to do business with Treasury departmental offices, as well as their bureaus, and ensure the OSDBU remains in compliance with the goaling efforts for SDVOSB. The information will be upcoming at <https://home.treasury.gov/>.
- b. **Eric Asmussen, Chief Senior Investigator, Veterans Employment & Training Services, U.S. Department of Labor Report:**

- i. **February 2024- Small Entrepreneur Small Business Roundtable** – The Department of Labor will host a Small Entrepreneur Small Business Roundtable in February 2024. This event is still in the planning stages.
  
- c. **Cordell Smith, Deputy Director of Acquisition Policy, OSDDBU, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Report:**
  - i. **Fiscal Year 2023 Goals and Performance** – \$10.5 billion dollars went to veteran owned small businesses. \$10.3 billion went to service-disabled veterans, \$4.8 billion went to small-disadvantaged businesses, and \$12.6 billion to all small businesses. These numbers may increase as additional records are added to the Federal Procurement Data System.
  - ii. **November 2023** – The National Veterans Small Business Engagement was held in Kissimmee, FL. 2,067 registrants from different business categories participated in the event. Over 170 people from the VA were there to meet with small and large businesses to discuss business opportunities and share insights on upcoming opportunities with procurement decision-makers.
  
- d. **Mathew Blum, Associate Administrator, Office of Federal Procurement Policy Report:**
  - i. **October 25, 2023** – OMB’s Director issued memorandum M-24-01 Implementing Section-a requirement in Section 7(a) of Executive Order 14091, which further advances racial equality and support for underserved communities through the federal government. The section directs the government to expand the amount of procurement dollars awarded to SDBs. It formally established the government-wide goal of 15 percent, which begins in fiscal year 2025. It also directed OMB to establish a 13 percent government-wide goal for FY 2024. SBA’s Government Contracting & Business Development is currently working with agencies in negotiating their SDB individual agency contracting goals to cumulatively meet the 13 percent goal. Mr. Blum referenced two facts:
    - Agencies should continue to increase access to SDVOSBs, Women Owned Small Businesses, and HUBZone small businesses. Businesses participating in these programs have a high likelihood of also being SDB. OMB’s new equity tool shows businesses that participate in these programs and already registered to contract with the federal government. Those that never received a government contract would be considered as new entrants.
    - At the end of the guidance document, OMB and SBA, the Domestic Policy Council and the National Economic as well as the Gender Policy Council noted several key efforts that they are continuing to work in FY 24 which includes increased opportunities for small businesses on multiple award contracts. Both the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council and SBA are working regulatory changes in this area OMB will be releasing guidance encouraging agencies to adopt a number of practices that can significantly improve small business participation.

- e. General Services Administration (GSA) Report: Read by Nicole Yoder, Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD), as submitted by GSA:**
- i. Fiscal Year 2023-** GSA achieved 11.9 percent goal for SDVOSBs, with an actual spend of \$784.3 million going to SDVOSB firms. For the contracting opportunities tool forecast, GSA recently moved to the new website and some areas are still under construction. To see the current list of federal opportunities to [aquisitiongateway.gov/forecast](https://aquisitiongateway.gov/forecast) once website construction ends. Six agencies are posting to the forecast tool including the VA, DOI, DOL, OPM, SBA, and GSA.
  - ii. OSDBU Monthly Training** – GSA is offering virtual monthly OSDBU national training webinars. Many GSA OSDBU small business specialist in attendance. GSA invites all small businesses to renew the [GSA.gov/events](https://GSA.gov/events) page and look for the monthly OSDBU national training for upcoming events such as the December 14 webinar entitled “How to Build/Position Your Firm’s Capabilities and Experience.”
  - iii. November 30, 2023-** Polaris’ Request for Proposals Concerning IT and Service-Based Solutions. GSA released RFP Amendment 0004 to the Polaris IT GWAC service-disabled veteran-owned small business, SDVOSB, pool in the Polaris submission portal at [polaris.app.cloud.gov](https://polaris.app.cloud.gov). Proposal revisions must be submitted within the PSP no later than 4:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, January 12, 2024. Oasis Plus – which is a non-IT, service-based solutions.
  - iv. October 20, 2023-** GSA’s Office of Professional Services and Human Capital Categories officially closed the initial proposal submission period for all six Oasis Plus requests for proposals. This includes a service-disabled veteran owned small business pool. GSA is not limiting the number of contracts awarded because of this solicitation.
  - v. Fiscal Year 2024** – GSA’s primary focus is to ensure that Oasis Plus is open for business; this includes evaluating proposals, awarding contracts, publishing on Oasis Plus ordering guide, creating and scheduling Oasis Plus overview, and delegation of procurement authority training. Technical evaluations and awards will focus first on the Oasis Plus total small business offers since the Legacy Oasis small business contract will be ending on December 19, 2024.
- f. Fran Perez- Wilhite, Program Manager, North Carolina Military Business Center (NCMBC) – Report:**
- i. Military Medical Innovation Operational Forum** – On December 8, 2023, the NCMBC held the Military Medical Innovation Operational Forum (MIO), in collaboration with Womack Army Medical Center in Fort Liberty, NC. The purpose of this event is to forge collaborations between Womack and academic, industry, and military partners to yield actionable results on joint submissions for federal grant funding. The goal is to increase the success rate of grant applications. NCMBC’s goal is to begin discussions that will lead to future engagements and

collaborations. Following the MIO forum, you may submit your research proposals to Womack by March 8, 2024. For more information, call (704) 806-6858.

- ii. **Whiting Turner Construction Company** – Currently, The NCMBC is actively introducing veteran-owned small businesses and services disabled small businesses to Whiting Turner Construction Company.
- iii. **The Southeast Regional Federal Construction Infrastructure and Environmental Summit** – Will be held on April 16, 2024, in Wilmington, NC.
- iv. **Medical, Biomedical and Bio Defense: Support to the Warfighter Symposium** will be held June 2024, in Chapel Hill, NC. If you have questions regarding the events, please call (704) 806-6858.

**g. Mike Phipps, The American Legion- Report:**

- i. **Rule of Two-** The American Legion addressed issues with the Rule of Two. Mr. Phipps said the American Legion is finding that the Rule of Two is not always strictly implemented, even in normal contracting. Mr. Phipps said that the American Legion is putting together several suggestions for when you get to the simplified acquisition threshold, how the Rule of Two is being implemented, what resources are needed, and how to enforce the Rule of Two.
- ii. **FAR Implementations** – Mr. Phipps states that there is an urgent need for a FAR implementation. 13 CFR 125.3 that delineates subcontracting plan requirements for large businesses were awarded federal contracts. It outlines the need for businesses to establish a percentage goal for the utilization of small businesses in their subcontracting plan and mandates timely reporting on progress towards those goals.
- iii. **Support for SBA and OVBD**– Mr. Phipps stated that the American Legion wants to continue to support the SBA and the OVBD, including the Veterans Business Outreach Centers (VBOC's) program and advocate for additional funding to increase the number of VBOCs to 50 and more. Additionally, they want to increase funding for the Boots to Business, the Boots to Business Reboot Program, and advocate for an increase in VBOC staff for more effective outreach at the local level. Also, The American legion would like to encourage the development of a government-wide veteran business development program for SDVOSBs. In the federal contracting arena, it would be a similar program to what the VA has and extend to DoD, that creates veterans and to other agencies.
- iv. **The Post 9/11 G.I. Bill for Entrepreneurship** – The American Legion would like to expand the post 9/11 G.I. Bill for Entrepreneurship to provide financing of resources for veterans looking to build their own businesses and advocate for the of a public/private partnership between the SBA and banking institutions to promote economic growth and opportunities for rural and disadvantaged communities across America.

- v. **Federal Government Contracting Goal** – The American Legion would like to see the federal government contracting goal for veteran businesses increase from 3 to 5 percent.
  
- h. **Scott Jensen, Executive Director, National Veteran Small Business Coalition (NVSBC)** –
  - i. The NVSBC is keeping watch to ensure that the veteran companies are aware of the requirements for certification. NVSBC is also making sure federal agencies comply with the law and taking appropriate action at both the contracting and procurement decision making level to ensure that they are working with appropriate and certified SBA-certified SDVOSBs, per the effect of the law. It's not just to market to the veteran companies, but also to the primes and the federal agencies that will be required to comply with it.
  - ii. **February 28, 2024-** The NVSBC will be co-hosting a Veteran Government Contracting Hybrid Symposium in partnership with Institute for Veterans and Military Families and George Mason University (GMU) Baroni Center. The event will be held in person and have virtual access.
  - iii. **May 20-23, 2024** – NVSBC Vets Conference will be held in Orlando, FL at the Rosen Centre. Exhibitors and sponsorship opportunities are currently open. Individual registration will open on January 17, 2024. For further information, please visit <http://www.nvsbc.org>.
  
- 4. The next meeting will be held in person and virtually via Microsoft Teams on March 6, 2024, at 1:00 PM ET.
  
- 5. The meeting was adjourned 2:25 p.m. by Timothy Green.