

**Special Task Force to Reduce Inefficiencies in Procurement (STRIP)****Location: Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW 1st St, Miami, FL 33128, 19th Floor****Date: October 7, 2025 - Time: 10:00 a.m.****Meeting Minutes**

Start: 10:07 am

Appointed: 15

Stop: 1: 35 p.m.

Quorum: 8

<u>Members Present (11)</u>	<u>Members Absent (2) Zoom (2)</u>
Albert "Al" Dotson, Jr.	Aldo Leiva (ABSENT)
Carolina Vester	Josenrique Cueto (ZOOM)
Chairwoman Diana Mendez	Rey T. Melendi (ZOOM)
Erin Hendrix	Willy Bermello (ABSENT)
Jina Marie Braynon	
John Elizabeth Aleman	
Kenneth Naylor	
Maira Suarez	
Miguel De Grandy	
Rudy Ortiz	
Victor Herrera	

Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Michou Jean (SPD) at 10:07 a.m. A roll call was conducted, and a quorum was confirmed. Members who were joining remotely were noted for the record.

Welcome

Welcome by Chairwoman Mendez and moved directly into opening the floor for the reasonable opportunity for the public to be heard.

Reasonable Opportunity for the Public to be Heard

Chairwoman Mendez opened the reasonable opportunity for the public to be heard (in-room and online). No members of the public came forward to speak, the public comment period was closed.

Approval of the September 23, 2025, Meeting Minutes

The Taskforce reviewed the minutes from the September 23, 2025, meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes, and all members agreed. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Discussion on Survey Questions for the Contract Managers

Rita Silva provided an update on the status of the survey questions for contract managers. She shared that her team has been in discussions with the Communications Department to review and finalize the survey. The plan is to simplify multi-part questions into single, focused prompts and include space for open-ended responses. Once finalized, Communications will distribute the survey anonymously through their standard platform. Rita noted that a draft will be shared with the Chair before being presented to the full Taskforce at the next meeting.

Taskforce Recommendations

Reduce Redundant Milestones / Consolidate Pre-Solicitation Steps

Rudy Ortiz recommended consolidating overlapping approval steps in the pre-solicitation process. The proposal is to merge redundant milestones into a single Pre-Solicitation Package Approval, capturing SBE participation, Local Preference, and other compliance requirements in one step. The group also discussed shifting recurring affidavits into the vendor registration system for future solicitations, rather than requiring repeated submissions. Key considerations included:

- Existing vendors (approx. 15,000) should not be required to resubmit past documentation.
- Certain attestations (e.g., Local Preference) are time-sensitive and must still be confirmed at submission.
- Automation and AI should be used to support pre-screening, with human review retained for final validation.

Staff reported that a comprehensive forms inventory and analysis is underway and will be presented at the next meeting. The Taskforce agreed to treat the elimination of redundancy as an ongoing initiative that will guide future recommendations.

Pre-Scope Industry Engagement

Victor Herrera revisited a suggestion first raised during the September 23 meeting, proposing that departments conduct one-on-one industry meetings before drafting the project scope. He explained that this approach, similar to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) model, allows departments to gather early input from vendors and industry experts before the formal handoff to procurement. The Taskforce agreed to table the item until the members had an opportunity to review the materials Mr. Herrera submitted. Once the materials are reviewed, the group plans to revisit the proposal and determine how it can be implemented across different procurement categories (A&E, goods/services, design-build, etc.).

Technology & Systems (Informatics / eBuilder / ERP)

There was discussion on County's current technology infrastructure and procurement systems, focusing on how to improve efficiency and transparency without mandating a full system replacement. There was general agreement that the emphasis should be on functional outcomes, such as streamlined workflows, better communication between platforms, and improved reporting, rather than naming or endorsing any specific replacement system. The discussion highlighted that while multiple systems (including PeopleSoft/Infor, Bid-Tracking, and Project Administration) currently serve vital roles, many operate in silos. The consensus was that the County should focus on horizontal optimization, ensuring these existing systems integrate more seamlessly.

Motion 1: Recommend supporting horizontal optimization of the existing electronic systems, ensure that there's appropriate funding allocation to perform the necessary review and optimization, identify what is based on the system and what is a policy, and investigate the potential for integration with other systems and provide support for those integrations. Motion was made, seconded and approved (11-0)

Motion 2: Standardization of Software Application: Recommend standardizing the software application used for each type of procurement to develop consistency across different procurement types. Vote: Approved unanimously. (11-0)

Motion 3: Standardization of Advertisement Notification: Recommend standardizing the vendor notification process for all County procurements. Vote: Approved unanimously. (11-0)

Motion 4: Selection Committee Enhancements and Committee Size. Detailed in the recommendations. Vote: Approved unanimously. (11-0)

Selection Committee Enhancements – Expertise and Department Involvement

The Task Force discussed the structure and composition of County Selection Committees (CSCs), specifically focusing on ensuring that committees consistently include members with the appropriate subject-matter expertise and representation from the requesting/user department.

Recommend the following enhancements involving CSC Selection Expertise and Department Representation

- Include Division Director and similar level positions from user department based on grade level in addition to Assistant or Deputy Director to open number of members for over \$25 million to allow for more availability.
- Implement AI Driven System to identify candidates for evaluation committee based on INFORMS data, including HR job information and resume, track CSC rotation, participation, and training history.
- Implement self-guided training modules for committee members to replace lengthy workshops
- Recommend using a Neutrality Affidavit with legislation requirements and eliminating the Office of Commission Auditor background check.
- Implement a policy that County employees should have at least 2 years of service, to prevent any conflict per legislation regarding past employment, allow for exceptions.
- Modify conflict of interest guidelines to allow former consultants. Allow declaration of prior employment on record.
- A member of the issuing department must chair the committee, instead of a representative from SPD. SPD can support the committee Chair regarding the procedure.
- For a 3-member committee all members must come from the user department and be named by the department director

- For a 5-member committee at a minimum the majority of the members must be from the user department and be named by the Department Director. If the director only elects name 3, the balance shall be names provided by SPD.
- For A&E procurements members from other departments should be professionally licensed engineers or architects. The requirement can be waived for good cause.

Approved unanimously. (11-0)

Motion 5: Selection Committee Enhancements and CSC Selection Expertise and Department Representation.

The discussion on Selection Committee Composition resulted in a formal motion to modify the minimum committee size requirements

Recommend modifying the minimum committee size requirements as follows:

- For contracts under \$25 million, the committee shall be composed of 3 voting members. For contracts above \$25 million, the committee shall be composed of five members.
- Provide for 2 alternate members for all contract values and allow flexibility for SPD to recommend more.

Approved unanimously. (11-0)

Presentations:

Phase IV: Recommendation to Award and Phase V: Contract Performance

Contract Performance - Christopher Grant-Henriques

Christopher Grant-Henriques provided an overview of current challenges and opportunities within the Award and Contract Performance phases of the procurement process. He highlighted ongoing issues with inconsistent follow-up on vendor performance, particularly in situations where non-performance concerns are raised but not formally documented or resolved in a timely manner. Christopher also noted a pattern where vendors win awards based on unique proposal commitments (such as financing structures, delivery schedules, or community benefit plans), but these elements are not always incorporated into the final contract, making them difficult to monitor and enforce. He emphasized that proposal commitments must be explicitly written into the contract language and tracked as part of ongoing performance obligations.

To strengthen accountability, Christopher recommended requiring a formal performance evaluation at closeout for every contract, creating a documented record of contractor performance that can be referenced in future selections.

Additional Focus Area: Technology – AI – Adil

Adil provided an update on the County's ongoing technology modernization efforts, with a particular focus on the use of AI to support procurement operations. He explained that the County currently relies on multiple systems, including the ERP system, bid-tracking, and project administration tools, which do not all fully integrate with one another. This creates additional manual work for staff when gathering information or managing solicitations.

He shared that the County has already launched an internal AI assistant (using a secure, closed environment) to help staff quickly access procurement process guidance and internal procedures. The tool was deployed in August and is being tested for accuracy and reliability before being expanded more broadly.

Adil also noted that the County is working toward automating certain evaluation and compliance steps, including pre-award checklists and Competitive Selection Committee (CSC) scoring workflows. However, he cautioned that AI should be used to support, not replace, human decision-making due to risks related to data accuracy, bias, and legal compliance.

Additionally, Adil addressed the need for improved integration across existing platforms, recognizing that many procurements pain points stem from fragmented systems rather than a lack of tools. He noted that a central, public-facing contracts portal would improve transparency and reduce the volume of public records requests.

Adjournment: After the final presentation and discussion, the Chairwoman closed the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35 pm.