

**Special Task Force to Reduce Inefficiencies in Procurement (STRIP)****Location: Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW 1st St, Miami, FL 33128, 19th Floor****Date: January 14, 2026 - Time: 10:00 a.m.****Meeting Minutes**

Start: 10:24 am

Stop: 1:00 p.m.

Appointed: 15

Quorum: 8

<u>Members Present (8)</u>	<u>Members Absent (4) Members Zoom (3)</u>
Albert "Al" Dotson, Jr.	Aldo Leiva (ABSENT)
Carolina Vester	Erin Hendrix (ABSENT)
Chairwoman Diana Mendez	Jina Marie Braynon (ABSENT)
John Elizabeth Aleman	Maira Suarez (ZOOM)
Josenrique Cueto	Miguel De Grandy (ZOOM)
Kenneth Naylor	Rey T. Melendi (ABSENT)
Rudy Ortiz	Willy Bermello (ZOOM)
Victor Herrera	

Roll Call

The meeting was called to order with a brief welcome and acknowledgment of attendees who wished to speak. Chairwoman Diana Mendez then requested introductions. Introductions were given by task force members, staff, and Zoom participants and the County Attorney's Office was also represented, with Eddie Gonzalez noted.

Updates on Requests

Small Business Enterprise (SBE) simplified certification process

Staff reported that the review of a simplified certification process is ongoing. They are assessing current certification timelines and the level of resources currently required. While there has been discussion around a potential self-certification model with audit rights, staff is carefully considering stakeholder concerns related to fraud risk and the appropriate level of due diligence before certification is granted. Staff advised they are not yet prepared to present a final recommendation but plan to return with a more refined proposal at a future meeting.

Contract Manager Survey Sent

Staff reported that the Contract Manager Survey has been distributed to procurement professionals and contract management staff across departments, including A&E, services, and construction. The survey is currently due within the next few days, with the option to extend the deadline if needed to increase participation. Staff also noted that a follow-up reminder may be sent to encourage a stronger response rate.

STRIP Website Status Update

Staff confirmed that the STRIP website is now live and fully integrated into the Strategic Procurement Department's website. The site serves as a centralized resource for the public and stakeholders and currently includes the resolution establishing the STRIP Task Force, task force appointment information, and preliminary and adopted recommendations as they become available. It also provides the full schedule of meeting dates along with the information needed to join meetings, noting that the same Zoom link is used for all meetings and is posted for ease of access. In addition, the website includes adopted meeting minutes, with updates made as future minutes are formally approved. Staff further noted that the site lists a designated staff liaison, with Michou Jean identified as the primary point of contact for STRIP-related inquiries and coordination.

Time Management and Remaining Meeting

The Chair led a discussion emphasizing the importance of staying on schedule, noting that only four meetings remain before the final report is due. It was stressed that achieving quorum at each meeting is critical, as the absence of quorum prevents the Task Force from advancing recommendations and risks inefficient use of members' time. Members were asked to prioritize attendance at the remaining meetings and to notify staff as early as possible of any conflicts so potential rescheduling can be considered.

To support progress, the Chair outlined a structured approach for future meetings, including time-limiting discussion on each recommendation to approximately 10 minutes. If consensus is not reached within that timeframe, the item will be deferred or returned for further refinement and brought back in a more complete, decision-ready form.

Approval of December 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes

After quorum was achieved, the Task Force moved into formal business. Task Force member John Elizabeth Aleman noted an error in the memorandum, not in the meeting minutes, clarifying that the word "contact" should read "contract." The correction was noted for the record.

There being no edits to the meeting minutes, a motion was made to approve them. The minutes were approved unanimously (8-0).

Reasonable Opportunity for the Public to be Heard

The Chair opened the floor for public comment for both in-person and Zoom participants. No members of the public requested to speak during, and the Chair closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Taskforce Recommendations

The Task Force discussed issues related to equity and competitive fairness during Tier Two oral presentations. Members raised concerns that the first proposer may be disadvantaged by being asked questions first, while later proposers may benefit from hearing or learning the questions in advance, noting that the practice of competitors leaving the room as a “professional courtesy” is no longer realistic. The discussion distinguished between standardized questions that should be posed uniformly to all proposers and clarifying questions that naturally arise during individual presentations.

Operational and legal considerations were also reviewed, including challenges associated with hybrid and Zoom-based presentations, such as technical limitations, staffing demands, and reliability. Staff and the County Attorney’s Office provided context on Sunshine Law requirements, the cone of silence, and the parameters for open versus closed sessions. Procurement staff further clarified that committees are prompted to develop and share questions with shortlisted firms after the Tier One evaluation and that questions are not intended to be created after presentations have begun. Overall, the Task Force generally agreed that sharing questions with all shortlisted firms is a key step in promoting fairness. However, there was concern that additional requirements, such as expanded video recording or live streaming, could add complexity contrary to STRIP’s efficiency goals. As a result, the Chair directed those broader issues related to live access, recording, and potential closed-session structures be tabled for further review and possible legal or legislative analysis, with the matter to return at a future meeting.

Recommendation: Use of Technology During Selection Committee Meetings

After the discussion the taskforce approve the following recommendations regarding the use of technology during oral presentations:

To ensure fairness, consistency, and equal treatment of proposers, the County shall restrict the technology that may be used by proposers during oral presentations conducted as part of a competitive selection process. This requirement applies to all oral presentations before a competitive evaluation or selection committee, including but not limited to Tier 2 presentations for professional services and design-services procurements.

All proposers shall be required to use only the presentation technology and equipment provided by the County. The use of proposer-supplied or alternative technology shall not be permitted.

The procurement official shall, in advance of the oral presentations, notify all proposers in writing of the specific technology and equipment that will be made available by the County and shall clearly state that only such equipment may be utilized during the presentation.

Recommendation: Online Public Repository for Procurement Records

The Task Force considered a recommendation to establish an online repository accessible to the public for contracts exceeding \$5 million. The proposed repository would include key procurement materials such as solicitation documents, submitted responses, evaluation scoring sheets, recordings of evaluation meetings, and formal objections or substantive correspondence, with discussion emphasizing a focus on formal documents rather than all internal emails.

The primary objective of the recommendation is to reduce duplicative public records requests while enhancing transparency in the procurement process. Taskforce Members referenced similar models used by other jurisdictions, including Broward County, and discussed whether the \$5 million threshold should be adjusted or aligned with existing County thresholds, such as Mayor's authority or selection committee procurements. Timing was a significant consideration, as bidders have limited windows to determine whether to file objections and therefore need timely access to relevant records. Staff also noted operational constraints, including reliance on another department for website postings and the impracticality of immediate publication of all materials.

A motion was made and seconded, and the recommendation was approved with direction for staff to return with the proposed policy and timing framework. (8-0 Approved)

Recommendation: Consolidation of Due Diligence, Forms, and Affidavits

The Task Force discussed opportunities to improve efficiency by reducing redundant due diligence documents, affidavits, and forms that are repeatedly required across multiple proposals. Staff presented a table outlining which forms are mandated by statute, which could be eliminated with legislative changes, which could be consolidated into fewer documents, and which must remain proposal-specific, such as subcontractor lists and bonds.

The discussion reflected strong support for stripping and consolidating forms wherever legally permissible and for pursuing county legislative changes to remove unnecessary affidavit requirements. Members also agreed that, where feasible, the process should move toward a single affidavit or consolidated attestation, while recognizing that certain state-mandated language may limit full consolidation.

A motion was made and seconded to support staff's recommendations to strip and consolidate forms and affidavits where legally allowable, pursue necessary legislative changes, and advance the single-affidavit concept where feasible. The motion was approved. (8-0)

Proposal size

The Task Force discussed concerns regarding proposal packages growing to 300–400 pages, which creates a significant burden for both selection committee members and staff. There was general support for establishing clearer proposal limits, including the use of executive summaries and page caps by section. Staff advised that draft language addressing these issues is already in development, including the use of “preferred maximums,” and indicated they can present it at a future meeting. Staff was directed to share the draft language electronically in advance of the next meeting to allow members time to review.

Standardized Vendor Submission Checklist

Taskforce member Maira presented a recommendation to establish a standardized submission checklist to help vendors ensure all required items are included, with the goal of reducing avoidable omissions, protests, and follow-up communications. The Task Force noted that while some agencies rely on submission portals with required upload fields that function as a built-in checklist, not all procurements are configured this way, and a checklist could still provide value. Members also emphasized the need to balance consistency with vendor usability, ensuring the checklist does not prevent submission for items that are otherwise curable. The discussion concluded with agreement on the intent of the recommendation, and further consideration will continue to refine the approach.

Local Preference / Locally Headquartered

The Task Force revisited issues related to local preference and locally headquartered requirements, focusing on the current process that requires vendors to affirmatively “check the box” at the time of bid submission or forfeit the preference. Members noted that this structure can unintentionally penalize genuinely local or locally headquartered firms due to simple oversight, which is inconsistent with the policy objective of keeping County dollars within the local economy.

The primary direction discussed was to pursue legislative modifications so that local or locally headquartered preference is not lost solely because a box was not checked, allowing staff to independently verify eligibility and request clarifying documentation as needed. The group also discussed a cure concept, whereby eligibility could be corrected after submission but prior to award or, in selection committee procurements, before scoring.

As a next step, staff was directed to redistribute their recommendations related to local preference and locally headquartered provisions in advance of the next meeting to allow the Task Force to review and take action.

Adjournment

The meeting concluded after quorum was lost, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.