



## City of Virginia Beach Minority Business Council 2024-2025 Annual Report to City Council

**Author:** Aekta Javia, Chair

**Date:** August 31, 2025

### Executive Summary

The Minority Business Council (MBC), City Council Liaisons and City staff, are pleased to provide the annual report to City Council covering the period of July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025. The MBC would first like to thank the MBC City Council Liaisons, City Councilmembers Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond and Jennifer Rouse, it has been a pleasure to work with both City Councilmembers and they have been very supportive and active in the many events sponsored by the MBC. We look forward to their continued support. The MBC would also like to thank City staff for their unwavering support in supporting the many initiatives of the MBC, we could not do it without them.

In fiscal year 2025 the Minority Business Council held/participated in the following meetings, events, workshops, etc.:

- Seven (7) Monthly Meetings, including their annual retreat in June 2025
- Annual Fall Conference and Expo (November 7, 2024)
- Annual Spring Contractors Roundtable (April 10, 2025)
- MBC Annual Retreat (June 13, 2025)
- Cannabis Task Force
- Commonwealth of Virginia Minority Business Commission
- Various Workshops

The MBC monthly public meetings were held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month at The HIVE. In FY2025. Monthly meetings were held on August 9, 2024, September 13, 2024, October 11, 2025, January 10, 2025, February 14, 2025, March 14, 2025, and May 9, 2025, and June 13, 2025 (Annual Retreat). At each MBC monthly meeting there was an Industry Hour guest speaker. The industry hour topics covered a variety of business opportunities and diversity interests.

This Year the MBC welcomed:

- Francesca Moncion, Hispanic Chamber of Coastal Virginia
  - What is the Hispanic Chamber of Coastal Virginia
  - Ways to be involved
  - The impact of the chamber on the community
- Tim Cook, Director of Procurement, Flatiron
  - Shared details on the Flood Protection Project they were executing in Virginia Beach
  - How to do business with Flatiron
- The Honorable Tiffany Boyle, Commissioner of Revenue, City of Newport News
  - Shared information about the Commonwealth of Virginia's Minority Business Commission

- That the VB MBC played a key role in its formation
  - Shared information on House Bills that the Commission was tracing
- Francine Allen-Humphrey, Director of Financial Counseling Services, Urban League of Hampton Roads
  - Provided a history
  - Shared the information about the various programs offered
- Aisha Van Dussen, SWaM Procurement Program Coordinator, City of Virginia Beach
  - Presented City of Virginia Beach FY 2024 Annual Report for Awards and Expenditures to Minority, Women and Service-Disabled/Veteran-Owned Businesses
    - Included Spend and Award Data
    - And all outreach events attended and provided by City of Virginia Beach SWaM Office
- Alicia Smith, Director of Procurement, Virginia Beach City Public Schools
  - Presented an overview of the spend award data to SWaM Businesses
  - Shared that VBCPS has migrated to Oracle

The MBC's Fall Conference and Expo, a longstanding event with over two decades of history, continues to be a significant success in the Hampton Roads region and attracts localities and school divisions throughout the Hampton Roads region, including some federal and state agencies. Held on November 7, 2024, at the Virginia Beach Convention Center, the Expo featured more than 40 exhibitors offering valuable contracting opportunities to small businesses across the Hampton Roads community. This eagerly awaited annual gathering continues to attract many small business owners as well as prime contractors looking to engage small business owners in contracting opportunities.

Themed “Building Towards Success: Navigating Challenges, Embracing Opportunities”, the Expo served as a platform for education, inspiration, and personalized interactions with Hampton Roads resource partners, procurement professionals, and business owners seeking strategic opportunities to enhance their business endeavors. The event showcased guest speakers Precious L. Williams, CEO and founder, of the Perfect Pitch Group. Ms. Williams brought unmatched energy, expertise, and authenticity to the stage as she covered the importance of being able to pitch and why it's important in today's business world.

In the spring of each year, the MBC hosts its annual Roundtable event. While past Roundtables were primarily construction-focused, the 2025 Spring Roundtable shifted its emphasis to address broader resources vital to the small business community. This year's program highlighted topics such as access to capital, marketing strategies, and guidance on doing business with the City of Virginia Beach, with a special focus on upcoming subcontracting opportunities with the Windsor Woods, Princess Anne Plaza & The Lakes Drainage Improvements Project. Held on April 16, 2025, at The HIVE Small Business Resource Center, the event featured engaging breakout sessions including Access to Capital with LISC, Doing Business with the City of Virginia Beach presented by the SWaM Business Office and Flatiron, and Marketing Essentials led by Karlaa Greggory. Guest speaker Floyd Miller, President and CEO of the Metropolitan Business League, brought additional insight and inspiration to attendees as well as highlighted the resources available with the Metropolitan Business League. The Roundtable also included exhibit tables hosted by Branch Civil, Flatiron Construction, and the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity. Since its inception, this event has proven to be a valuable platform for small businesses to connect directly with project owners, resource providers, and financial institutions, fostering relationships and access to critical tools for growth and success.

The MBC holds an annual retreat which provides an opportunity to discuss accomplishments and upcoming goals and objectives. Details of fiscal year 2025 goals and accomplishments, as well as the MBC's upcoming goals and objectives are detailed below. This year's Retreat was facilitated by, Jonathan Zur, President & CEO of the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities. During the retreat the MBC discussed the benefits of inclusive workforces, characteristics of inclusive leaders, and approaches to courageous conversations. They also discussed the opportunities on enhancing communication within subcommittees, with associates, and the community. MBC members also elected the executive board members for the 2024-2025 year and congratulations to the new Executive Board.



*Figure 1: Pictured left to right: Olga Torres-Baker, Financial Counselor, Tara Jones, Secretarial Officer, Aekta Javia, Chair, Cavelle Mollineaux, Vice Chair*

The MBC has several committees as well, and the following individuals have been appointed to serve as the Chair of the following committees:

- Outreach Committee Chair – Aekta Javia
  - Includes goals that develop and progress legislation, ordinances, administrative directives, and procedures.
- Policy Committee Chair – Cavelle Mollineaux
  - Includes goals that develop and progress legislation, ordinances, administrative directives, and procedures.
- Minority Awareness Committee Chair – Jaketa Clark-Thompson
  - Accomplishments: Rebranding and marketing project, update of Mission and Vision, and Associate recruitment
  - Social media platform management including Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and LinkedIn
- Data and Analysis Committee Chair – Cynthia Terry
  - Includes goals that help develop [SWaM] business capabilities via collection, and analysis of minority and women-owned business contract awards and expenditures with the city; and the establishment and maintenance of data and directories on minority and women-owned businesses and business activities in the city and throughout the region.

We thank all our members and associates for their dedication and hard work in serving on the Minority Business Council.

Members of the MBC also serve on the following boards and commission:

- Cannabis Task Force
- Commonwealth of Virginia Minority Business Commission
  - Initial task force

The MBC continues to host and participate in many workshops here in Virginia Beach and throughout the region. Below is a list of workshops that the MBC has had the pleasure of hosting/participating in as facilitators, guest speakers, and/or exhibitors:

- Growth Activities Program
- VB UPLIFT Program
  - Fall 2024 Cohort
  - Spring 2025 Cohort
- Perfecting Your Pitch
- Marketing Master Class
  - Personal Branding Marketing Workshop
  - DIY Social Media Marketing
  - Leveraging Artificial Intelligence
- Small Business Financial Bootcamp
- Doing Business with the City of Virginia Beach Workshop Series
- Disparity Study Community Outreach Meetings
- MBC Events
  - Spring Contractors Roundtable
  - MBC Networking Event
  - Fall Conference and Expo
- Flatiron Outreach Events
- Attended other Agency events
  - AABAC ProcureCon Industry Day and Buyer Expo- Region 757
  - Newport News Procurement/SWaM Fair
  - SBSD Financial Symposium
  - CNU SWaM Fair
  - Women in Defense Industry Day
  - How to Do Business with the City of Portsmouth
  - City of Chesapeake Vendor Fair and Networking Event

The MBC attends the City of Virginia Beach State of the City address each year and the State of the Region address, as well as supports the annual Virginia Beach Development Authority Golf Tournament.

## **Mission Statement**

The Minority Business Council's continuing goal is to advance and facilitate an environment of business opportunities, focusing on increasing expenditures available to small, minority, women, and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses in Virginia Beach while continuing to address the needs and goals of these business owners throughout Virginia Beach as a means to further the city's economic development thus driving the success of the economy of the state of Virginia as a whole.

## **Vision**

To provide guidance, business assistance, educational resources, seminars, purchasing listings, upcoming business opportunities, and various other outlets to small, women, and minority businesses throughout Virginia Beach.

## Accomplishment of Goals and Objectives

Over the past fiscal year, the MBC successfully accomplished the following goals and objectives, which are in line with the MBC's mission and vision:

- HB2751: List of businesses afforded preferential treatment to include “military family-owned business”
- SB913: limitation upon imported goods where there is “forced or indentured labor”

### Bills of interest:

- HB2751: List of businesses afforded preferential treatment to include “military family-owned business”
- HB1922: VPPA; Small Business Enhancement Program
- SB913: limitation upon imported goods where there is “forced or indentured labor”

## Membership and Attendance

### *Membership Roster FY2024 – 2025*

MBC Members	Beginning Date	Expiration Date
Rhonda Alexander	6/1/2024	5/31/2026
Jaketa Clark-Thompson	10/20/2020	5/31/2026
Karla Gregory	10/5/2021	9/30/2025
Ed Hopper	7/18/2021	5/31/2025
Aekta Javia	3/1/2025	5/31/2027
Tara Jones	6/1/2022	5/31/2026
Krishna Loftus	6/15/2021	5/31/2027
Cavelle Mollineaux	10/5/2021	9/30/2025
Cynthia Terry	3/19/2024	10/31/2026
Olga Torres Baker	7/18/2017	5/31/2027
Herman E. Jr. Valentine	10/5/2021	9/30/2025

### MBC Associates:

- Cuprice Anthony-Cox
- Eric Camacho
- Ebony Malone
- Cory McCoy
- Grace Peart
- Ryan Turner
- Alberto Zegarra Alva

*Attendance report:*

City of Virginia Beach  
Minority Business Council  
Attendance Record  
Jan 1, 2024 – Dec 31, 2024

Name	Term Expires on:	Jan 12 <sup>th</sup>	Feb 9 <sup>th</sup>	Mar 8 <sup>th</sup>	April 12 <sup>th</sup> (Spring Event)	May 10 <sup>th</sup>	June 13 <sup>th</sup> (MBC Retreat)	July 12 <sup>th</sup>	Aug 9 <sup>th</sup>	Sept 13 <sup>th</sup>	Oct 11 <sup>th</sup>	Nov 7 <sup>th</sup> (MBC Fall Event)	Dec 13 <sup>th</sup> Networking Event	Total Present
Alexander, Rhonda	05/31/2026	-	-	-	-	-	P	-	-	P	P	P	-	4/4
Clark-Thompson, Jaketa R.	05/31/2026	E	E	P/V	E	E	E	-	-	A	P	A	P	2/9
Gregory, Karlaa	09/30/2025	P	P	E	E	E	P	-	-	P	P	P	-	6/9
Hopper, Ed	05/31/2025	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	P	9/9
Javia, Aekta	05/31/2025	P	P	P	E	P	P	-	-	p/v	P	P	P	8/9
Jones, Tara	05/31/2026	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	-	9/9
Knight-Thompson, Frances	05/31/2024	P/V	P	P/V	P	P	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	5/5
Loftus, Krisha	05/31/2025	P/V	P	P	E	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	-	8/9
Mollineaux, Cavelle	09/30/2025	P	P	P	E	P	P	-	-	P	P	A	-	7/9
Terry, Cynthia M.	10/31/2026	-	-	-	P	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	-	6/6
Torres Baker, Olga	05/31/2025	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	P	9/9
Valentine, Herman E. Jr	09/30/2025	P	E	P	P	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	-	8/9
Watson, Damen	10/31/2024	P	E	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/2
This row indicates if there was a quorum; total number of members in person/ total number of appointed members		8/11	8/11	7/10	6/11	9/11	10/11	-	-	8/11	11/11	9/11	4/11	
City Council Liaisons/ Department Staff Liaisons														
Council Woman Jennifer Rouse		P	C	P	P		E	-	-	A		E	-	6/10
Council Woman Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond			C				P	-	-	A		p	-	6/10
Staff Liaison, Keith Lee Minority Business Coordinator		P	C	P	P	P	P	R	-	-	-	-	-	10/1
Staff Liaison, Nikita Susens Minority Business Coordinator Asst		P	C	P	P	P	E	-	-	p	p	p	-	10/1

Figure 2

Figure 2 **Key:** Present (P); Present/Virtually (P/V); Absent (A); Resigned (R); Excused Absence (E); Cancelled (C) This table showcases the attendance of all the Minority Business Council members for 2024.


**City of Virginia Beach  
Minority Business Council  
Attendance Record  
Jan 1, 2025 – Dec 31, 2025**

Name	Term Expires on:	Jan 10 <sup>th</sup>	Feb 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mar 14 <sup>th</sup>	April 10 <sup>th</sup> (Spring Event)	May 9 <sup>th</sup>	June 13 <sup>th</sup> (MBC Retreat)	July 11 <sup>th</sup>	Aug 8 <sup>th</sup>	Sept 12 <sup>th</sup>	Oct 10 <sup>th</sup>	Nov 6 <sup>th</sup> (MBC Fall Event)	Dec 12 <sup>th</sup>	Total Present
Alexander, Rhonda	05/31/2026	P	P/V	A	A	P	P	C	C				-	4/6
Clark-Thompson, Jaketa R.	05/31/2026	P/V	P	P	A	P/V	P/V	C	C				-	5/6
Gregory, Karlaa	09/30/2025	P/V	A	A	p	P/V	P/V	C	C				-	4/6
Hopper, Ed	05/31/2025	P	P	A	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4/5
Javia, Aekta	05/31/2025	P	P	P	P	P/V	P	C	C				-	6/6
Jones, Tara	05/31/2026	A	A	P	P	A	P	C	C				-	3/6
Loftus, Krishna	05/31/2025	P	P	A	A	P	P	C	C				-	4/6
Mollineaux, Cavelle	09/30/2025	P	P	P	P	P	P	C	C				-	6/6
Peart, Grace	5/31/2027	-	-	-	-	-	P	C	C				-	1/1
Terry, Cynthia M.	10/31/2026	P	A	A	P	P	P	C	C				-	4/6
Torres Baker, Olga	05/31/2025	P	P	P	P	P	P	C	C				-	6/6
Valentine, Herman E. Jr	09/30/2025	P	P	P	P	P	P	R	-				-	6/6
<b>This row indicates if there was a quorum; total number of members in person/ total number of appointed members</b>		10/11	8/11	6/11	8/11	10/11	11/11	-	-					
<b>City Council Liaisons/ Department Staff Liaisons</b>														
Council Woman Jennifer Rouse		A	A	A	A	A	P						-	1/6
Council Woman Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond		P	A	P	A	P	A						-	3/6
Staff Liaison, Nikita Susens Minority Business Coordinator		P	P	P	P	P	P						-	6/6

Figure 3

*Figure 3 Key: Present (P); Present/Virtually (P/V); Absent (A); Resigned (R); Excused Absence (E); Cancelled (C) This table showcases the attendance of all the Minority Business Council members for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025. Mr. Valentine resigned on June 13, 2025; Ms. Peart appointed in June 2025.*

*Volunteer hours report:*

<div>  <div> <b>All Service By Volunteer</b>            City of Virginia Beach, Office of Volunteer Resources            Finance         </div> </div>			
Volunteer	FY 24-25 Hours	FY 25-26 Hours	Total Hours
Alexander, Rhonda	17:00	1:00	18:00
Anthony-Cox, Cuprice	15:30	0:00	15:30
Camacho, Eric	13:00	0:00	13:00
Clark-Thompson, Jaketa	8:00	1:00	9:00
Gregory, Karlal	15:00	0:00	15:00
Hopper, Edward	55:00	0:00	55:00
Javia, Aekta	23:00	11:00	34:00
Jones, Tara	20:30	3:00	23:30
Loftus, Krisha	18:00	1:30	19:30
Malone, Ebony	20:00	0:00	20:00
McCoy, Cory	6:00	0:00	6:00
Mollineaux, Cavelle	9:30	3:30	13:00
Peart, Grace	9:00	1:00	10:00
Terry, Cynthia	8:00	1:00	9:00
Torres Baker, Olga	41:30	11:00	52:30
Turner, Ryan	5:00	0:00	5:00

*Figure 4*

Figure 4 shows the total volunteer hours for the members and associates of the Minority Business Council: Rhonda Alexander 18 hours, Cuprice Anthony-Cox 15.30 hours, Eric Camacho 13, Jaketa Clark-Thompson 9 hours, Karlal Gregory 15 hours, Edward Hopper 55 hours, Aekta Javia 34 hours, Tara Jones 23:30 hours, Krisha Loftus 19:30 hours, Ebony Malone 20 hours, Cory McCoy 6 hours, Cavelle Mollineaux 13 hours, Grace Peart 10 hours, Cynthia Terry 9 hours, Olga Torres Baker 52:30 hours, and Ryan Turner 5 hours.



Volunteer	FY 24-25 Hours	FY 25-26 Hours	Total Hours
Valentine, Herman	31:00	0:00	31:00
Zegarra Alva, Alberto	6:00	0:00	6:00
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>321:00</b>	<b>34:00</b>	<b>355:00</b>

Figure 5

Figure 5 shows the total volunteer hours for the members and associates of the Minority Business Council: Herman Valentine 31 hours and Alberto Zegarra Alva with 6 hours, with the MBC having a grand total of 355 hours.

## Budget Report

*The Minority Business Council does not have a budget. However, the SWaM Business Office's budget supports events, workshops, conferences, etc. for the Minority Business Council. The MBC received \$21,100 in sponsorships in support of the annual MBC Conference and Expo held on November 7, 2024.*

## Goals and Objectives for the Coming Year

- *Engage Virginia Beach School Board*
  - *Work with the City's SWaM Procurement Program efforts.*
- *Effective communication within the MBC*
  - *Communication within subcommittees and associates*
- *Continue to improve the Social Media Strategy*
  - *Increase engagement and share education, events and business resources.*
- *Updated Disparity Study*
  - *Review results and recommendations.*

## Recommendations to City Council

The Minority Business Council currently does not have any recommendations for City Council.

## Additional Information

Should you have any questions or require a formal City Council briefing on the work of this team, please feel free to reach out to Nikita Susens, SWaM Business Coordinator, [nsusens@vbgov.com](mailto:nsusens@vbgov.com) or 757.385.6810 or contact Lavera Tolentino, Purchasing Agent, [ltolenti@vbgov.com](mailto:ltolenti@vbgov.com) or 757.385.4438.