

Business Resource Guide ***Business resources that can assist with the growth and development of your business:***

Business Development Board of Palm Beach County -
(561) 684-2401

Hispanic Human Resources - (561) 641-7400

Palm Beach County Resource Center - (561) 863-0895

Palm Beach County Business Incubators:

Business & Economic Development & Revitalization
Corp. (BEDR) - (561) 686-0064

Delray Beach Center for Technology, Enterprise and
Development (TED) - (561) 265-3790

Enterprise Development for Glades Entrepreneurs
(EDGE) - (561) 993-3343

Palm Beach County:

Office of Small Business Assistance (OSBA) - (561) 233-1550

International Airport - (561) 471-7447

Engineering Department - (561) 684-4000

Purchasing Department - (561) 233-1500

Facilities Development & Operations - (561) 233-0200

Business Loan Fund - (561) 838-9027

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) - (561) 833-1672

Small Business Development Center - (561) 362-5620

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) - (305) 536-5521

Business Resource Checklist

- Accounting
- Business Plans
- Credit Counseling
- Incubators
- International Trade
- License/Certification
- Marketing Plans
- Relocation Assistance
- Business Counseling
- Business Roundtables
- Employee Training Programs
- Legal
- Loans/Financing
- PBC Marketing Assistance



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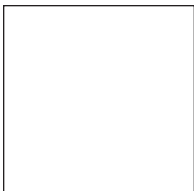
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50 South Military Trail, Ste. 209
West Palm Beach, FL 33415

Office Of Small Business Assistance
Of Palm Beach County





Pamela Collins, Editor in Chief

The JOC Program: A Special Opportunity for Small Business

If you have a business that can complete small and medium construction-related projects, then Palm Beach County's Job Ordering Contracting Program (JOC) is a special opportunity you should be looking into. This efficiency program allows small and medium projects to be covered under an umbrella of one single, competitively bid contract. It is an effective process for government agencies that have ongoing smaller construction jobs and maintenance needs, and a boon to the smaller contractor who may have fewer resources than larger outfits to be continually bidding on individual projects.

The JOC program provides bidding based upon an adjustment rate applied uniformly to over 200,000 unit prices. The process was developed for the County's Facilities Management Division by the Gordian Group, which serves as a consultant to Palm Beach County. One of the assets of the program is that it can shave three months off the normal bidding process time for projects over \$25,000. Another advantage is that JOC bids can be valid for up to three years, counting in annual renewal options.

The JOC program was formally adopted in 1995. Any general contractor licensed in Palm Beach County with commercial experience can potentially become a JOC contractor. The first step is to be a registered vendor with Palm Beach County. Contracts are awarded to the lowest responsive bidder in a JOC competitive solicitation. Subcontractors must also be licensed and registered vendors. Minority vendors must be registered with the Office of

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BK Electric *(Business Profile of a JOC Subcontractor)*

Bonzie King was born in Edison, Georgia, but has spent the majority of his life in Southern Florida - from grade school to JFK High School from which he graduated in 1969.

His company, B K Electric, based in Riviera Beach, has been in business for 15 years, and has been certified through Palm Beach County's M/WBE Program since its inception in October 1991. The company has also been certified as an M/WBE with the State of Florida since 1993.

Mr. King decided to go into business for himself in 1974. Since 1969 he had been a sheet metal mechanic for Pratt & Whitney and was laid off, which, unbeknownst to him at that time, was a favor. After being laid off he went back into the electrical trade, and was immediately hired by Lawrence Electric, thus resuming his interest in that trade. Mr. King had been working as an apprentice in the electrical trade with Hodges & Son since he was about 14 years old.

Mr. King worked for Lawrence Electric for 15 years as a journeyman, and was grandfathered in to take the master's exam because of his years of experience. He then went to Concept Electrical in Fort Lauderdale, which prepared him for the exam. Bonzie emphatically states, "It took me two or three tries, but I finally got my master electrician's license in '84. I opened up my own business, B K Electric, in January 1985."

"When I started B K Electric it was just me. It was a goal I had set for myself, that I wanted to be an electrical contractor. I had no employees, one truck, and I was going around doing odd jobs. I was doing just residential repair, remodeling, putting in air conditioning, even hanging ceiling fans, anything that would pay the bills. Then one inspector advised me that I needed to get my license. When I got my license in '84 I had no employees. My first job was a day care center in West Palm Beach as a subcontractor for Sunshine Builders. I hired my brother and a couple other guys to help me, and those guys have been with me ever since."

The first job awarded to B K Electric paid \$15.00 an hour. Word spread about the quality of work, and from that point on B K Electric was sought after by several local contractors. The company recently completed a job with the Trump Golf Course for about \$200,000. B K Electric also completed a job for \$185,000 on an apartment building in West Palm Beach. Mr. King stated, "The prime contractor went bankrupt and I lost some money there. I thought this was going to take me under."

"Since becoming a JOC contractor the company's revenues have more than doubled. In 1998 we grossed about \$600,000. Before our involvement with JOC we grossed between \$200,000-\$300,000. JOC is keeping us very busy. To date, we have 11 full time and 3 part time employees. We average about three additional employees every now and then as jobs come up. Working with the JOC Program has been a positive experience, because not only has my revenue grown, but I do a lot of different types of work. We did the emergency backup generator for the Fairgrounds, and we got experience working with generators. JOC provides a variety of things, not just one thing. They give you a chance to do all kinds of electrical work."

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CHARLIE'S CORNER ☺

**By Charles Collins II
Director, OSBA**

History of the M/WBE Program

In January 1989 the United States Supreme Court established new standards by which local governments could constitutionally operate local M/WBE programs to eradicate the effects of past discrimination within their own jurisdiction; provided they could show at least passive participation in a system of race and gender exclusion practiced by market area businesses. The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) commissioned a Disparity Study to determine if the County's past procurement practices were discriminatory, and recommended corrective actions to remedy any disparities found.

The Disparity Study covered an eight (8) year period (FY 1981-1989). On January 17, 1991 MGT of America, Inc. concluded in its Revised Final Report that Palm Beach County had, in fact, been a "passive" participant in discrimination against minority and women owned business enterprises in Palm Beach County. The BCC concluded there was a compelling governmental interest to justify the creation, implementation and enforcement of an M/WBE Ordinance (88-4).

"Creating an Affirmative Action Program which is a legal remedy to overcome specific exclusion of specific groups . . . it's not something that gives people a little boost up . . . it is a legal remedy for a legal wrong. It must be understood this way or else we don't understand it at all."

On April 9, 1991 the BCC adopted M/WBE Ordinance No. 91-34, setting up reporting requirements, goal setting procedures and parameters for operating an M/WBE Program.

On October 19, 1993 Ordinance No. 93-28 replaced 91-34 and required that the "narrowly tailored" actions to remedy past discrimination not last longer than the discriminatory effects it was designed to eliminate.

Sunset Provision

The Sunset provision of Ordinance No. 93-28 requires that the M/WBE Program sunset on September 30, 2002, and that six (6) months prior to the sunset the County should review all of the successes and failures of the M/WBE Program and determine if there is a need for continuing the program.

The experiences of all M/WBE firms represent an important element that the BCC can use as a basis to determine the future of the M/WBE Program. The Office of Small Business Assistance proposes a Fact Gathering Process inclusive of a Vendor Survey, Personal Interviews, Focus Groups and a review of all race/gender neutral measures. Your cooperation will be helpful in gathering this information.

Feel free to E-mail your comments to: ccollins@co.palm-beach.fl.us or by writing to OSBA, 50 S. Military Trail, Suite 209, West Palm Beach, FL 33415. Please refer to the OSBA web site at <http://www.osba.co.palm-beach.fl.us> for information on upcoming events.

Your participation and cooperation will be appreciated.

Cherish the Front-line People

**By Ron Capute, Sr.
Independent Consultant**

Business is simple. This statement has been voiced by various entrepreneurs and consultants alike. Does this sound perplexing in today's complex, interrelated, global economic environment? If business is supposedly simple, what makes it seem so complicated? I feel that it is dealing with people, both internally and externally. Operating a successful business comes down to how effective business leaders are with people.

I want to start with a very basic concept of the relationship between customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction. Is it a two-way street? I think so. If an employee is treated well, has a good feeling of self esteem, and is empowered to do the job properly, how will the employee treat the customer? Very well. You guessed it! Will that increase customer satisfaction? Right again! On the other hand, does a satisfied customer improve employee satisfaction? What is it like to deal all day with customers who are not happy with your product, delivery schedule, timeliness of service? When this happens, do your workers jump out of bed and rush to the job? Maybe not. Yes, there is a relationship between customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction.

What can you, as business leaders, do to influence this relationship? It all starts with the people. More specifically, the front-line people. The front-line people are the ones most responsible for the delivery of your products and services. Their treatment of your customers sends out a long and lasting image of what your company is all about. The treatment of your front line will determine the treatment of your customer. It is that simple. When your business gets hectic, complicated and difficult, pause for a moment. Remember what's important. Cherish the front-line people! It will yield huge dividends.

In future articles, I will discuss ways to motivate, reward and recognize employees, how to cherish the front-line people. Providing employees with the proper incentives is something that is seriously lacking in today's workplace.

The JOC Program

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Small Business Assistance to qualify for M/WBE status.

JOC contracts are assigned geographically with one bonded contract each in the North and Central Zones, and two bond waiver contracts in the South Zone. The goal for minority participation over the course of each contract is 20%, with 10% being certified black business. Performance and payment bonds of \$500,000 are required of the prime contractor only.

Contractors can find out about JOC opportunities through published bids in the Palm Beach Post, Palm Beach Gazette, El Latino Semanal and Florida Photo News. Bid documents are also available for review at the Palm Beach County Resource Center, Hispanic Human Resources Office, Palm Beach County Office of Small Business Assistance and the Palm Beach Builders Exchange.

For more information about the Job Ordering Contracting Program, contact Chauncey Taylor II, Director of Palm Beach County's Facilities Services at 233-0221, or stop in to visit us at the Office of Small Business Assistance.

BK Electric

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One benefit of the JOC (Job Order Contracting) program is that subcontractors are not required to be bonded. However, due to the experience and track record as a JOC contractor, B K Electric is prepared to face this challenge.

Mr. King appreciates the business acquired through the JOC Program and emphatically states, "The key to my success is to be on time. In the JOC Program they need you there on time, they need you there to do a quality job as efficiently as you can, having quality help, good materials, and leaving the place like you found it."

B K Electric does work in the private sector as well, and Mr. King refers to jobs involving 22,000 square foot homes in Martin County and on Hutchinson Island. "B K is doing pretty good in the private sector. The work we do is approximately %75 government and %25 private. We do a lot of business with JOC." B K Electric provides services in new commercial and residential construction; remodeling and renovations; wiring installation; lighting and exterior energy conservation; retrofit; and fire alarm systems. For the past several years, B K Electric has worked extensively with the County's JOC Program and has been their most productive subcontractor. According to Chauncey Taylor II, Director of Palm Beach County's Facilities Services, "The company's work is of such quality that he is used almost exclusively by JOC contractors."

Save These Dates

Free Small Business Seminars

OSBA is sponsoring the following seminars at the Clayton Hutcheson Center, 531/599 N. Military Trail, West Palm Beach:

- February 24** Human Resource Tips for Small Business Owners: Finding and Keeping Good Employees - Learn how to seek out and retain the most valuable asset of your company - your employees.
- April 27** Increase Profitability by Developing High Performance Work Teams - Find out how the pros keep their workforce motivated and productive.
- June 22** How to Successfully Manage Multiple Projects in Your Small Business - Having trouble juggling your workload? Find out how to manage your time and get organized.
- August 17** Mastering New Business Online - The Internet is exploding exponentially in the business world - don't be left out!

If you are interested in attending any session, please call our office (233-1550) to register.

Retirement Plans:

A "Must" for Small Business Owners

Most small business owners don't think of retirement plans when thinking about deductions and their yearly tax bill. This is unfortunate, since experts contend that retirement plans are one of the best tax breaks available to small business owners.

If you visualize yourself enjoying retirement life, the uncertainties and risks that come with running your own business make it imperative that you save for retirement. You can personally deduct contributions to your own account, and your company gets to deduct contributions you make on behalf of your employees. In addition to the tax benefits you receive, a company-sponsored retirement plan is a great way to attract and retain valuable employees.

There are a number of retirement plan options in place for small business owners. SIMPLEs, SEPs, Keoghs, and IRAs all offer significant tax advantages. Depending on the type of plan you choose, and your earnings, you may be able to shield as much as \$30,000 of your earned income annually. Contact your accountant for more information.

IRS Update

- If you are starting, or already have, a small business and need information on taxes, record keeping, accounting practices, completing Federal business and employment tax returns, and meeting other Federal tax obligations, there is help available. Much of the assistance is free. The service is called Small Business Tax Education Program, or STEP. You can find out more about this program for small business by referring to Tax Topic 103 or mailing the interest form in Publication 1057, Small Business Tax Education Program Brochure, to the nearest IRS Taxpayer Education Coordinator. In addition, the IRS has assembled a business tax kit, Publication 454-A, which contains various forms and publications for persons in business or for those starting a business. For information you can contact the IRS at 1-800-829-4477.
- If you are suffering, or about to suffer, a significant hardship because of the way Internal Revenue laws are being carried out, you may ask for special help from the IRS' Taxpayer Advocate Program (formerly Problem Resolution Office). You may reach that office by dialing 1-877-777-4778 (1-877-PRP-IRSU).