with 19 CFR 351.305, which continues to govern business proprietary information in this segment of the proceeding. Timely written notification of the return/destruction of APO materials or conversion to judicial protective order is hereby requested. Failure to comply with the regulations and terms of an APO is a violation which is subject to sanction.

These amended final results are published in accordance with sections 751(h) and 777(i)(1) of the Act.

Dated: November 30, 2007.

David M. Spooner,

Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.

[FR Doc. E7–23964 Filed 12–10–07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DS–S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administrastion

[C–570–921]

Lightweight Thermal Paper from the People's Republic of China: Notice of Postponement of Preliminary Determination in the Countervailing Duty Investigation

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 11, 2007.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Neubacher or Scott Holland, AD/CVD Operations, Office 1, Import Administration, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230; telephone: (202) 482–5823 and (202) 482–1279, respectively.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On October 29, 2007, the Department of Commerce (the Department) initiated the countervailing duty investigation of lightweight thermal paper (LWTP) from the People's Republic of China (PRC). *See Notice of Initiation of Countervailing Duty Investigation: Lightweight Thermal Paper from the People's Republic of China*, 72 FR 62209 (November 2, 2007). Currently, the preliminary determination is due no later than January 2, 2008.

Postponement of Due Date for Preliminary Determination

On November 20, 2007, Appleton Papers Inc. (petitioner) requested that the Department postpone the preliminary determination of the countervailing duty investigation of LWTP from the PRC. Under section 703(c)(1)(A) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (the Act), the Department may extend the period for reaching a preliminary determination in a countervailing duty investigation until not later than the 130th day after the date on which the administering authority initiates an investigation if the petitioner makes a timely request for an extension of the period within which the determination must be made under subsection (b) (section 703(b) of the Act). Pursuant to section 351.205(e) of the Department's regulations, the petitioners' request for postponement of the preliminary determination was made 25 days or more before the scheduled date of the preliminary determination. Accordingly, we are extending the due date for the preliminary determination by 65 days to no later than March 7, 2008.

This notice is issued and published pursuant to section 703(c)(2) of the Act.

Dated: December 4, 2007.

Stephen J. Claeys,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.

[FR Doc. E7–23958 Filed 12–10–07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DS–S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Minority Business Development Agency

[Docket No.: 071205803–7804–01]

Solicitation of Applications for the Minority Business Opportunity Center (MBOC) Program

AGENCY: Minority Business Development Agency, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with 15 U.S.C. Section 1512 and Executive Order 11625, the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) is soliciting competitive applications from organizations to operate a Minority Business Opportunity Center (MBOC) in the locations and geographical service areas specified in this notice. The MBOC operates through the use of business consultants and provides business assistance and brokering services directly to eligible minority-owned businesses. The MBOC Program's primary evaluation criterion is the dollar value of contracts and financial transactions awarded to eligible minority business enterprises (MBEs). Responsibility for ensuring that applications in response to this competitive solicitation are complete and received by MBDA on time is the sole responsibility of the applicant. Applications submitted must be to operate an MBOC and to provide business assistance and brokering services to eligible clients. Applications that do not meet these requirements will be rejected. This is not a grant program to help start or to further an individual business.

DATES: The closing date for receipt of applications is January 18, 2008 at 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). Completed applications must be received by MBDA at the address below for paper submissions or at *www.Grants.gov* for electronic submissions. The due date and time is the same for electronic submissions as it is for paper submissions. The date that applications will be deemed to have been submitted electronically shall be the date and time received at Grants.gov. Applicants should save and print the proof of submission they receive from Grants.gov. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered. Anticipated time for processing is sixty (60) days from the close of the competition period. MBDA anticipates that awards under this notice will be made with a start date of April 1, 2008.

Pre-Application Conference: In connection with this solicitation, a pre-application teleconference will be held on December 18, 2007 at 1 p.m. (EST). Participants must register at least 24 hours in advance of the teleconference and may participate in person or by telephone. Please visit the MBDA Internet Portal at *http://www.mbda.gov* (MBDA Portal) or contact an MBDA representative listed below for registration instructions.

ADDRESSES: (1a) *Paper Submission—If Mailed*: If the application is sent by postal mail or overnight delivery service by the applicant or its representative, one (1) signed original, plus two (2) copies of the application must be submitted. Applicants are encouraged to also submit an electronic copy of the proposal, budget and budget narrative on a CD–ROM to facilitate the processing of applications. Completed application packages must be mailed to: Office of Business Development—MBOC Program, Office of Executive Secretariat, HCHB, Room 5063, Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230.

Applicants are advised that MBDA's receipt of mail sent via the United States Postal Service may be substantially delayed or suspended in delivery due to security measures. Applicants may

therefore wish to use a guaranteed overnight delivery service. Department of Commerce delivery policies for overnight delivery services require all packages to be sent to the address above.

(1b) *Paper Submission—If Hand-Delivered:* If the application is hand-delivered by the applicant or by its representative, one (1) signed original, plus two (2) copies of the application must be delivered to: U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency, Office of Business Development—MBOC Program (extension 1940), HCHB—Room 1874, Entrance #10, 15th Street, NW. (between Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues), Washington, DC. Applicants are encouraged to also submit an electronic copy of the proposal, budget and budget narrative on a CD–ROM to facilitate the processing of applications.

MBDA will not accept applications that are submitted by the deadline, but that are rejected due to the applicant's failure to adhere to Department of Commerce protocol for hand-deliveries.

(2) *Electronic Submission:* Applicants are encouraged to submit their proposal electronically at *http://www.Grants.gov*. Electronic submissions should be made in accordance with the instructions available at Grants.gov (see *http://www.grants.gov/forapplicants* for detailed information). MBDA strongly recommends that applicants not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov as, in some cases, the process for completing an online application may require 3–5 working days.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information or for an application package, please visit MBDA's Minority Business Internet Portal at *http://www.mbda.gov*. Paper applications may also be obtained by contacting the MBDA Office of Business Development or the MBDA National Enterprise Center (NEC) in the region in which the MBOC will be located (see below Agency Contacts). In addition, Standard Forms (SF) may be obtained by accessing *www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants* or *www.grants.gov*. and Department of Commerce (CD) forms may be accessed at *www.doc.gov/forms*.

Agency Contacts:

1. MBDA Office of Business Development, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room 5075, Washington, DC 20230. *Contact:* Efrain Gonzalez, Chief, 202–482–1940.

2. MBDA Atlanta National Enterprise Center (ANEC), 401 Peachtree Street, NW., Suite 1715, Atlanta, Georgia 30308. This region covers the states and territories of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee and the U.S. Virgin Islands. *Contact:* John Iglehart, Acting Regional Director, 404–730–3313 or 214–767–8001.

3. MBDA Chicago National Enterprise Center (CNEC), 55 E. Monroe Street, Suite 2810, Chicago, Illinois, 60603. This region covers the states of Illinois Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin. *Contact*: Eric Dobyne, Regional Director, 312–353–0182.

4. MBDA Dallas National Enterprise Center (DNEC), 1100 Commerce Street, Room 726, Dallas, Texas 75242. This region covers the states of Arkansas, Colorado, Louisiana, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah and Wyoming. *Contact*: John F. Iglehart, Regional Director, 214–767–8001.

5. MBDA New York National Enterprise Center (NYNEC), 26 Federal Plaza, Room 3720, New York, New York 10278. This region covers the states of Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia. *Contact:* Mr. Heyward Davenport, Regional Director, 212–264–3262.

6. MBDA San Francisco National Enterprise Center (SFNEC), 221 Main Street, Room 1280, San Francisco, California 94105. This region covers the states and territories of Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon and Washington. *Contact:* Linda M. Marmolejo, Regional Director, 415–744–3001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background: The MBOC Program is a key component of MBDA's overall minority business development assistance program and promotes the growth and competitiveness of eligible minority-owned businesses. MBDA currently funds a network of eight (8) MBOC projects located throughout the United States. MBOC operators provide business assistance and brokering services to eligible MBEs, with an emphasis on firms with $500,000 or more in annual revenues or firms with ''rapid growth potential'' (collectively, the ''Strategic Growth Initiative'' or ''SGI'' firms). In addition, MBOC operators provide access to procurement and financing opportunities within the public and private sectors. Pursuant to this notice, competitive applications for new three-year awards are being solicited for the eight (8) MBOC projects set forth below.

Locations and Geographical Service Areas: MBDA is soliciting competitive applications from eligible organizations to operate an MBOC in the following locations and geographical service areas:

Name of MBOC	Location of MBOC	MBOC geographical service area
Alabama MBOC	Mobile, AL	State of Alabama.
Chicago MBOC	Chicago, IL	State of Illinois.
Florida MBOC	Orlando, FL	State of Florida.
Gary MBOC	Gary, IN	State of Indiana.
Los Angeles MBOC	Los Angeles, CA	County of Los Angeles, CA.
New Orleans MBOC	New Orleans, LA	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA MSA.**
Washington, DC MBOC	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV MSA**.	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV MSA.**
Wisconsin MBOC	Milwaukee, WI	State of Wisconsin.

** Metropolitan Statistical Area, please see OMB Bulletin No. 07–01, Update of Statistical Area Definitions and Guidance on Their Uses (December 18, 2006) at *http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/bulletins*.

Electronic Access: A link to the full text of the Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) for this solicitation may be accessed at: *http://www.Grants.gov, http://www.mbda.gov*, or by contacting the appropriate MBDA representative identified above. The FFO contains a full and complete description of the requirements under the MBOC Program. In order to receive proper consideration, applicants must comply with all information and requirements contained in the FFO. Applicants will be able to access, download and submit electronic grant applications for the MBOC Program through *http://www.Grants.gov*. MBDA strongly recommends that applicants

not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov as in some cases the process for completing an online application may require additional time (e.g., 3–5 working days). The date that applications will be deemed to have been submitted electronically shall be the date and time received at Grants.gov. Applicants should save and print the proof of submission they receive from Grants.gov. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

Funding Priorities: Preference may be given during the selection process to applications which address the following MBDA funding priorities:

(a) Proposals that include performance goals that exceed by 10% or more the minimum performance goal requirements set forth in the FFO;

(b) Applicants who are headquartered and demonstrate an exceptional ability and leadership in identifying and working towards the elimination of barriers which limit the access of minority businesses to markets and capital in the applicable MBOC geographical service area;

(c) Applicants who demonstrate an exceptional ability to identify and work with minority firms seeking to obtain large-scale contracts and/or insertion into supply chains with institutional customers;

(d) Proposals that utilize fee for service models and those that use innovative approaches to charging and collecting fees from clients;

(e) Proposals that take a regional approach in providing services to eligible clients;

(f) Proposals from applicants with an existing client base in the applicable MBOC geographic service area that exceeds by 50% or more the applicable performance goal for the minimum number of clients served; or

(g) Proposals that demonstrate an ability to establish an MBOC that has an industry specific focus and that demonstrate the leveraging of one or more economic clusters, including but not limited to aerospace, manufacturing, construction, financial services, information technology and automotive industries.

Funding Availability: MBDA anticipates that a total of approximately $1,750,000 will be available in each of FYs 2008 through 2010 to fund financial assistance awards for the eight (8) MBOC projects referenced in this competitive solicitation. The total award period for awards made under this competitive solicitation is anticipated to be three years and all awards are expected to be made with a start date of April 1, 2008. The anticipated amount of the financial assistance award for each MBOC project (including the minimum 20% non-federal cost share) is as follows:

Project name	April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009			April 1, 2009 through March 31, 2010			April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011		
	Total cost ($)	Federal share ($)	Non-federal share ($) (20% min.)	Total cost ($)	Federal share ($)	Non-federal share ($) (20% min.)	Total cost ($)	Federal share ($)	Non-federal share ($) (20% min.)
Alabama MBOC	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500
Chicago MBOC	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000
Florida MBOC	250,000	200,000	50,000	250,000	200,000	50,000	250,000	200,000	50,000
Gary MBOC	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500
Los Angeles MBOC	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000
Louisiana MBOC	325,000	260,000	65,000	325,000	260,000	65,000	325,000	260,000	65,000
Washington, DC MBOC	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000
Wisconsin MBOC	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500

Applicants must submit project plans and budgets for each of the three (3) program years under the award (April 1, 2008–March 31, 2009, April 1, 2009–March 31, 2010 and April 1, 2010–March 31, 2011). Projects will be funded for no more than one year at a time. Project operators will not compete for funding in subsequent program years within the approved award period. However, operators that fail to achieve a ''satisfactory'' or better performance rating for the preceding program year may be denied second- or third-year funding (as the case may be). Recommendations for second- and third-year funding are generally evaluated by MBDA based on a mid-year performance rating and/or combination of mid-year and cumulative third quarter performance ratings. In making such funding recommendations, MBDA and the Department of Commerce will consider the facts and circumstances of each case, such as but not limited to market conditions, most recent performance of the operator and other mitigating circumstances.

Applicants are hereby given notice that FY 2008 funds have not yet been appropriated for the MBOC program. Accordingly, MBDA issues this notice subject to the appropriations made available under the current continuing resolution, H.J. Res. 52, ''Making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes,'' Public Law 110–92, as amended by H.R. 3222, Public Law 110–116. In no event will MBDA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of other MBDA or Department of Commerce priorities.

Authority: 15 U.S.C. 1512 and Executive Order 11625.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA): 11.803, Minority Business Opportunity Center Program.

Eligibility: For-profit entities (including but not limited to sole-proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations), non-profit organizations, state and local government entities, American Indian Tribes, and educational institutions are eligible to operate an MBOC.

Program Description: MBDA is soliciting competitive applications from organizations to operate a Minority Business Opportunity Center (MBOC) (formerly the Minority Business Opportunity Committee Program). The MBOC will operate through the use of trained professional business consultants who will assist eligible minority entrepreneurs through direct client engagements. The MBOC is supported by a volunteer advisory committee that assists the MBOC operator in implementing program

requirements and providing contract and financing opportunities to eligible minority entrepreneurs.

Minority entrepreneurs eligible for assistance under the MBOC Program are African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Spanish-speaking Americans, Aleuts, Asian Pacific Americans, Native Americans (including Alaska Natives, Alaska Native Corporations and tribal entities), Eskimos, Asian Indians and Hasidic Jews. No service may be denied to any member of the eligible groups listed above.

The MBOC Program generally requires project staff to provide standardized business assistance and brokering services directly to eligible MBE clients, with an emphasis on those firms with $500,000 or more in annual revenues or those eligible firms with ''rapid growth potential'' (''Strategic Growth Initiative'' or ''SGI'' firms); to develop and maintain a network of strategic partnerships; to provide collaborative consulting services with MBDA and other MBDA funded programs and strategic partners; and to provide referral services (as necessary) for client transactions. MBOC operators will assist MBE clients in accessing federal and non-federal contracting and financing opportunities that result in demonstrable client outcomes. The MBOC Program's primary evaluation criterion is the dollar value of contracts and financial transactions awarded to MBEs. MBOCs also provide business assistance services including but not limited to assessing client capabilities and needs, and assisting the client in developing a course of action to successfully obtain contracts and financial transactions. Specific work requirements and performance metrics are used by MBDA to evaluate each project and are a key component of the MBOC program and are fully set forth in the FFO.

The MBOC Program also incorporates an entrepreneurial approach to building market stability and improving quality of services delivered. This strategy expands the reach of the MBOCs by requiring project operators to develop and build upon strategic alliances with public and private sector partners, as a means of serving minority-owned firms within each MBOC's geographical service area. This entrepreneurial strategy expands the reach of the MBOCs by requiring project operators to develop and build upon its advisory committee and strategic alliances with public and private sector partners as a means of serving minority-owned firms within each MBOC's geographical service area. The MBOC Program is also designed to leverage MBDA resources including but not limited to: MBDA Office of Business Development; MBDA National Enterprise Centers; MBDA Business Internet Portal; and MBDA's network of Native American Business Enterprise Centers (NABECs), Minority Business Enterprise Centers (MBECs), and other MBOCs. MBOC operators are required to attend a variety of MBDA training programs designed to increase operational efficiencies and the provision of value-added client services.

MBOC operators are generally required to provide the following three client services: (1) Facilitate the Award of Contract and Financial Transactions—this involves providing business assistance and brokering services to minority-owned businesses, including the identification of public and private sector contract and financing opportunities; (2) MBOC Advisory Committee and Subcommittees—this involves the establishment and operation of an advisory committee consisting of public and private sector executives and key decision makers that assists the MBOC operator in implementing its program and in identifying upcoming contract and financing opportunities for MBEs; and (3) Program Promotion and Advocacy—the MBOC operator is required to promote its activities within the minority business community and to advocate the use of minority businesses with respect to contracting and financing opportunities.

Please refer to the FFO pertaining to this competitive solicitation for a full and complete description of the application and programmatic requirements under the MBOC Program.

Match Requirements: The MBOC Program requires a minimum non-federal cost share of 20%, which must be reflected in the proposed project budget. Non-federal cost share is the portion of the project cost not borne by the Federal Government. Applicants must satisfy the non-federal cost sharing requirements in one or more of the following four means or in any combination thereof: (1) Client fees; (2) applicant cash contributions; (3) applicant in-kind (i.e., non-cash) contributions; or (4) third-party in-kind contributions. The MBOC operator may but is not required to charge client fees for services rendered, although MBDA encourages the applicant to implement a fee-for-service program. Client fees (if imposed) must be used towards meeting non-federal cost share requirements and must be used in furtherance of the program objectives. Applicants will be awarded up to five bonus points to the extent that the proposed project budget includes a non-federal cost share contribution, measured as a percentage of the overall project budget, exceeding 20% (see Evaluation Criterion below).

Evaluation Criterion: Proposals will be evaluated and applicants will be selected based on the below evaluation criterion. The maximum total number of points that an application may receive is 105, including the bonus points for exceeding the minimum required non-federal cost sharing, except when oral presentations are made by applicants. If oral presentations are made (see below: Oral Presentation—Optional), the maximum total of points that can be earned is 115. The number of points assigned to each evaluation criterion will be determined on a competitive basis by the MBDA review panel based on the quality of the application with respect to each evaluation criterion.

1. Applicant Capability (40 Points)

Proposals will be evaluated with respect to the applicant's experience and expertise in providing the work requirements listed. Specifically, proposals will be evaluated as follows:

(a) *Community*—Experience in and knowledge of the minority community, minority business sector and strategies for enhancing its growth and expansion; particular emphasis shall be on expanding SGI firms. Consideration will be given as to whether the applicant has an ''established presence'' in the applicable MBOC geographical service area at the time of its application. For this purpose, ''established presence'' means that the applicant has had an office in the applicable MBOC geographical service area for at least three (3) years preceding the date of this FFO and has established working relationships with purchasing and financing organizations in such area (4 points);

(b) *Business Consulting (Brokering)*—Experience in and knowledge of brokering procurements and financial transaction with respect to minority firms, with an emphasis on SGI firms in the applicable MBOC geographical service area (5 points);

(c) *Financing*—Experience in and knowledge of the preparation and formulation of successful financial transactions, with an emphasis on the applicable MBOC geographical service area (5 points);

(d) *Procurements and Contracting*—Experience in and knowledge of the public and private sector contracting opportunities for minority businesses, as well as demonstrated expertise in assisting clients into supply chains (5 points);

(e) *Financing Networks*—Resources and professional relationships within

the corporate, banking and investment community that may be beneficial to minority-owned firms (5 points);

(f) *Establishment of a Self-Sustainable Service Model*—Summary plan to establish a self-sustainable model for continued services to the MBE community beyond the three-year MBDA award period (3 points);

(g) *MBE Advocacy*—Experience and expertise in advocating on behalf of minority communities and minority businesses, both as to specific transactions in which a minority business seeks to engage and as to broad market advocacy for the benefit of the minority community at large (3 points); and

(h) *Key Staff*—Assessment of the qualifications, experience and proposed role of staff that will operate the MBOC. In particular, an assessment will be made to determine whether proposed key staff possesses the expertise in utilizing information systems and the ability to successfully deliver program services. At a minimum the applicant must identify a proposed project director (10 points).

2. Resources (20 Points)

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated as followed:

(a) *Resources*—Resources (not included as part of the non-federal cost share) that will be used in implementing the program, including but not limited to existing prior and/or current data lists that will serve in fostering immediate success for the MBOC (8 points);

(b) *Location*—Assessment of the applicant's strategic rationale for the proposed physical location of the MBOC. Applicant is encouraged to establish a location for the MBOC that is in a building which is separate and apart from any of the applicant's existing offices in the geographical service area (2 points);

(c) *Partners*—How the applicant plans to establish and maintain the network of strategic partners and the manner in which these partners will support the MBOC in meeting program performance goals (5 points); and

(d) *Equipment*—How the applicant plans to satisfy the MBOC information technology requirements, including computer hardware, software requirements and network map (5 points).

3. Techniques and Methodologies (20 Points)

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated as follows:

(a) *Performance Measures*—For each program year, the manner in which the applicant relates each performance measure to the financial information and market resources available in the applicable MBOC geographical service area (including existing client list); how the applicant will create MBOC brand recognition (marketing plan); and how the applicant will satisfy program performance goals. In particular, emphasis may be placed on the manner in which the applicant matches MBOC performance goals with client service hours and how it accounts for existing market conditions in its strategy to achieve such goals (10 points);

(b) *Start-up Phase*—How the applicant will commence MBOC operations within the initial 30-day period. The MBOC shall have thirty (30) days to become fully operational after an award is made (3 points); and

(c) *Work Requirement Execution Plan*—The applicant will be evaluated on how effectively and efficiently staff time will be used to achieve the work requirements, particularly with respect to periods beyond the start-up phase (7 points).

4. Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative (20 Points)

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated as follows:

(a) *Reasonableness, Allowability and Allocability of Proposed Program Costs.* All of the proposed program costs expenditures should be discussed and the budget line-item narrative must match the proposed budget. Fringe benefits and other percentage item calculations should match the proposed budget line-item and narrative (5 points);

(b) *Non-Federal Cost Share.* The required 20% non-Federal share must be adequately addressed and properly documented, including but not limited to how client fees (if proposed) will be used by the applicant in meeting the non-federal cost-share (5 points); and

(c) *Performance-Based Budgeting.* The extent to which the line-item budget and budget narrative relate to the accomplishment of the MBOC work requirements and performance measures (i.e., performance-based budgeting) (10 points).

Bonus for Non-Federal Cost Sharing (maximum of 5 points): Proposals with non-federal cost sharing exceeding 20% of the total project costs will be awarded bonus points on the following scale: more than 20%—less than 25% = 1 point; 25% or more—less than 30% = 2 points; 30% or more—less than 35% = 3 points; 35% or more—less than 40% = 4 points; and 40% or more = 5 points. Non-federal cost sharing of at least 20% is required under the MBOC Program. Non-federal cost sharing is the portion of the total project cost not borne by the Federal Government and may be met by the applicant in any one or more of the following four means (or in a combination thereof): (1) Client fees (if proposed); (2) cash contributions; (3) non-cash applicant contributions; or (4) third party in-kind contributions.

5. Oral Presentation—Optional (10 Points)

Oral presentations are optional and held only when requested by MBDA. This action may be initiated for the top two (2) ranked applications for each project and will be applied on a consistent basis for each project competition. Oral presentations will be used to establish a final evaluation and ranking.

The applicant's presentation will be evaluated as to the extent to which the presentation demonstrates:

(a) How the applicant will effectively and efficiently assist MBDA in the accomplishment of its mission (2 points);

(b) Business operating priorities designed to manage a successful MBOC (2 points);

(c) A management philosophy that achieves an effective balance between micromanagement and complete autonomy for its Project Director (2 points);

(d) Robust search criteria for the identification of a Project Director (1 point);

(e) Effective employee recruitment and retention policies and procedures (1 point); and

(f) A competitive and innovative approach to exceeding performance requirements (2 points).

Review and Selection Process:

1. Initial Screening

Prior to the formal paneling process, each application will receive an initial screening to ensure that all required forms, signatures and documentation are present. An application will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated by the review panel if it is received after the closing date for receipt of applications, the applicant fails to submit an original, signed Form SF–424 by the application closing date (paper applications only), or the application does not provide for the operation of an MBOC. Other application deficiencies may be accounted for through point deductions during panel review.

2. Panel Review

Each application will receive an independent, objective review by a panel qualified to evaluate the

applications submitted. The review panel will consist of at least 3 persons, all of whom will be full-time federal employees and at least one of whom will be an MBDA employee, who will review the applications for a specified project based on the above evaluation criterion. Each reviewer shall evaluate and provide a score for each proposal. Each project review panel (through the panel Chairperson) shall provide the MBDA National Director (Recommending Official) with a ranking of the applications based on the average of the reviewers' scores and shall also provide a recommendation regarding funding of the highest scoring application.

3. Oral Presentation—Upon MBDA Request

MBDA may invite the two (2) top-ranked applicants for each project competition to develop and provide an oral presentation. If an oral presentation is requested, the affected applicants will receive a formal communication (via standard mail, e-mail or fax) from MBDA indicating the time and date for the presentation. In-person presentations are not mandatory but are encouraged; telephonic presentations are acceptable. Applicants will be asked to submit a PowerPoint presentation (or equivalent) to MBDA that addresses the oral presentation criteria set forth above. The presentation must be submitted at least 24 hours before the scheduled date and time of the presentation. The presentation will be made to the MBDA National Director (or his/her designee) and up to three senior MBDA staff who did not serve on the original review panel. The oral panel members may ask follow-up questions after the presentation. MBDA will provide the teleconference dial-in number and pass code. Each applicant will present to MBDA staff only; competitors are not permitted to listen (and/or watch) other presentations.

All costs pertaining to this presentation shall be borne by the applicant. MBOC award funds may not be used as a reimbursement for this presentation. MBDA will not accept any requests or petitions for reimbursement.

The oral panel members shall score each presentation in accordance with the oral presentation criterion provided above. An average score shall be compiled and added to the score of the original panel review.

4. Final Recommendation

The MBDA National Director makes the final recommendation to the Grants Officer regarding the funding of applications under this competitive solicitation. MBDA expects to recommend for funding the highest ranking application for each project, as evaluated and recommended by the review panel and taking into account oral presentations (as applicable). However, the MBDA National Director may not make any selection, or he may select an application out of rank order for the following reasons:

(a) A determination that an application better addresses one or more of the funding priorities for this competition. The National Director (or his/her designee) reserves the right to conduct one or more site visits (subject to the availability of funding), in order to make a better assessment of an applicant's capability to achieve the funding priorities; or

(b) The availability of MBDA funding.

Prior to making a final recommendation to the Grants Officer, MBDA may request that the apparent winner of the competition provide written clarifications (as necessary) regarding its application.

Intergovernmental Review: Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, ''Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.''

Limitation of Liability: In no event will MBDA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of other MBDA or Department of Commerce priorities. All funding periods are subject to the availability of funds to support the continuation of the project and the Department of Commerce and MBDA priorities. Publication of this notice does not obligate the Department of Commerce or MBDA to award any specific cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds.

Universal Identifier: Applicants should be aware that they will be required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering system (DUNS) number during the application process. See the June 27, 2003 **Federal Register** notice (68 FR 38402) for additional information. Organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1–866–705–5711 or by accessing the Grants.gov Web site at *http://www.Grants.gov.*

Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements: The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the **Federal Register** notice of December 30, 2004 (69 FR 78389) are applicable to this solicitation.

Paperwork Reduction Act: This document contains collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, SF–LLL, and CD–346 have been approved by OMB under the respective control numbers 0348–0043, 0348–0044, 0348–0040, 0348–0046, and 0605–0001. Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

Executive Order 12866: This notice has been determined to be not significant for purposes of E.O. 12866.

Administrative Procedure Act/ Regulatory Flexibility Act: Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act for rules concerning public property, loans, grants, benefits, or contracts (5 U.S.C. 533(a)(2)). Because notice and opportunity for comment are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 533 or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C 601 *et seq.*) are inapplicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis is not required and has not been prepared.

Dated: December 6, 2007.

Ronald N. Langston,

National Director, Minority Business Development Agency.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Availability of Seats for the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council

AGENCY: National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice and request for applications.

SUMMARY: The Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS or Sanctuary) is seeking applicants for the following vacant seats on its Sanctuary Advisory Council (Council): Research Primary, Research Alternate, Marin County Community-at-Large Alternate,