

Southwest LRT DBE and Workforce Advisory Committee

Thursday, March 18, 2021

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

[\[link to video of meeting\]](#)

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER - Roll Call**
 - a. Gilbert Odonkor, Eric Ampadu, Marvin Smith, Sheila Olson, Julie Brekke, Melanie Williams, Tony O'Brien, Mel Reeves, Maura Brown, Dan Peterson, John O'Phelan, Mary Schmidt, Barb Lau, Jerri Sweeney, Dale Even, Christa Seaberg, Katy Maus, Chris Gannon, Mike Toney, Elaine Valadez, Brianne Lucio, Ashanti Payne, Sam O'Connell, Jon Tao, Mahad Omar, Brian Runzel, Cyrenthia Jordan, Brian Leitch, Lykhanu Lysongseng
2. **BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES UPDATE by Aaron Koski (Slides 3-6)**
 - a. Aaron shares the results of BSC's 2021 outreach. He states that there were a diverse pool of applicants for this year's cohort. With about 93 applicants, they have selected 37 2021 BSC participants for this year's cohort.
 - b. **Question by Mel Reeves:** *I was under the impression that this program was only for women and POCI, it looks like it is wide open. What's the case?*
 - i. Aaron: As a government agency we can't be restrictive. But we have intentionally done outreach to reach specific groups, like Spanish radio stations to reach more communities.
3. **SWLRT PROJECT UPDATE by Sam O'Connell (Slides 7-17)**
 - a. Sam shares and describes pictures regarding project updates on the SWLRT project. These include the SouthWest Station (Eden Prairie), Shady Oak Road/TH 212 LRT Bridge (Eden Prairie), TH 82 LRT Tunnel (Minnetonka), Opus Area Retaining Walls (Minnetonka), Smetana Roadway Bridge (Minnetonka), LRT Bridge at Excelsior Boulevard (Hopkins), (Beltline Blvd Pedestrian Bridge (St. Louis Park), Excavation at Kenilworth LRT Tunnel (Minneapolis), Glenwood Avenue LRT Bridge (Minneapolis), and Franklin O&M Facility Modifications (Minneapolis).
4. **DBE ACHIEVEMENT REPORTING**
 - a. **DBE Progress Reports and Disaggregated DBE Data by Jon Tao (Slides 18-24)**
 - i. Jon shares the DBE Achievement as of January 31st 2021. Fortunately, all projects are now exceeding the DBE goals. As of January 31st 2021, the combined DBE% to date is 19.7%, significantly over the 15% goal.
 - ii. Jon shares data charts of Civil/Systems/Franklin DBE participation as of January 31st.

- iii. Jon shares disaggregated data regarding ethnic/gender identity percentages on the project via a table and pie chart.

b. Civil: LMJV DBE Activities by Christa Seaberg (Slides 25-28)

- i. Christa shares LMJV's one month look ahead for their Anticipated DBEs. She gives kudos to all those that are on the project and notes the change in participation and growth of the project overall.
- ii. Christa shares LMJV's update on DBEs on the project. They held a DBE workshop that saw attendance of 27 DBEs.
- iii. **Question by Barb Lau:** *Were you hearing anything with people having difficulties so far? Were there any common themes? Like how some monthly requirements could be daunting for some small businesses.*
 - 1. Dale: We do have some daunting requirements, but we haven't heard any formal feedback from people saying that they couldn't keep up with our requirements. Although we can say that the work we are doing is more than what we are used to.
 - 2. Christa: Taking the time to mentor DBEs about our requirements takes an important part to alleviate some of the worries and pains that can face small businesses.
- iv. Christa shares LMJV's DBE highlight for the month, which is Public Solutions Group. Their scope of work was initially public outreach, then site preparation was added (dewatering, flagging and site clean-up).

c. Systems: APJV DBE Activities by Chris Gannon (Slides 29-32)

- i. Chris shares APJV's one month look ahead for their anticipated DBEs.
- ii. Chris shares APJV's update on DBEs on the project. They have awarded subcontracts to Top Line and IMO consulting, and have sent RFQ's to Boys Water Products.
- iii. Chris shares APJV's update on change orders. Change orders approved thru February 1st is \$1,005,600.10. He shares that the DBE Change Order Participation is at 60% for CO participation and 15.6% for DBE job to date participation.

d. Franklin O&M: LS Black DBE Activities by Brian Leitch (Slides 33-35)

- i. Brian shares LS Blacks Update on change orders. They are at \$39,077,597.13 approved thru 01/15. Their DBE change order participation is at 20% with Job to Date participation being at 20% as well.
- ii. Brian shares LS Black's update on DBE activity. They are continuing participation from Go Fetsch Mechanical, have future work for Painting by Nakasone and have upcoming work from Rock On Trucks, and work from Bald Eagle Erectors.

5. WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION REPORTING

a. Workforce Participation Reports and Disaggregated Workforce Data by Elaine Valadez and Brianne Lucio (Slides 36-48)

- a. Elaine shares the Civil Workforce Participation percentages using data charts and pie charts. Construction total for civil is 1,003,354 hours.
 - b. Brianne shares disaggregated data on civil workforce participation using pie charts and a table breaking down total hours and percentage participation by race.
 - c. Elaine shares the Systems Workforce Participation percentages using data charts. Construction total for Systems is 261 hours.
 - d. Elaine shares the Franklin Workforce Participation percentages using data charts and pie charts. Construction total for Franklin is 31,921 hours.
 - e. Brianne shares disaggregated data on Franklin workforce participation using a table breaking down total hours and percentage participation by race.
- b. Civil: LMJV Workforce Activities by Christa Seaberg (Slides 49-52)**
- a. Christa shares workforce activities that took place in February. These included GFE meetings with MDHR/Council, meeting with BSC, SWLRT DBE Update Meeting and many others. She also shared the steps that LMJV is taking to further improve workforce activities.
 - b. LMJV has no new hires/transfers. She states that this will hopefully be the last month that it is low, and mentioned that they are going into a hiring path into the new construction season. She said she is looking to have approximately ~80 rehires/new-hires (not a rigid number). A good majority of them will hopefully be call-backs.
- c. Systems: APJV Workforce Activities by Mike Toney (Slides 53-54)**
- a. Mike shares the Systems Contract workforce plans to meet/improve their workforce goals. These include meetings with Local groups (292,160,49), holding mock interviews at Summit Academy, Virtual Job fairs and much more.
 - b. He mentioned that there will not be a lot of new hiring, their subs are going to be pretty small but they are hoping to get the diversity that they need on this project by committing to more outreach.
- d. Franklin O&M: LS Black Workforce Activities (Slides 55-56)**
- a. Brian shares the Franklin Contracts workforce activities that they are committing to. This includes monthly GFE meetings with MDHR, a planned meeting with Christa Seaberg and sending out reminder emails to trade partner teams about participation and plans to increase workforce as necessary.
- 6. 2021 Committee Focus Survey by Ashanti Payne (Slides 57-61)**
- a. Ashanti shares that we want members to fill out the 2021 DBE & Workforce topics survey to gather input and comments.
 - b. Ashanti share some of the responses that we have received thus far on the survey for both DBE & Workforce topics.
 - c. Salima breaks down some of our current responses regarding workforce topics further.
- 7. COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION DISCUSSION ON WORKFORCE (Slides 62-79)**

- i. Melanie Williams – Twin Cities Rise, Director, Workforce Development
 - ii. Julie Brekke – Hired, Executive Director
 - iii. Sheila Olson – Goodwill-Easter Seals, Chief Services and Programs Officer
 - iv. Tony O’Brien – Summit Academy, Director, Academic Programs
- b. Melanie:
 - i. Melanie kicks off the presentation by emphasizing that nonprofits is one of the most important pipelines to work with women and POCI to when it comes to workforce. She mentions that she hears from employers that it is hard to find a diverse talent workforce, and notes that nonprofits HAVE that pipeline of diverse talents that have mentors in their support systems and are ready to be trained. She thanks the DWAC members for the opportunity and turns it over to Julie.
- c. Julie:
 - i. She mentions that the purpose today is to show DWAC members how nonprofits can partner up with employers and help them prepare people for entry level jobs and apprenticeships within the construction industry.
 - ii. Julie explains why this is important: there is a growing interest in the trades/construction industry and that it needs to fill open positions, nonprofits can help trades & contractors met their workforce needs & diversity goals, and there is a change in demographics and retirement within the Twin Cities.
 - iii. Julie shares further data regarding changing demographics and outlooks of racial/ethnic diversification ranging from 2013 thru 2053.
 - iv. Julie shares the number of active apprentice training programs and a chart showing the growth of active apprentices from 1997-2020. She also shares the demographics of the same apprentice outlook.
 - v. Julie shares demographics of individuals served from Summit Academy, Hired, Twin Cities Rise! and Goodwill-Easter Seals.
 - vi. Julie shares some of the strengths & commonalities that employers can expect from the nonprofit sector.
- d. Tony:
 - i. Tony shares some of the strengths based in recruitment & community outreach. This includes community connections, nontraditional locations to recruit, programs free for participants and a pre-screening to ensure readiness of prospective employees.
- e. Julie:
 - i. Julie touches on the core job skill development points that they work on with prospective employees. They provide the constructive criticism needed for them to improve in the trades, and they do this using relationship development, work readiness and other soft skill support. This also includes support services that remove barriers to success.
- f. Sheila:

- i. Sheila mentions that they provide hard skill support such as construction math and measurements. Generally, all areas in critical thinking is the kind of support that they spend a lot of time on, in addition to site safety (ex. OSHA 10) and hard tools usage for them to have some sort of experience and knowledge of what is to be expected. This is to get them ready to go when the time comes.
- ii. She also states that graduates are going to be prescreened for the construction/trades industry, and that nonprofits support job placement and apprenticeship connections. Since some of these participants are usually expected to have some sort of experience, this will help connect them to opportunities that can help provide that. Sheila mentions that this will help them support BOTH the employee and the employer.
- iii. Sheila highlights 3 things that she wants DWAC members to remember: Nonprofits are a pipeline or complement existing Union & Trade programs, all nonprofits are not the same and do not do their work in the same way, and nonprofits see members as partners and know that they are key to helping them prepare individuals for jobs in the industry.

g. GOODWILL-EASTER SEALS:

- i. Jennifer Allshouse's participant success story is shared.

h. SUMMIT ACADEMY OIC:

- i. Rodjerick Courney's participant success story is shared.

i. TWIN CITIES RISE!:

- i. Twin Cities Rise shares the success story of folks in their core program, with emphasis on the importance of empowerment and coaching support.

j. Q&A:

- i. **Question by Christa:** *What are nonprofits doing in regard to financial literacy/training especially with potential layoffs?*
 - 1. Julie: We have financial literacy tools/programs between the nonprofits to be able to help participants as part of a lot of our career pathways program.
- ii. **Question by Salima:** *There are times were people enter the construction field who can't afford union dues. Can you talk about the wrap-around services regarding that?*
 - 1. Julie: Very often we have support services and dollars to move to folks that need it. This also includes microgrants that can assist folks that have, for example, one less financial hurdle that prevents them from moving forward.
 - 2. Tony: We do very similar and go to the unions to pay their fees, and we also provide them with a bucket of hand tools to work with.
 - 3. Sheila: I'd say the same thing as well. We also have some dollars to move around, in addition to providing a bucket of tools like Tony said.

4. Mel: Twin Cities Rise! is the same thing. We also have some funds to move around for those that need the assistance, and we also received a grant to assist to help folks in gaining equipment.
 5. Sheila: As seen, we tend to be resourceful! We receive support from a lot of places in community, and we lean on community to make sure that we get support that might be needed if it isn't in our immediate disposal.
- k. **Question by Jon Tao:** *Has there been any noted success stories from graduates in your programs that have been hired by any of our subs/contractors on the SWLRT project?*
- i. Sheila: I don't know off the top of my head, but we do have a participant that is doing an apprenticeship/training type program that has been hired by Lunda.
 - ii. Julie: I can't think of anything currently either but what I can mention is that we can customize our training programs to work in tandem with contractors on SWLRT to make sure that we focus on skills and traits that are needed/wanted 6-12 months down the line to implement in future projects.
 - iii. Tony: I am not entirely sure right now, but I can find out, I know some folks that might be working for APJV.
 - iv. Melanie: I can't think of anything within the recent year since we have to re-establish partnerships, but I can say that we've had massive success before in previous years to get our participants hired following the end of trainings.

8. ADJOURN

Next Scheduled Meeting: April 15, 2021 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm