

Southwest LRT DBE and Workforce Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 15, 2021

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

[Link to Video Stream](#)

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Roll Call
 - a. Gilbert Odonkor, Eric Ampadu, Marvin Smith, Sheila Olson, Julie Brekke, Melanie Williams, Tony O’Brien, Leslie Woyee, John O’Phalen, Mary Schmidt, Jerri Sweeney, Dale Even, Christa Seaberg, Katy Maus, Chris Gannon, Mike Toney, Elaine Valadez, Salima Khakoo, Brianne Lucio, Ashanti Payne, Jon Tao, Mahad Omar, Mohamed Omar, Gary Courtney, Cyrenthia Jordan, Brian Runzel, Andy Robinson
2. **SWLRT Project Update by Brian Runzel (Slides 8-17)**
 - a. Brian shares details and pictures of the following stations: Southwest Station, Town Center Station, TH 62 LRT Tunnel, Smetana Roadway Bridge, Beltline Blvd Pedestrian Bridge, Tremmie Pour Kenilworth LRT Tunnel, Glenwood Avenue LRT Bridge, and Franklin O&M Facility Modifications.
3. **Building Strong Communities Update by Gary Courtney (Slides 3-7)**
 - a. Gary shares the current timeline for the April Update. The timeline from start to last are the following steps: virtual classroom, drug test & interview, trade exploration, trade tracks, and finally apprenticeship placement & support. They are currently at the drug test & interview step.
 - b. Gary shares the BSC Physical Exposure event that they held on Saturday, April 10th with the Iron Workers Local 512 and Joint Apprenticeship Training Center.
 - i. They discussed: pre-work stretching, ergonomics on a jobsite, proper ladder ascension, lifting techniques, tape measure use, and carrying techniques.
 - ii. Gary shares pictures for the rest of their April Update.
4. **DBE Achievement Reporting**
 - a. **DBE Progress Reports and Disaggregated DBE Data by Jon Tao (Slides 18-19):**
 - i. Jon shares the DBE Achievement as of Feb 28th, 2021
 1. To date, LMJV has 20.5% DBE achievement, APJV has 15.6% DBE achievement, LS Black has 19.2% DBE achievement, and the average percentage between all prime contractors are currently at 18.4% DBE achievement to date.
 - b. **Civil: LMJV DBE Activities by Christa Seaberg (Slides 20-22):**
 - i. Christa shares the current DBE participation they have on the SWLRT project for March & April

- ii. LMJV shares IMO Consulting Group for their DBE highlight of the month. Their scope of work includes pre/post condition surveys and construction surveying. Their current contract to date is \$5.9M and they have completed \$4.9M to date.

c. Systems: APJV DBE Activities by Chris Gannon (Slides 23-26):

- i. Chris shares the anticipated DBEs one month look ahead for APJV: Bald Eagle Erectors, Moltron Builders, IMO, and Dionne Construction.
- ii. For APJV's systems contract DBE update, they have set out an RFQ to Boys Water Products for pumps for tunnel work. Approximately \$81K WBE.
- iii. For Update on Change Orders, they have \$1,005,600.10 owner change orders approved through 3/1/21

d. Franklin O&M: LS Black DBE Activities by Andy Robinson (Slides 27-29)

- i. Andy shares LS Black's update on change orders: current contract amount thru \$39,084,535 with anticipated DBE participation at 19%. DBE Achievement to date is at 17%.
- ii. They have continued participation from GoFetsch mechanical (installing ventilation), they have future work for Painting by Nakasone, Bald Eagle Erectors is installing misc. metal work, and Camacho is working on roofing.

5. Workforce Participation Reporting

- a. Workforce Participation Reports and Disaggregated Workforce Data by Elaine Valadez

a. Civil (Slides 31-33):

- i. Elaine shares that Civil is at 21,690 hours for February 2021, and their civil construction total is 1,025,044 hours. She then shares the breakdown of workforce participation percentages.
- ii. She shares the hours worked by ethnicity category pie chart
- iii. Trucking participation on project include 18,850 hours for MBE, 3,532 hours for ZTS, and 683 hours for Rock-On Trucks

b. Systems (Slide 34):

- i. There were no hours worked for the month of February, so it is currently at 0 hours. Construction totals is 261 hours. She then shares the breakdown of workforce participation percentages.

c. Franklin O&M (Slides 35-36)

- i. Elaine shares that Franklin is at 6,061 hours for February 2021, and their construction total is 31,921 hours. She then shares the breakdown of workforce participation percentages.
- ii. She shares the hours worked by ethnicity category pie chart.

b. Civil: LMJV Workforce Activities by Christa Seaberg (Slides 37-39)

- a. Christa shares LMJV's workforce activities update for March 2021. They included their monthly GFE meeting and subcontractor workforce participation meeting, BSC meeting to see how Lunda/SWLRT project can contribute, construction trades outreach planning and other updates.

- b. Christa shares the new hires/transfers for March 2021. They have now 2 white males and 1 POCI male. The 3 were rehires for Lunda at their stations. No new hires for LMJV/CS.McCrossan for March. They are looking forward to report higher numbers for next month.

c. Systems: APJV Workforce Activities by Mike Toney (Slides 40-41)

- a. Mike shares APJV's workforce activities update. Their current plan to meet their workforce goal include completed meetings with Locals 292/160/49, participation in mock interviews at Summit Academy, participation in virtual job fair with Twin Cities Urban league, ACE mentorship program and other items.

d. Franklin O&M: LS Black Workforce Activities by Andy Robinson (Slides 42-43)

- a. Andy shares LS Blacks workforce activities update. This includes their scheduled monthly GFE updates, meeting with Christa Seaberg regarding outreach opportunities, submitting reminder emails to trade partner teams about participations and other updates

6. Questions:

- a. **Question John O'Phelan:** Do you recall some of the main topics that might be of interest for the committee that were mon the survey submitted to DBE's?
 - i. Jon Tao provides an overview of responses received: DBE topics included prompt payment, DBE contribution to the workforce participation, analysis of DBE participation vs. available DBEs in region, and Cost/Schedule impacts from change orders. In addition to that, setting up a subcommittee to focus on long term challenges for DBE's on all projects. There is also interest in surveying workforce on site.
- b. **Question Julie Brekke:** With the short/long term planning conversation, how and where does the conversation happen with America's Rescue plan or potentially America's Job plan which is being discussed in DC? There is significant amount of funding being set aside for trades, so we can be collectively thoughtful to use those funds to improve workforce and meet women-worker goals for our short/long term goals. Where does that convo happen and how does it work?
 - i. Christa: I agree especially with your last statement. It should not just be project focused when we are talking about goals, we should also talk about company goals. I want to see "What are you doing to increase your goals?". It's important to look at those, not only in recruitment, but in retainage as well. It also takes education for the community to show them that they have support and educating project owners. Looking at companies' workforce in general is super important and it helps alleviate bicycling form project to project just to meet a goal.
 - ii. Jerri: I agree, we need to concentrate on making these things available to everyone.

- iii. Ashanti: From a Council Standpoint, we most certainly have a responsibility/duty in using our impact, influence, resource, and projects to make an impact. We have opportunity to make room for the long-term discussion of making an impact across the region. I also want to say that internally/externally when we talk to partners and other partner group, retention is certainly a topic that comes to the forefront of our conversations. We ask ourselves questions to make sure we are making progress and taking steps to address these issues.
- iv. Julie: There are active conversations going on about active stimulus coming down the pipe that can be used as an active catalyst and a way to create an extra push of resources. I don't know how that looks like in the trades and how that can happen. There's a lot of data out there that shows the economic growth of the cities. I think there's a worthy challenge here where we can be strategic and rely on each other's strengths to take out of this opportunity.
- v. Christa: We still have two years left on this project, this is a great opportunity to educate and bring in our community to show what construction really is. There are a lot of schools/communities along the SWLRT pathway, and this is a perfect opportunity to work as a team to create some sort of marketing piece to show what's going on in their neighborhood (the positives). How this can help strengthen their communities.
- vi. John O'Phelan: We sometimes forget our veterans, so it would be interesting to do a quick analysis to see where our veteran's participation is at. It would be interesting to do a 10-minute like check-in/presentation to check on this some time soon. Also, there has been a need to look at the top 5-8 subcontractors that bring dollars to their project, and we may need to investigate how they work on retention, equity, and future opportunity.
- vii. Christa: We are not going to get those numbers to be blunt, every single contractor on this project is required by MDHR to turn in a detailed workplan, which we have and we are working with Elaine with some of those subcontractors to up their workplan on the project. Also note that Lunda is one of those 8 companies, and we need to work on retainage. On the state capitol project, we had the largest female participation nationally. Where are those numbers now? Our contractors are working hard and we are assisting them, but we need to be focusing on what we can be retaining.
- viii. Ashanti: I want to reiterate what was just said. I've seen that as a region when we wouldn't meet the personnel needed, we would export workers from other location. Are we fine with that as a region? Is there opportunity to be flexible/relaxed with our participation ratios? What can we do so we don't have to go to other locations for hires? We need to find out and create a strategy to address that.

- ix. Jon Tao: If you look over your handouts, Elaine does a lot of work to show the breakdown in the tables. Some subcontractors are putting down 0% which may look like they are not taking workforce seriously. We must look at where our results are. The champions here are the employers, who do the hiring and retaining. When they start putting people who have gone through this training, they should also put them through their core workforce. I think that's where we need our employers to be the champions. Right now, I see a lot of construction companies struggling with workforce, sometimes the problem is the company's culture internally or feeling overwhelmed by workforce goals being too big.
- x. Christa: The goals are 10 year incremental goals I love what you have to say Jon, but keep in mind that in the reports where 0% is recorded, they have very little. For example, Hanson Custom Crushing does work with only 3 employees although they are at every single outreach event possible. To have relationships built with subcontractors with potential new hires are important to focus on. What are we doing to help soft skills for workers?
- xi. Elaine: I agree with Jon, if the view on the leadership level is that goals are long term goals so there doesn't need to be effort made to increase the pipeline, it's recruit and retain. But also you need to bring people into the unions and into the workforce. We need to focus on bringing in whatever participation we have and put a sincere effort in improving it. We need to be positive and proactive and encourage subcontractors to do their best effort and not to just coast, that's my point. We need to focus on bringing people in, because if we don't bring people in then we don't have people to retain.
- xii. Jerri Sweeney: It is currently super difficult to hire folks currently, we hire folks to keep them and don't hire temps. We have full time employees currently, but we cannot put them aside to hire new folks that will not stay with the organization.
- xiii. Ashanti: How I would like for us to approach this type of conversation is to start looking at what we can do and no longer speak about what we cannot do.
- xiv. Julie: What if we investigate a trades career ship? A way to grow workforce without having to layoff other individuals and using some extra funds coming down from stimulus initiatives to supplement your current methods? Let's be strategic about Marketing pieces that Christa has mentioned, capacity and other items to make some space created to begin strategic conversations to use this influx of funds to springboard towards opportunities.
- xv. John O'Phelan: Going back to my previous point, when you look at the top 5-8 companies, they have been here for 40 years on average and have failed to increase their workforce. You can see that they have been through a lot of time in a growth market but have no diversity while making a lot of money out of the

project. They have the employees and have the growth but have been failing at their short/long term goals.

- xvi. Christa: Make sure to look at a company entirely, not on just 1 project. We need to keep pushing forward on increasing. It is tough right now in COVID to do in-person methods to increase workforce, but I am watching for an increase in numbers as we progress.
- xvii. Dale Even: To put it into context if you go back 20 years, do you think the workforce participation looks the same? These companies are making inroads to get to those goals. We're signatory to the unions so we can't hire who we want. When I look at combined data, there are some challenges at getting our number up. We are doing well joint venture wise. Let's start talking about what actions we can do to improve it.
- xviii. Ashanti: We appreciate that and I want to recognize your efforts Dale, and John you are right we can't just depend on these businesses you mentioned to make a significant dent. We need to approach this as a business problem. Lunda hires folks like Christa that have expertise, training and can make impact in the industry. Not all companies do that, not even Lunda. The point is, the big companies have the power to make a big impact. I just want to drive home the fact that not all companies are big enough to hire that expertise, but it is important to invest in your employees so that they can have the skills and expertise to contribute and take on these issues.
- xix. Julie: Every sector is having this conversation, and it is not an overnight conversation. I think there has been great progress made over this past 10 years, and it would be interesting to see how many of the current prime contractors have been maintaining retainage from project to project. We need to look at that data. This is not a calling out, this is a calling in and there is something there where we can support growth, diversity, and inclusion.
- xx. Mike Toney: I want to let you all know that I have been tuned in and if you have any panel meetings, I'd like to participate in it. One thing Ashanti said is that we are comfortable with people coming from Ohio to help us with our work, as we depend on a 5-state region to help us with our projects. That's where that workforce is coming from.
- xxi. Katy Maus: I wanted to chime into what Dave said earlier. We are hiring for all operators, which makes it difficult to add new individuals into the operating trade since these are all very skilled positions. What we've been doing is adding 1 trainee to a crew, but again watching for proper ratios.

7. ADJOURN

Next Scheduled Meeting: May 20, 2021 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Chat:

from John O'Phelan to everyone: 2:16 PM

Sounds like a plan! I'm typically about 10 days out so lets go for the following week. Feel free to send me a couple of dates. Peace and blessings Christa!

from MARVIN SMITH to everyone: 2:20 PM

I have a meeting with our National Chapter at 3 Pm.

from elainev to everyone: 2:22 PM

Thank you for letting us know Marvin.

from Salima Khakoo, Human Rights to everyone: 2:26 PM

Hello Marvin

from Maura Brown to everyone: 3:03 PM

Important questions, Ashanti. Thanks.

from Julie Brekke to everyone: 3:06 PM

Great idea!

from Schm1Mar to everyone: 3:07 PM

Excellent suggestion, John! Something with Vets!

from Christa to everyone: 3:08 PM

Justin from Helmets to Hardhats will be presenting at either our May or June Subcontractor workforce meeting

from Schm1Mar to everyone: 3:16 PM



I can ask MnDOT's Office of Civil Rights if they have any eval of the local hiring preference.

from Schm1Mar to everyone: 3:18 PM

And maybe FHWA has an eval of local hiring preferences from other states too, i.e., best practices

from Maura Brown to everyone: 3:29 PM

The unbelievably slow pace of change is incredibly painful. Comparing where we are on SWLRT vs. CCLRT it just seems incredible that we haven't made more progress.

from Christa to everyone: 3:29 PM

Thanks everyone. I believe in our construction outreach and what we can do with our communities. It takes the entire team working together and I look forwrad to working with all of you!

from Christa to everyone: 3:32 PM

Thanks Ashanit!! Agreed! We need to get into the schools!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Let's do a distance hands out event for the high schools along the SWLRT!!

from Christa to everyone: 3:33 PM

I need to pick up my son from school. I appreciate all of you being a part of our awesome team.

from Christa to everyone: 3:34 PM

Our overall company #s are AWESOME. All of our projects are government funded projects with goals on EACH project.

from Andy Robinson to everyone: 3:41 PM

I have to run to another meeting. Thank you for having me and I look forward to next meeting.



from Sheila Olson to everyone: 3:47 PM

Well said Julie! We all need to be doing this work (including CBO's) and look at what we can do to move the needle.

from Christa to everyone: 3:48 PM

CBOs on this - please email me so I can set up meetings soon.
cseaberg@lundaconstruction.com

from Sheila Olson to everyone: 3:49 PM

Christa, I sent you an email to connect with all of us at once.

from Christa to everyone: 3:50 PM

Thanks Sheila!!

from elainev to everyone: 3:50 PM

Thank you everyone.

from Julie Brekke to everyone: 3:50 PM

Thank you!