

Southwest LRT DBE and Workforce Advisory Committee

Thursday, August 19th, 2021

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

[\[Handouts\]](#) [\[Presentation\]](#) [\[Video\]](#)

1. **ATTENDEES** - Eric Ampedu, Sheila Olson, Tony O'Brien, Maura Brown, Mel Reeves, John Klem, Alex Merritt, Leslie Woyee, John O-Phalen, Mary Schmidt, Barb Lau, Dale Evans, Christa Seaberg, Katy Maus, Chris Gannon, Mike Toney, Elaine Valadez, Salima Khakoo, Sam O'Connell, Cy Jordan, Mahad Omar, Jon Tao, Brian Runzel, Andy Robinson, Ronald Brandenburg, Brian Leitch, Elaine Richardson, Brittany Yamagata, Jeanine Davis
2. **SWLRT PROJECT UPDATE by Sam O'Connell (Slides 4-12)**
 - a. Sam shares the SWLRT project update by displaying pictures and pointing out updates made to the following stations: LRT in Hopkins, Franklin O&M.
 - b. Sam also shares project specific updates. She shares the TPSS 15B Delivery, plumbing and fire safety installation and construction at Franklin O&M Facility.
3. **DBE ACHIEVEMENT REPORTING**
 - a. **DBE Progress Reports by Jon Tao (Slides 13-15)**
 - i. Jon shares the DBE achievement as of June 30, 2021. Total DBE% to date across all contracts are at 20.1% out of the 15% goal. Progress is good according to Jon regarding DBE achievement progress.
 - ii. Jon also shares information on monitoring DBE firms and meeting with DBEs on the Civil contract for CUF visits.
 - b. **Civil: LMJV DBE Activities by Christa Seaberg (Slides 16-20)**
 - i. Christa shares LMJV's list of DBE participation for the month of August.
 - ii. Christa shares their DBE Highlight of the month, which was Zaczkowski Trucking Services. They are doing On-site trucking services.
 - iii. Christa shares LMJV's update on change orders, which was approved at \$151,007,153 and DBE job-to-date participation is at 20.7%.
 - c. **Systems: APJV DBE Activities by Chris Gannon (Slides 21-24)**
 - i. Chris shares a new DBE, Top Line, which they have added to the project to install and furnish signage.
 - ii. Chris shares APJV's one month look ahead, which includes West 21st Street Station using Gunnar Communication Work, and TPSS Foundations using other DBE firms.
 - iii. Chris shares APJV's update on change orders, which are approved thru 7/1 at \$8,390,210 and DBE job-to-date participation is at 15.9%.
 - d. **Franklin O&M: LS Black DBE Activities by Brian Leitch (Slides 25-27)**
 - i. Brian shares that LS Blacks update on change orders, which are approved thru 6/30 at \$39,276,218 and DBE job-to-date participation is it 19%

- ii. Brian shares update on DBE activity. This includes firms such as GoFetsch mechanical, Nakasone Painting, Am-Tec Designs, Wissota Supply Co, and Dzeidzic Caulking

4. WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION REPORTING

e. Workforce Participation Reports by Elaine Valadez (Slides 28-34)

- i. Elaine shares the Civil workforce participation percentages. They are sitting at 79,093 hours for the month of June, with 1,347,671 total hours. To date, women are at 8.19% and POCI are at 22.10%.
- ii. Elaine shares the breakdown of workforce participation hours by ethnicity for Civil.
- iii. Elaine shares the Civil workforce trucking participation hours. MBE is at 22,711 hours, ZTS is at 4,164 hours, and Rock-On Trucks is at 683 hours.
- iv. Elaine shares the systems workforce participation percentage. They are sitting at 38 hours for the month of June, with a total of 387 hours. To date, they are at 19.90% for women, and 28.17% for POCI.
- v. Elaine shares the Franklin & M Workforce participation percentage. They are sitting at 4,471 hours for the month of June, with 76,084 total hours. To date, women are at 7.68%. and POCI are at 23.88%
- vi. Elaine shares the breakdown of workforce participation by ethnicity for Franklin O&M

f. Civil: LMJV Workforce Activities by Christa Seaberg (Slides 35-38)

- i. Christa shares LMJV's workforce activities for the month of July. This includes monthly SWLRT meetings, continual update meetings with LMJV representatives & Lunda field operations on upcoming hiring needs, LMJV field site visit by Lunda and CS McCrossan, and much more.
- ii. LMJV has upcoming stand out workforce activities for the month of August. This includes outreach planning meeting with Civil, Systems and Facilities, monthly LMJV Workforce/ Hiring review, continuation of workforce education meetings with SWLRT and Dunwoody, and a monthly review meeting with representatives of BSC.
- iii. Christa shares LMJV's new hires/transfers for the month of July. They have 7 new hires (5 white males and 2 POCI males), and 18 new transfers (12 white males, 1 white female, and 5 POCI males). 5 are apprentices, 16 are journeymen, and 4 are foremen.
- iv. Question: Admin asks if the talent pool at Dunwoody is diverse.
 - 1. Christa responds yes.

g. Systems: APJV Workforce Activities by Mike Toney (Slides 39-40)

- i. Mike shares System's contract workforce activities. This includes the following to meet their workforce goal: APJV limited scopes available for craft labor through the remainder of 2021, preliminary meeting with a firm that can

provide skilled and diverse workforce of outside electricians through local 160, scheduled meeting with SWLRT primes and subcontractors, participated in mock interviews at Summit Academy OIC.

- h. Franklin O&M: LS Black Workforce Activities by Brian Leitch (Slides 41-42)**
 - i. Brian Lietch shares Franklin’s contract workforce activities. This includes monthly GFE meetings with MDHR, attending outreach opportunities with CBOs with subcontractor team participation, reminder emails to trade partner teams about participation and plans to increase workforce as necessary, and more.
- 5. THE BENCH PROGRAM by The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) (Slides 43-70)**
- a. Question: Cyrenthia asks what are some of the lessons they have learned from starting this program.
 - i. Elaine says they have been met with resistance, but they did not give up on showing the importance of using these disadvantaged and small businesses on projects.
 - b. Question: Jon Ophelan asks if there are pieces from the BENCH work that are unique which can be implemented into the DBE Program in Minnesota.
 - i. Mary responds that of the key differences at MnDOT is how they hire consultants, including levels of qualification. She also says they are not limited to TGBs; they have a geographic qualification as well. She also expresses her dislike over the MnDOT program and how it only includes 20% DBE/TGB firms.
 - c. Question: Jon Tao asks what the responses are when DBE firms do not get picked from the pool of firms.
 - i. Elaine responds that that they help including speed networking events and aid them in selling their firm to prime contractors.
 - d. Question: Mary asks if Elaine can talk about if there is a list for the SANDAG agency to hire.
 - i. Elaine says they do a procurement, and still use a competitive process to get firms on the project.
 - e. Question: Gilbert Odonkor asks if there is a limit to the size of the program.
 - i. Elaine responds that there is no limit.
 - f. Question: Cyrenthia asks if Elaine can elaborate on their consultant evaluation
 - i. Elaine says they use these evaluations so the primes can learn that they are monitoring the project.
 - g. Question: Jon Tao asks what the staffing resources are needed to run one bench program and how many contracts/DBEs the staff oversee.
 - i. Elaine responds that they have one analyst who is responsible for architecting their bench and the second does planning and construction management.
- 6. PUBLIC INVITATION (Slides 71-72)**

- a. Invitation to interested people to address the advisory committee – please pre-register for virtual meetings. Each speaker is limited to a three-minute presentation. To pre-register, email public.info@metc.state.mn.us in advance of the meeting.
- b. Jeanine Davis of MN Street Works: My question is, through my experience of projects of this type, once a contract goal with a DBE is met/fulfilled, that contractor is moved off that project or has a non-DBE finish the project and a DBE does not get the opportunity to get additional work on the project. Are you guys doing anything to address these things happening?
 - i. Cyrenthia Jordan: Certainly, we are aware of your particular situation, Brian Runzel is here as well today to speak on that question
 - ii. Brian Runzel: Generally, its critical that General Contractors meet the DBE goals. I am very familiar with your prime contractor and see that they are intentional in pursuing DBE goals. There is certain work that the O&M Facility will not fit as they are only doing indoor work as they completed all outdoor work. The number one goal is that the prime contractor is meeting the DBE goal, and I see the contractor is doing just that.
 - iii. Jeanine Davis: I'm not talking about my situation in particular; I am talking about what is usually seen on other contractors. DBE's finish their commitments, and then are removed as their commitment completes and a non-DBE is chosen instead for additional work. This is something that not only I, but other DBEs have been seeing and we see as an issue that no one is talking about.
 - iv. Cyrenthia: That is not the intent of our program, we want to make sure there are contracts and opportunities for small businesses. The OEO is available to work with directly on any particular issues/concerns that you may have. We'll look at what the general comment/question that you are sharing with us as well.
 - v. Barb Lau: What Jeanine is saying is not a mystery to me, it's something we see all the time in not just Met Council but MNDOT as well. Brian, you said that the main goal is DBE goals are met, and my main goal is that DBEs get opportunity to get projects and not go under. That's why you hear me monitoring the dollar amounts and see all moving pieces to make sure that situations like DBEs that get hurt do not go out of business, as we have been seeing.
 - vi. Jon Tao: I did want to emphasize that OEO is here as a resource, and we want to be a resource to our DBEs in the region. Barb, you shared that, and Jeanine too that this is something you are encountering as Small Business Owners that contractors are not following through with these kinds of things and not following the spirit of the DBE program to provide more opportunity where they

can to small businesses. The construction contracts are also a factor that impacts how these opportunities are handled.

- vii. Barb Lau: It does make me a little nervous if we have to look into the letter of contracts all the time. We should be looking at the bigger picture, where we have these price escalations, delays of payments, etc. and I think we can do better. Every time an issue comes up, we keep getting caught in the same loop of “the contract says this, the delay happened because of this” and I find it frustrating. We had several meetings going into this project about best practices, and I feel that we are failing on some of the initiatives that we set up to do. We should be setting this up so that when the project ends, we want to be proud of it, rather than survive through it.

7. ADJOURN

Next Scheduled Meeting: September 16th, 2021 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm