

Southwest LRT DBE and Workforce Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 16, 2020

2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

TELECONFERENCE CALL

Conference Call Information: 1-312-535-8110

United States Toll Free 1-415-655-0003

Meeting Number (Access Code): 968 530 436

Meeting Attendees: Tracey Jackson, Salima Khakoo, Elaine Valadez, Vince Fuller, Sam O'Connell, Jon Tao, Mike Toney, Yolanda McIntosh, Barb Lau, Brianne Lucio, Barry Davies, Sheila Olson, Melanie Williams, Maura Brown, John O'Phelan, Sheila Kauppi, Kent Robbins, Sam Ndely, Julie Brekke, Sean Skibbie, Katy Maus, Sannyng Vang, Dale Even, Aaron Koski, Mary Schmidt, Jerry Sweeney

1. Call to Order and Rollcall
 - Tracey Jackson called this meeting to order at 2:03 PM. Salima Khakoo took roll call for the meeting.
2. Review Meeting Minutes
 - Salima Khakoo asked the committee to review the meeting minutes from February and March. The minutes were approved at 2:10 PM.
3. Impacts of COVID-19 (Slide 3)
 - Tracey Jackson wanted to discuss the impacts of COVID-19 on the project office. Sam O'Connell from SPO shared how the majority of the office staff have transitioned to online work. The field staff have continued to work out in the field. Outreach and communication have adjusted to maintain the flow of project information to stakeholders. The team is relying heavily on videos and other forms of communication to keep information flowing. Dale Even from LMJV shared how the Contractor is adapting their work procedures to adapt the CDCs guidelines and best practices to keep the project moving forward. Shelia Olson from Goodwill shared that they are still operating but have made adjustments to move training to a virtual platform. Olson added that they are doing a lot of job placement with the increase in unemployment. Additionally, they have been providing support with childcare, unemployment assistance, etc. Olson highlighted the various forms of technology they are utilizing to continue work. Julie Brekke at Hired shared that many non-profits are transitioning to a televirtual model within a week. They have experienced very little interruptions to their daily operations. Their pathway program and other training programs have been moved online. However, all of their participants have mobile phones, but many do not have stable internet or computers. HIREDMN has been asking their participants for feedback regarding digital access and proficiency. Brekke noted that many nonprofits, including Hired MN, have learned a lot from these transitions. Melanie Williams from TC Rise echoed the other nonprofits by highlighting how TC has been nimble and flexible to adopt a teleworking structure. Sam Ndely from MEDA shared how they are trying to bring relief to their

clients by providing access to financial assistance. Unfortunately, the PPP program has ran out of money, so MEDA has been trying to navigate that change and assist clients. Kent Robbins asked if the project was continuing with construction? Jackson confirmed yes. Barry Davies, Union, shared how COVID-19 is impacting construction. Highway heavy construction is going well, but vertical construction is seeing more impacts regarding postponements. Davies noted there is definitely some slowdown in construction, but the light rail should not be impacted. Some changes include stopping the use of breakrooms and microwaves and pushing employees to take breaks in their cars. The long-term effects remain unknown, but the construction is continuing. Barb Lau from AWC, echoed Davies observations and added that construction has not taken the worst hit, but she said that it is important to keep job sites safe. Lau added that some states have shut down unsanitary worksites and encouraged the project to keep the worksites safe. Lau additionally share the impacts of COVID-19 on AWC. She notified the committee of scholarships that AWC is offering and will share that information with the committee. Mel Reeves asked what measures people are taken to protect those in the field? Davies replied that there are not enough masks to go around, and many construction companies have donated their masks to healthcare workers. However, social distancing is being practiced on the project.

4. SWLRT Project Update (Slides 5-17)

- Sam O'Connell updated the committee on progress for the SWLRT project. O'Connell shared walked the committee through progress in each of the cities on the alignment. O'Connell shared that the project is grateful to continue work during this time. She paused for questions and there were no questions.

5. DBE Achievement Reporting (Slides 19)

- Jon Tao, SPO, walked the committee through the DBE achievement through February 29th, 2020. He shared that the Civil and Systems DBE reports can be found in the attachments that were sent to the committee. Jon held for questions. Barb Lau asked if the Systems team would start presenting and coming to the DBE meetings. Mike from APJV are on the call for DBE this month to understand the interworking of the committee. In May, APJV will be presenting on their DBE commitment. Jackson added that the DBE report for the systems contract was included in the materials for today's meeting.
- LMJV DBE Activities (Slides 21-22): Dale Even from LMJV shared that there has not been a huge change regarding DBE. There have been a few Change Orders processed. LMJV is still on track to be at or above the 16% they committed too. The most significant change order was the EP Town Center, which has a DBE commitment greater than the 16%, the numbers should reflect that after it is processed. Barb asked how there is deduct of \$127,202.09 on billed to date from E&J Rebar. Even said he needed to check with his team and guessed it might be an accounting mistake, he will follow up with Cody and the committee. Even shared what DBEs are working now and paused for questions. Barb Lau was asked if there was a point of contact for interested suppliers looking for opportunities. Even has been sending interested suppliers to the change order department but told Lau she could share his information.

6. Workforce Participation Reporting (Slides 25-26)

- Elaine Valadez from MDHR, shared the workforce participation percentages from the month of February. LMJV had just over 6% women working and 20% people of color. The next slide showed further demographic breakdowns for hours worked in February. Valadez shared the data concerning trucking participation on the project. Finally, she

highlighted that MDHR has been meeting with LMJV and discussing their good faith effort. Valadez highlighted the report that outlined the hours worked by demographic for each company on the project. She noted that the purple highlighted parts of the report noted unknown workforce commitments. Robbins asked for clarification on the good-faith effort of the highlighted companies. Valadez clarified that the information was just unknown, but they were able to track down that information. Valadez held for questions and added that this report is used so each company can track their work and understand where they need to get. Sannyang Vang, LMJV, added that she is in contact with Egan as Rail Works is subcontractor of Egan.

- Vang highlighted previous outreach efforts from LMJV (slides 28–30) and noted which upcoming events have been cancelled. LMJV has hired ten new workers within March 9 and March 30, which included people of color, but no women. Khakoo asked for more clarifications on how LMJV was hiring. Vang noted that LMJV is hiring from the Unions, CBOs, and LMJV's hiring list. Jon Tao asked how they learn about openings within the project and how does LMJV share those openings? Vang shared that she learns the information from their superintendents. More often than not, people are asked for that list. Vang typically gets weekly updates. Khakoo asked if the superintendents are informing the unions of their workforce goals. Vang confirmed. The committee asked how this process was being documented. Vang requests that the superintendents document this process in writing. Julie Brekke asked if there is a possibility for the advisory committee to see those openings to broadcast real-time hiring needs to their networks. Vang will look into how they can share open positions but reminded the committee that LMJV does go to the unions first. Barry asked if LMJV asked for women when looking for openings. Sannyang said that the superintendents are requested to ask for women and people of color, however, different trades have different availabilities. John O'Phelan thanked Elaine for her contractor breakdown on the workforce report. He shared his concern with these numbers and said it'd be great if the business managers could share if people are actually asking for women and people of color. Reeves echoed O'Phelan and added the importance of bringing more people to the table. Katie from LMJV shared that there was one female operated hired in March. Khakoo thanked Vang for the documentation of the hiring processes. Vang thanked the committees for their feedback and will follow up with the superintendents.

7. Regional Construction Forecast

- Jackson asked to postpone the construction forecast to next month and move into the union workforce discussion. O'Phelan and Jackson hope to do this forecast presentation in May.

8. Union Workforce Discussion

- The committee discussed the potential of bringing more people to the table. Barry Davies shared that female and people of color can be requested to the union for hiring. Khakoo asked if a CBO has a displaced worker that is a woman, they can present that woman to the union for hiring. Davies confirmed and shared some requirements for unions to hire. Vang asked if the contractor can ask for the union to respond in writing for documentation purposes. Davies held for questions and no additional questions were asked.

9. Building Strong Communities Program Update (Slides 34-47)

- Aaron Koski shared Vince Fuller is now a Met Council employee in workforce development and will be providing monthly updates to the committee. Koski shared how the program is adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic. Kent Robbins asked how many people will be ready to find employment after completing the training. Koski is estimating 20-30 individuals. Fuller added that this is a strong cohort and seem incredibly prepared for the next steps in their careers.

10. Adjourn

- The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 PM.

Next Scheduled Meeting: May 21, 2020 from 2:00 - 3:30 pm

* Members of the public are welcome to address the Advisory Committee. We encourage members of the public with concerns to reach out to the advisory members or the co-chairs prior to the meeting with their concerns.

Questions or comments can be emailed to Committee Co-chairs: Tracey Jackson at tracey.jackson@metc.state.mn.us or Salima Khakoo at Salima.O.Khakoo@state.mn.us