

TRANSPORTATION DBE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TDAC) MEETING

Thursday, February 12, 2009

VDOT Research Council - Charlottesville

9:00AM – 12:00PM

Present:

Stanford Moore, K&M Enterprises
Freddie Jones, VDOT-Civil Rights
Dan Clymore, Shirley Contracting
Monica Esparza, VDOT-Civil Rights
Queen Crittendon, VDOT-BOWD Center
Quincy Martin, A & M Services Plus
Colleen Payne, UACSI
Tom Witt, VTCA
James Squire, CHI Associates, Inc.
Eddie Ramirez, Ramirez Contracting
Betty Curtis, Curtis Contracting
Derrick Jackson, Jackson Construction
Willie Miles, DMBE

Mike Russell, DMBE

Vincent Powell, DMBE

Via Videoconference:

Grindly Johnson, VDOT-Civil Rights
Leslie Gilchrist, VDOT-Civil Rights
Mary Ann Altum, VDOT- Civil Rights
Maria Edwards, PEMCCO, Inc.
Jay Openshaw, E.V. Williams
Clyde Hagwood, Hagwood and Associates
Erica Lowe, Hagwood and Associates
Avery Hillard – HICO Services
Sharita Barden – HICO Services
Dorothy Chimilio, GTT Enterprise
Angela Henry, Team Henry Enterprises

Stanford Moore opened the meeting and welcomed committee members and guests.

REVIEW OF TDAC GUIDELINES, MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA AND SELECTION OF OFFICERS

Freddie Jones indicated that TDAC bylaws call for the appointment of a committee to view membership guidelines and develop a slate of new officers and voting members. He also made the recommendation that three to five people serve on the committee. Stanford Moore appointed Dan Clymore, Freddie Jones, David Sheppard, Rod Belcher, Sandy Hutchens and Willie Miles to the committee, with the recommendation that David Sheppard chair the committee. He requested that the committee bring a slate of nominees for officers and membership to vote on at the next TDAC meeting, scheduled to be held in conjunction with the Virginia Transportation Construction Association (VTCA) Spring Conference (April 8, 2009 in Roanoke). He urged anyone interested in TDAC participation to send an email of interest to Monica Esparza. It was recommended that a mass email be sent to all Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firms and prime contractors to solicit interest in TDAC participation. The pre-qualified bidder list was also identified as a means for information sharing.

COMMUNICATION METHODOLOGIES

Monica Esparza discussed new VDOT guidelines limiting publication of print media, and emphasized that electronic means would be the best avenue for future information sharing. It was advised that all ensure that Monica has a current email address to receive notification of TDAC and VDOT activities.

In light of the current economic situation, using videoconference as an exclusive meeting format was discussed. The group was reminded that rising fuel expense was the reason videoconference options were initially initiated. Eddie Ramirez indicated that teleconference works well for groups also. Mike Russell encouraged the use of technology to engage primes and DBEs, as it is done for bid opening.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

Stanford Moore referenced a Richmond Times Dispatch news article and initiated discussion related to the eagerly awaited economic stimulus package from the federal government. Tom Witt commented that a good chunk of the money needs to be committed fast. It was noted that “shovel ready” projects mandated by the package would likely be maintenance projects. VDOT typically takes months to roll out a project; maintenance type projects get rolled out much more quickly. It is likely that projects pulled from the six year plan would be ready, and the rural rustic program also lends itself to shovel ready projects. Last year - \$1 billion was spent on contracts and this year, another \$2 billion was spent. Bidding competition has increased significantly. The need for swift communication (particularly related to civil rights issues) to contractors was noted as things will happen quickly.

The group concurred that there was more unknown than known, but industry members shared that legislation was expected to be signed into law within the next two weeks. 25% of funds would be out within 18 months, with the expectation that funds be committed within 90 days or 120 days. The work would likely be coming out next year rather than in the short term. There was concern that the formula for spending may be unrealistic – that state or contractors may not be ready to move expeditiously. Close to \$7 billion would also be administered to counties and localities. Within 120 days, the state should have allocated funds. Localities are to be provided 90 days, but if not committed then the funds would go back to the state for 30 days, and if still not used then would revert back to the federal government. It was noted that for a period of time, contractors are working at very low cost. A key problem noted were that firms put expense into bid preparation for contracts that VDOT has failed to award. All agreed that it would not be business as usual due to the possibility of the advertisement schedule changing, etc. Willie Lee indicated that general contractors are going for big and small jobs, and inquired about “out of the box” type provisions for DBEs.

Leslie Gilchrist spoke to the practice of expediting projects during emergency situations such as hurricanes, where VDOT is capable of moving projects fast. She encouraged DBEs to partner if necessary and bid on projects as prime contractors. Aggressive action is necessary for quick turn around on money that must be spent.

VDOT-BOWD CENTER PRESENTATION

Queen Crittendon delivered a presentation to encourage engagement of TDAC partners and stakeholders with the BOWD Center to help DBEs grow. One of the things TDAC

may consider is to allow BOWD partners to serve on the TDAC committee. Prime, DBE to DBE, and VTCA networking were discussed to build networks and increase contracting opportunities. Priorities for the BOWD Center are assisting businesses with assessments, detailed work plans, business plans, and financial check-ups. The big challenge for businesses today is working capital and bonding. When asked what challenges the BOWD Center was experiencing, Queen commented that ultimately, the opportunities are not as robust as they once were, but we streamline, perfect and focus on business development so that DBEs can better market their firms.

Mike Russell inquired about whether the VDOT pre-qualification form could be a fillable word document for easier use? Freddie Jones will investigate.

Stanford Moore mentioned and congratulated Valley Green Landscaping, Inc. for being highlighted in the Flour-Lane DBE Newsletter for his involvement in the northern Virginia HOT Lanes project.

The meeting was adjourned.

Contractors expressing interest in TDAC membership included:

Eddie Ramirez, Ramirez Contracting
Colleen Payne, Universal Adaptive Consultant Services
Quincy Martin, A & M Services Plus
Willie Lee, Jireh Construction