

Capital Projects Advisory Review Board  
**Education Connections Committee**

Meeting Notes 9-27-2023

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**Committee Members:** (8 filled positions, 5 = Quorum)

- |   |                            |   |                                    |
|---|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| X | Curt Gimmestad (GC & AGC)  | X | Linneth Riley Hall (Transit)       |
| X | Brian Aske (DBIA NW)       | X | Robynne Thaxton (Private Industry) |
| X | Curtis Bennett (OMWBE)     | X | Olivia Yang (Higher Ed)            |
| X | Janet Jansen (State - DES) |   | Vacant (MWBE)                      |
| X | Josh Klika (MRSC)          |   | Vacant (Trades\Labor)              |

**Guests:**

Talia Baker, CPARB Staff

**Meeting started at 7:47 am**

Chair Gimmestad started the meeting after obtaining a quorum.

*Brian Aske made the motion to approve the agenda; Janet Janson seconded the motion. Motion approved via voice vote.*

*Robynne Thaxton made the motion to approve the committee minutes from September 27, 2023; Janet Janson seconded the motion. Motion approved via voice vote.*

**Discussion Highlights:**

Chair Gimmestad shared that he has been in contact with the co-chairs of the Project Feedback Process Workgroup (PFPW) to discuss the potential for a joint meeting. Co-Chair Jeff Gonzalez and Co-Chair Dave Johnson informed ECC Chair Gimmestad that the workgroup is still ramping up and identifying the issues they will be working on. They will reach out to the ECC once they have identified possible educational needs.

Chair Gimmestad noted that the next two Business Equity/Diverse Business Inclusion Committee meetings will be on 10/18 and 11/15. He recommends ECC members attend one and see if they have any educational resources to add.

Olivia Yang suggested asking some AGC faculty to attend an ECC meeting to help with breaking down silos with training opportunities.

Robynne shared that the DBIA has an Equity and Inclusion Committee who address these issues for them. She asked if the ECC can use the BE/DBI Committee as a resource for identifying training opportunities and needs. It would be a great resource for training owners first on diversity and inclusion issues, such as what are the statutory requirements for alternative procurement and how to address them. Additionally, other topics may include some form of education resource on how to get a project approved by the PRC, how to write or review an inclusion plan, how to put together a procurement that evaluates an inclusion plan vs. checking a box, or how to improve outreach.

Olivia shared her thoughts regarding the need to nurture and elevate small and diverse businesses into trade partners and how to keep them in business, so they are successful. It will resonate with more owners.

Chair Gimmestad asked the group how this committee can assist with changing the dynamics of the available resources towards the development of trade partners. Robynne suggested this committee is a conduit that can help encourage more connectivity between entities who are knowledgeable and good at providing training.

Robynne shared that DBIA may be interested in supporting the development of missing resources as they frequently put together single topic webinars for issues like how to put together Inclusion plans. They have the

platform, they are really focused on educating the construction community, and they have access to community experts. She would be happy to suggest it to them.

Olivia cautioned the group to make sure whichever entity is asked to create training resources are familiar with the topic. It is important that whichever portal is provided can help attendees understand the issues and how to keep trade partners in business for the duration of the project. The BE/DBI Report identified 3 items of import: Access to Opportunity, Access to Capital and Access to Training. The goal is to coach small and disadvantaged businesses to be competitive in the public works arena and guide them to keep them in business throughout the project. Advertising for new ideas could be a forum to go with a webinar explaining what exists now and new ideas are needed in response to the prevailing issues around inclusion. The trainers need to know the audience; are they a new owner, established owner, or trade partners, and are they just starting out or have they been in business for a while, etc.

Brian Aske asked if there is a core group that could help develop a webinar and share material from the BE/DBI Report from 2022? Olivia suggested starting with diversity managers to identify the issues they encounter on a regular basis. She then asked if it is possible to have people talk about the problems small\diverse businesses encounter and how to maneuver through them.

Chair Gimmestad asked how this committee can influence or support the other CPARB committees?

Olivia shared BE/DBI Committee is currently working on prompt pay issues. She suggested starting with small conversations and grow it as ideas manifest.

Robynne volunteered to start that conversation with the BE/DBI Committee and reminded the group that this committee's job is only to identify the gaps in what is available and how it could be filled, but not to put content together. She will liaison with BE/DBI Committee, Lekha Fernandes, Curtis Bennet and others for identifying content and additional resources. She also asked DBIA if they would be interested in developing some training but knows they will need people to develop the content. She can ask if anyone on the BE/DBI Committee would be interested in participating in that effort.

Chair Gimmestad suggested making a recommendation to those who provide DB training and GC/CM training to include focus on how to support small trade partners.

Curtis Bennet asked if the webinar Robynne suggested would be held quarterly? She explained that DBIA could host a webinar and may be willing to make them free so people can use them as a resource, but they wouldn't be a quarterly training without making it a formal class with a cost.

Chair Gimmestad noted this topic allows for joint conversations that can evolve going forward.

Talia had a conversation with the DES web team regarding a Training Resources webpage. They recommended posting a Training Resources document in a PDF format instead that users can access or download verses scrolling through a webpage. They explained this format will be easier to update as this committee identifies updates to the content, it will make it easier for web browsers to capture the information and the web team can also track how often the document is opened or downloaded. She noted that the agency headings in this document are hyperlinks, and she will consider how to make it easier to identify them as such. Additionally, she would like to add a section on Best Practices for easy reference. Josh Klika confirmed that any publications on the MRSC webpage is okay to publish in this document. The Committee was pleased with the progress so far.

Chair Gimmestad may not be available for the 10/28 meeting and asked for a volunteer to chair in his absence. Brian volunteered to step in.

**Next Meeting:** 10/19/2023

- Agena
- Minutes from 9/27/2023
- Update on possible webinar training
- Review Training Resources Directory
- Consider how to identify what is missing from current content
- Identify Next Steps
- Establish Next meeting Agenda

**Parking Lot:**

- Lessons Learned

**Action items:**

1. Talia will work on developing the Best Practices documentation.
2. Agency representatives have offered to provide primary education opportunities category topics (Curt for AGC, Brian for DBIA, Josh for MRSC) and will send to Talia within 2 weeks. They should be generic enough that they won't need to be updated often.
3. Robynne will let the EC committee know if DBIA is willing to host webinar and host it for free.
4. Robynne will connect with Lekha Fernandes regarding identifying individuals who may be willing to work with DBIA to put together some content for a webinar. (*Inclusion Plans*)
5. Chair Gimmestad has a community member who may be interested in filling the MBE position. He will reach out to them.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:42 am**