

MCA - MDT Highway Technical Meeting
June 15, 2022 – via in Person and Video Conference

JOINT MEETING – 2:00 PM

Participants:

MDT:

Matney Juntunen
Shane Pegram
Oak Metcalfe
Dustin Rouse
Jake Goettle
Clarissa Martin
Duane Kailey
Mack Long
Joe Green
Paul Bushell
Bethany Kappes
Matt Collingwood
Matt Needham
John Schmidt
Megan Strachan
Matt Strizich
Kathy Terrio
Jeremy Wilde
Megan Handl
Dean Jones
Stephen McEvoy
John Schmidt
Jeff Jackson
Jordan Martin

MCA:

Brad Meyer – HighMark Traffic Services
Jodie Tooley – MT Lines
Cale Fisher -- Riverside
Deb Poteet – Poteet Construction
Russ Gaub – Riverside
Tony Ewalt -- Sletten
Aaron Gray – HSI
Kerry Gray -- HSI
Guy Slaybaugh -- Century
Hal Fugelvand – Knife River
Solomon Redfern – Helena S&G
Mike Meredith -- Forterra
Keith Johnston – Mtn West Holding
Pat Bomgardner – MT Lines
David Smith – MCA
Nicole Hanni – MCA
Brian Thompson – BKBH

SPECIFICATION CHANGES

105.08.2 Contractor Survey and Layout

Green: this is a clarification. No intent change.

Bomgardner: some projects have an amount of this design already done . . . maybe not all projects. For those that already have this information, if we could know that, then we are not doubling up on work.

Green: reach out to the EPM as soon as possible so there is no duplication.

107.22 PROTECTION OF ARCHEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL FINDINGS

108.03.2 Project Schedules

108.08 FAILURE TO COMPLETE ON TIME

Green: this needs to be updated every 2 years. FHWA has reviewed these changes.

304.02.1 Cement

Green: allow use of Portland limestone

501.02.1 Concrete

Green: same as above.

552.03.4 Placing Concrete

Green: this is required and was part of special provisions. We are including it so it doesn't get left out.

552.03.12 Installation of Expansion and Contraction Joints

552.03.17 Loading of Piers and Abutments

603.03.1 General

603.03.4 Backfilling

612.03.1 Submittals

Green: we received some comment on this. These changes are based on comments to version 3 of the spec book.

612.03.5 Weather Conditions

612.03.7 Inspection Equipment, Quality Assurance and Lighting

612.03.8 Quality Control (QC) Plan, Inspection Procedures, and Recording Systems

620.03.6 Interim Pavement Markings

Green: allows temporary striping in more circumstances. Interim still needed within ten days.

620.03.7 Final Pavement Markings

624.03.3 Submittals

Green: this supersedes anything in the spec book. Just referring to the table of submittals so there is no conflict.

701.04.2 Foundation Material

711.14 ELASTOMERIC BEARING DEVICES

711.18 MECHANICAL REBAR CONNECTORS

Green: the couplers need to have the same properties as the rebar itself.

713.11 SOD

714.07.4 Physical Requirements

622.02.3 Reserved

716.02 SEPARATION GEOTEXTILE

SECTION 401

SECTION 618

618.03.4

Green: must reply in 2 hours of notification of a traffic control problem.

Bomgardner: We do not see this as having been a problem in the past.

Wilde: there has been some instances on the weekends where we have not been able to get a hold of anyone. This has caused some major safety issues. We want to get things taken care of in a timely manner. We went back and forth on what an acceptable amount of time would be to respond to those. We would only apply if someone isn't responding within 3 hours or so.

Poteet: the problem is that this is not what the spec says. It says 2 hours and a \$1000 deduct. I also just don't see this as being a large issue. I think if there is an issue, our companies have made good efforts to get out there and get it solved.

Wilde: with the TMC, we will see this more in the future. In the past, there was not a reporting body.

Goettle: Deb is right. We have not seen it a ton, and we hope to not do so. If it is a big safety concern, we need it solved. If TMC and Highway Patrol are calling it in, then it's a problem. Again, the deduct is discretionary.

Johnston: with all these changes, you can expect to add 20% to the entire project for traffic control. When we see "may apply \$1000 deduct" – there are some managers that will give those fines with regularity. We have seen these in specials before on larger or more urban projects such as 19th in Bozeman. This will also be really difficult on employees. This adds a lot more work. someone will need to be on call all the time and that just doesn't give our employees enough time off. If there is something that is specialized that needs an aerial plan, that makes sense. But it doesn't make sense for simple pave or chip. All this takes a lot of time we don't have. The number for traffic control will go up with how much work is being required.

Long: we need the better product. We can't do business like we used to.

Johnston: we can do more if it's paid for.

Long: we can pay more for the work. We hear of the couple of bad contractors. We don't want to make it harder. But we need to get the better product and response on these issues when they arise.

Redfern: there are jobs where this spec is needed . . . but there are a lot of jobs where this is not needed. Simple paves and chips. Do we really need this on every single job? I also expect some abuse of this fine.

Wilde: you may have some valid comments there. The aerial gives you advance traffic understanding. I think there is a difference in the need for aerial overlay.

Goettle: we are all ears on suggested language.

Slaybaugh: I don't see the deduct being applied consistently. EPMs are different across the state.

Fuglevand: I hate to see spec changes that are just fines – which is essentially what this is. I do not think this aligns with our partnering goals and efforts. Why can't we use partnering principals? – something like “contractor should make every effort” . . . make it more of something that we all agree on. I think this is harsh and somewhat threatening.

Long: again, it's for the one case that is a particularly bad contractor. I know one thing we all respond to is the fines.

Wilde: we can take another look at this with those comments.

Goettle: I really like Hal's comments. Well said.

Ewalt: I agree with Hal's comments. I want to add that adding something like this . . . its vague on how it would be applied uniformly. That is always a problem. Traffic control is becoming one of the more difficult portions to wrap our arms around it. There should be unit numbers on these traffic control measures. We really should focus on how much we are piling on traffic control.

618.04.6

Johnston: we are seeing two-way traffic on one side of the road. Contractors still need to access between the barrier. Sometimes it's easier to just move some barriers. It's often overlooked in the plans, and we have a hard time getting paid for it. We also see it on bridge work. normally the project managers have been good to work with. The attenuators need to be moved – but it should be paid for.

Green: there is some update or modification to take this into account, correct?

Wilde: I am not sure. I will have to look. There has been a memo that says whenever there is a concrete barrier, there should be attenuator. I am not exactly sure.

Smith: we really appreciate MDT contacting individual commenters, but some people who do not speak up also care about the 2nd draft and other changes. If those could come to me and I can then distribute to the master list. That way everyone who cares has an opportunity to view the updates after we provide comment.

MCA New Business

1. 406 Certs

Meredith: I think Oak and I are on the same page on this one.

Metcalfe: I am tired of arguing about language. I am just going to give you the language and you can sign it.

2. Annual MDT Concrete Meeting

Meredith: MDT told me they are going to do a separate pre-cast meeting.

Metcalfe: we are going to try Nov. 1. I want pre-cast involved in both . . . but try an additional separate conference with pre-cast. There are things that are separate and some that are common. We want to address specific pre-cast with the pre-cast folks.

Meredith: can we discuss spec changes ahead of time.

Metcalfe: yes. We should.

3. Letting Schedules-Long Lead Times

Meredith: a lot of pre-cast products have long lead times. Irrigation and box culverts are the main ones. Those have quick start dates and it puts us in a bind. The request is to move the notice to proceed back so that everyone can get their materials.

Reynolds: I think the standard Notice is 6 weeks. We have talked about increasing that time frame – and we will talk about that with our letting schedule. I want to post plans sooner . . . about 2 months before we advertise the projects. I understand people do not want to order products before they have the contracts. We have been trying to urge against early notice to proceeds. I think we are open to that.

Goettle: we have extended quite a few calendars with the material problems.

Meredith: if you put those in preliminary plans for review . . . we still cannot do anything about it. We just do not have the time to build the products. All we know from the preliminary plans is that there will be a train wreck and we are not going to build before things are bid and contracts awarded. I have raised that issue and the response has been “bid accordingly” – I don’t think that actually solves the problem.

Kailey: is it everything or specific items?

Meredith: it’s the special irrigation structures . . . we have dealt with them in the past, but this year was bad.

Redfern: for instance, if MDT hadn’t procured early on the Lincoln job, we wouldn’t have got it done.

Kailey: anytime you run into that, call Jake so we can bid it separately.

Meredith: the problem is that when I identify the problem in January, its already too late. I’m already out of time and I just don’t bid the contract.

Kailey: we are seeing supply issues all over the board.

Meredith: who sets these schedules? – 120 days or 180 days? – wouldn't that be a good time to have the conversation about the calendar, or is that too early?

Metcalf: with the industry meetings, I try to foster a complete discussion. It seems like the industry meetings has only been the ready-mix suppliers. We want everyone in the line to attend.

Collingwood: we should be able to make a decision to award time or suspend time. Is that enough?

Meredith: that would work if MDT would do that. That hasn't always been the answer we got.

Collingwood: I would be happy to award time if that's the case.

Reynolds: re: letting schedules: the schedule is out. We adjusted everything after January and February. Bids should be approximately every 3 weeks. Let me know if there are issues. The commission will look at it in August. – Also, the bid withdrawal electronically should have been available on the most recent bid.

Bomgardner: is that something you have to set up before?

Reynolds: you can use the physical or the electronic. I think there is a wizard that walks you through it. There should be a YouTube video that will show you how to do that.

4. Contractor Survey and Layout when there are plan errors

Redfern: last couple of years, I have had a lot of problems correcting errors on plans. It seems like there are more and more errors on plans. I'm not sure what to do. It's a lot of effort and we are not getting compensated for it. It takes a lot of our time. Is there a way to get compensated for that? There are things that need field fitting and that's fine --- others are taking a lot of time and effort. Its above what my expectations have been.

Goettle: if it is truly a problem, it needs to be addressed. Talk to your EPM and then move it up partnering.

Redfern: do you ever do a post-mortem on projects? – I would like to do that and have the designers involved.

Pegram: we can't do it on every project, but for problem sites, we want to do that with everyone including designers.

5. R/W agreements and bid documents

Redfern: I am running into issues where the ROW and the bid documents don't match up and the landowners get pretty upset. I would like MDT to just give us the ROW agreements when we get the contracts.

Kailey: can we produce a list of NSOPs?

Goettle: I thought we had done that before. We are hearing that from EPMs as well.

6. Primavera .xer and .xlm file types

Redfern: we would like MDT to accept .xer and .xlm files . . . I don't think MDT takes both of them.

Juntunen: the problem is that we were losing items in the import. We decided we could only take P6 . . . we have been discussing this with Oracle and the newest version should solve the problem.

Collingwood: if you could send me a file, I can test that. Send me the original for the Lincoln Road xer file. I'll test it.

7. Wage Increase

Poteet: Each time there has been a wage increase, we have got a traffic control unit increase. This recent wage increase is substantial. We need to up our unit costs.

Wilde: with the DOL wage rate increase, the traffic control items were increased. We will increase all traffic control items later this year.

Bomgardner: will we get the chance to review before it goes into effect?

Wilde: yes.

Poteet: can we move that up? The wage rates are already increased.

Goettle: we did look at the rate schedule. It's minor changes for everything but flagging and pilots. We hope things get added to the bid item in the interim.

8. Flood Damage

Bomgardner: we are looking for an update and we want to be part of the solution.

Fuglevand: we recognize that a lot will need to get done. People need the roads. Our request is to allow MCA to be a part of the process. We have ideas that can help this get done quickly to get the roads open – if we can get in front of this, we can try to get on some of this without a huge work force. We would really like to be a part of the planning and discussions.

Long: we are trying to use our maintenance forces. We are doing triage right now. We are trying to come up with a plan. We can't do it without MCA. MDT already has all of MCA busy already – we are going to need to work together.

Fuglevand: there are projects under contract right now. We can prioritize to determine what needs to get done right now and what does not so we can free up contractors.

Rouse: we are already reaching out to contractors in the area. We are going to look at some design build. We are going to need resources with MCA.

Fuglevand: the roads in the park are one thing . . . but how many MT roads are washed out?

Rouse: There are a few right now. And its fluid. What we know is that Red Lodge was quite devastated. Lots of urban reconstruct. Some roads are completely gone in that area. However, the majority is local government roads/bridges

Kailey: we want to look at opportunities to make things more resilient for the future.

MDT New Business

1. Funding and Redistribution

Rouse: IJJA passed and we are under that bill now. We built our budget on assuming that passed. Of course, inflation had increased. That does impact us. Bids are higher than anticipated. We do receive a redistribution amount in September – that has been around \$50M. We are going to eat into that this year. If we do get more money, we have a plan for that too. There is a possibility that the flooding could eat up everything. We are over our initial estimates with inflationary trends.

Redfern: how does fuel increases impact things?

Rouse: we anticipate that.

Smith: is there going to be FEMA money for the flood rebuild? Do we need 15% match?

Kailey: FEMA is more for local governments. That money should be up front if there is any. The more IJJA money we go after, the more money we need. We are putting budget office on notice that we need more money. The more grants we get, the more we are going to need from the governor's office. There are other surpluses that we would like to get into. We can fund match right now, but the more grants we get the more it hurts the fund.

2. Letting Schedule

Discussed above.

3. Federal Wage Decision

Terrio: the June 9 letting will be the effective date of the new wage decision.

4. Schedules

Juntunen: if you are having material issues on any project, give us too much detail. If you have a delay, that is the reasoning and justification we need. The justification to give more time. Also, please use your partnering ladder. Also, general reminder to look at schedule of contractor submittals.

Meredith: you are justified if there is a change from bid to when you receive materials?

Juntunen: correct.

Collingwood: if its due strictly to weather, and its critical path, then its an ok delay.

Meredith: if we have delays before bid time, there is no extension?

Juntunen: show it on your bid, and give your reasoning. Once the job is yours, that is when the schedule really kicks in.

5. CHFRS-2P vs CRS-2P

Green: is there any opinion on the two different types of oil? The high flow or the CRS-2P?

Redfern: if you use one over the other, is that how you decide to use fog seal?

Metclafe: the choice to fog seal is a district decision.

Fisher: are you looking to make a change? – why the question?

Green: no change contemplated.

Fisher: we have had better success with the high flow. No reactivating with the higher temps.

Redfern: I agree. CRS-2P bleeds. I noticed a difference during the higher temp months.

Old Business

1. Monthly Progress Estimates

Martin: right now with ASHTOware, we likely cannot make this happen. Maybe that is different in a few years. We can't get the estimates to you through our system. You should see those by the 6th or 7th of each month.

2. DBE Update

Handl: we are way under our goal. We are trying to change our directory so it is easier to search. If you have suggestions, please let us know. We are also doing a recruitment to get more firms signed up. If you have any referrals, please do so.

3. Partnering

Martin: I want to see and hear your issues so that we can use the partnering. We plan to push this beyond our crews on the ground and beyond the people at the pre-cons. I have heard issues today that I want to get working on.

Juntunen: we want to facilitate problem solving. And include the designers.

Fuglevand: are you waiting for someone to call you, or when do you get involved?

Martin: on the bigger jobs, I want to reach out early. The eventual plan is to initiate partnering very early.

Fuglevand: the spec now is that all jobs will be partnered. How do we know whether or not there is any kind of partnering going on for the level 2s? do we have that info?

Martin: I want EPMs to keep that in their DWR reports. If there is something that a contractor wants to add, I get a record of that as well in ASHTOware.

Fuglevand: so far, it has been difficult to measure if this is working or being done. It would be good to be able to see if it is working or not. It needs to be something that everyone can view.

Martin: that is the plan. We are testing evaluation cards with scores.

Juntunen: it is mostly a cultural measure . . . it is difficult to have an objective score. The most formal amount of evaluation will be on the level 1.

Fuglevand: I think the steering committee should be getting some information.