

MCA - MDT Highway Technical Meeting
December 15, 2021 – via Video Conference and in person at MCA Offices, Helena

JOINT MEETING – 2:00 PM

Participants:

MDT:

Jake Goettle
Kathy Terrio
Joe Green
Paul Jagoda
Dean Jones
Paul Rieger
John MacMillan
Jeremy Wilde
Megan Handl
Darin Rouse
Oak Metcalfe
Doug McBroom
Shane Pegram
Matt Strizich
Geno Liva
Paul Bushnell
Chris Trautmann
Dwane Kailey
Frederick Beal

Contractors:

David Smith
Guy Slaybaugh, Century
Jodie Tooley, MT Lines
Solomon Redfern
Cale Fisher, Riverside
Mike Meredith, Forterra
Mitch Callas, United Materials
Brian Thompson, BKBH
Clint Habel, Riverside
Jake Hoffman, KLE Const.
Anthony Butcher, Century Co

Specifications

MDT has no proposed revisions for the December 2021 meeting.

MCA New Business

Monthly Progress Payments

- Cale Fisher: MDT seems to missing quantities on the monthly progress payments. Sometimes it is significant, sometimes it is not. I used to be able to go hash it out with the EPM – the response I have been getting is that the information is not available yet on the 25th. I am hoping we can have a better procedure where the contractor can have a 24 or 48 hour review time to review the estimates. We would like some review time to get it caught early.
- Guy Slaybaugh: it can become problematic with smaller subcontractor. Sometimes we just take the hit and pay them up front . . . then we are the ones financing the project. More than anything, this is just a friendly reminder that it is important that these are correct and timely.
- Joe Green: I spoke with some field office persons. Everyone agrees this is important. We plan on introducing this as a topic at the next district engineering meeting (quarterly). Will also be a topic at the next EPM meeting. We want to solve this so that this is not a problem.
- Paul Jagoda: We are going to try to figure this out. Please send specific problems to Joe Green so that we can learn where the ball is being dropped.

Contractor options for pulling bids the day of the letting.

- Guy Slaybaugh: We are interested in having an ability to pull bids on the day of letting. It would be nice to have this option. We did when bids used to not be electronic.
- Cale Fisher: This is not a very common occurrence, but it would be nice to use. We sometimes bid in Idaho and we have that option to pull the bid with their electronic bidding. We would like that option. For instance, bidding multiple projects but only really wanting 1.
- Darin Reynolds: That doesn't seem too complicated. I think that functionality is available. We do have the form available on our website to pull a bid . . . and we can receive that by email. But I agree this may be something we can get into the electronic bid system. We will look into this.
- Solomon Redfern: So how does the current process work? – if you are low on the first bid, and then do not want the 2nd.
- Reynolds: That is in the specs. Right now, you can come into MDT on bid day. 102.11 is the spec on point. You can either hand deliver the form or email me the copy.
- Goettle: We do need it in writing. It can only be a withdrawal. Conditional Bids are not currently allowed.
- Cale Fisher: We would like to be able to do conditional withdrawal.

Department New Business

Letting Schedule

- Darin Reynolds: It seems like the letting schedule is working. 2 lettings a month in the winter and spring . . . and 1 per month in the summer. We have been kicking around the idea of adjustments in the schedule and wanted to bring it to you early. The 2022 schedule is set . . . this would be for bids into 2023. Our goal is to make it most advantageous to you.
- Brad (Calumet): is there going to be some point in the schedule where the letting really gets hit.
- Reynolds: our current 5-year plan accommodates the funding bill out there with the feds. We try to balance everything. I would not anticipate any significant difference. I do, however, think we are getting a slight increase.
- Dustin Rouse: we are seeing about a 20% increase in our core program. There is an additional \$45M per year for the bridge program. There is also an increase in the safety program.

Partnering

- Dwane Kailey: we have a spec for the partnering. MDT really wants to take partnering seriously, but we also need contractors to be there as well. The most recent meeting was not well attended by contractors.
- Slaybaugh: I already informed everyone that we need to have contractors attend these partnering meetings.

Source of Supply

- Oak Metcalfe: We will be presenting a significant change re: pre-inspected items. This will be spec 106.01. We want to target info we really need, and brush aside information we do not actually need. We have run into instances where the source of supply was not clear at the pre-inspection. We can make accommodations, but we need to be advised of these things. The goal is to provide more specific direction re: what is needed on the source of supply letter. An item needs to either be on the qualified product list or independently inspected and approved.

Mastic

- Oak Metcalfe: this is a crack filler used for large cracks and potholes. Our original spec was based on recipe. It was a generic specification. We have run into issues where the suppliers do not want to provide information. We have since learned that the product is becoming more widespread and specialized for various uses (void v. protection). Our intent is to specify the material based on the new ASTM standard. We will also have specs on how to apply the product and which situations it can/should be used.

Outreach with producers

- Oak Metcalfe: With covid, we have not been out with suppliers all that much. We want to have the construction conference in Billings this coming February. We also want to have a plant mix industry meeting. Ideally, we would like to do it at the same time.

Old Business

Customer Service Survey

- Jake Goettle: we will be sending out soon. We originally planned for November, but that was delayed.

Website/FTP Update

- The website is new as of a week ago. Please let us know if there are any issues or feedback. We also have a new system for building bid packages.

Federal Highway Wage Decision Update

- Kathy Terrio: the joint heavy highway committee met and proposed rates. That proposal is available on the MDT website. MDT will be hosting a meeting soon to ask questions and discuss. Do not use the proposed draft for bid . . . it is not approved yet. it still has to be approved by contractors and Fed Labor
- Jake Goettle: I just sent the announcement to David Smith. We will distribute.

Partnering

- Jake Goettle. Dwane already covered this. Otherwise, I thought it was a good meeting on Partnering. MDT did get two positions from the legislature to fund partnering. Those are posted, but we have yet to find candidates with experience we were hoping for. This would be a partnering program manager.
- Guy Slaybaugh: I filled contractors in on the partnering summit. I thought the meeting went well and provided highlights and suggestions to other contractors.

MCA-MDT Environmental Task Force

- Jake Goettle: This is for endangered species protections. Originally, bull trout and projects near bull trout streams. This has gone fairly well with the new special spec and bid item. We did still have a violation – luckily, the monitor discovered and fixed while the violation was occurring. That has been a good addition to the project. This was on 4 projects last year. Where there any comments on this?
- Guy Slaybaugh: How much longer till we get in the good graces of all the enviro and wildlife agencies?
- Jake Goettle: This really is a serious topic. I think we are making progress. I think we are showing those agencies that we are taking appropriate steps. On the project that we had the violation – it was the operator that was not aware of what they could and could not do.
- Slaybaugh: Could we get some of those wildlife folks on this meeting or another smaller group? I would be interested in participating.

MCA Announcements

- David Smith
 - MCA annual meeting is upcoming at Fairmont. Mack Long will be speaking.
 - The sand and gravel and opencut stakeholders will meet 1/12.

Future Discussion

- Guy Slaybaugh: in the future, I would like to discuss traffic control at bridge ends and crossovers. Also further reducing speeds in some work zones.