

WSDOT APPRENTICESHIP UTILIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

June 9, 2009

1:-30 – 4:00 PM

MEETING MINUTES

Commission Board Room
WSDOT Transportation Building
310 Maple Park Ave
Olympia, WA 98504

Attendees:

Committee Members: Bob Abbott, Bob Adams, Dave Johnson, Linea Laird (Chair), John Littel, Randy Loomans, Dean Smith, Jason West, Tom Zamzow

WSDOT Staff: Melinda Capps, Jeff Carpenter, Jenna Fettig, John Huff, Marvin Jenkins, Craig McDaniel, Ron Wohlfrom

Meeting Observers: Van Collins (Associated General Contractors), Don DeMulling (PNW Ironworkers), Lorraine Lucas (Graham Construction and Management), Julie Printz (Scarsella Bros.), Jody Robbins (Labor & Industries), Tami St. Paul (Operating Engineers Regional Training Program), Valerie Whitman (Max J. Kuney Co.), Shelly Williams (Scarsella Bros.),

Meeting Overview and Outcomes:

Action Items:

Future action is needed on the following items:

1. WSDOT will provide a report to the committee showing apprentice and journeylevel hours for each occupation.
2. WSDOT will supply a list of planned projects to the committee in July.
3. The Construction Office will work with Contract Ad & Award to ensure that apprenticeship requirements are shown in bold text on all bid announcements sent out.
4. WSDOT will continue to seek approval to place apprenticeship requirements on federal projects (currently, a memorandum of agreement allows this).
5. The agency will work with contractors and the IT department to develop on web-based tool for contractors to collect, compile and submit monthly apprenticeship data.
6. The Construction Office will work with the Highways & Local Programs Division to share WSDOT's approach to requiring apprenticeship as well as the agency's good faith effort with local agencies.
7. WSDOT will work to enforce consistency in what hours are reported on monthly reports (onsite vs. plant hours).
8. The agency will collect data from contracts containing the requirement and provide this to the committee for the future evaluation of adjustments to the requirement (planned for November 10, 2009).

Date Setting:

The Apprenticeship Utilization Advisory Committee set the following tentative meeting date:

- **November 10, 2009 – 1:30 to 4:00 p.m.**
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Meeting Minutes:

Welcome

Linea Laird welcomed the group and introduced **Jeff Carpenter, the new State Construction Engineer and Committee Chair**. Jeff welcomed the group. Members and attendees introduced themselves.

Actions Taken Since Last Meeting

Apprentice Hours by Occupation (handout)

Linea explained the handout to the group. Tom would be curious to see journeyman hours by craft or trade too. **WSDOT will supply a report showing the journeyman hours for each craft or trade as well as apprentice hours.**

Active Projects (handout)

Linea went over the table of active projects with the group. The goal is different for some projects because of the phasing-in of the requirement.

Completed Projects (handout)

Linea directed the group to the completed projects handout. **Two completed projects did not make their goals.** Bossburg to Canada had issues with subcontractors not meeting their goals. The NCR Seal also did not make the goal. Craig explained that due to the nature of the work, the goal could not be met and a good faith effort was approved.

Advance Schedule of Projects (handout)

Linea directed the group to the updated Advance Schedule of Projects. By January, **WSDOT expects 100 projects will have had apprenticeship requirements.**

Randy asked where the agency is at with stimulus projects. Linea explained how the stimulus projects were obligated and told the group about the WSDOT website at: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/funding/stimulus/> where they can learn more about the ARRA projects.

Dave Johnson asked about projecting out over WSDOT's entire program. Jeff explained the limitations of how far WSDOT can look into the future. Jeff says by July, the list will be out. **WSDOT will provide this information to the committee in July.**

Bob Abbott has noticed some larger contracts do not have the apprenticeship requirement listed on the bid announcement. **Construction will work with Contract Ad to ensure the requirement is listed in bold text on every bid announcement.**

FHWA Training Coordination

Craig updated the group on where WSDOT is at with coordinating with Federal Training Goals and State Apprenticeship Requirements. Apprenticeship has been more successful putting women and minorities to work than the federal program. WSDOT is working to use apprenticeship to fulfill the federal requirements. **WSDOT is working under a memorandum of agreement** to allow apprenticeship on federal contracts until further data is available about any affects the requirement might have on the accomplishment of federal training goals as well as other federal programs can be determined.

New Reporting System

The agency is working on a web-based reporting system to allow contractors to consolidate, edit, and submit apprenticeship reports. Valerie though a system might be helpful, but would need to allow subcontractors to enter in their data as well as the prime contractor. Dean suggested working with the contractors on the reporting system. **Jenna will work with contractors and IT on determining how to set up the system so that subcontractors as well as prime contractors can access what they need.**

Bob Adams asked what administrative issues had come up. Craig explained that the prime contractors were having issues getting subcontractors on board, and there are some issues getting timely submittal of the plan. Randy brought up an issue with one project where the contractor was not planning to utilize apprentices, but this has been resolved as they have enrolled in a state-approved program. Randy mention labor is planning to police the issues with WSDOT. Labor has concerned about the contractors letting a project finish without doing anything.

Outreach

Linea briefed the group about her presentation at a recent WAPA meeting. Events like this are bringing up issues. Linea asked the group members to highlight recent or upcoming activities.

Bob Abbott said the Laborers are partnering with the AGC on a career day in Seattle.

- Dave Johnson said Helmets to Hardhats has expanded. WSBCTC is also working on a pre-apprenticeship program. Dave mentioned the economic situation has affected apprenticeship. They are trying to get projections together to see how to best meet their workforce needs.
- Randy mentioned that the Governor's Safety and Health Conference will be held in Tacoma on October 6 and 7th and encouraged the group to attend.
- Bob Adams mentioned recruiting apprentices was easier when the legislation passed than today due to the economy. Tom agreed and

mentioned Granite has journeymen sitting at home because apprentices are required. He also brought up that a number of cities and counties are requiring apprentice labor. The cities and counties are really struggling with how to define a good faith effort, etc. Contractors have struggled with Snohomish County in particular and Tom asked if WSDOT can do some outreach with the county and share the agency's approach. **Linea agreed to work with Highways and Local Programs to get the word out to local agencies about how WSDOT is administering the requirement.**

- Dave Johnson knew that 23 agencies statewide have goals in place. GA has been the primary contact for most of them. Bob Abbott was hoping if WSDOT got a web-based system in place that it could be utilized by schools and local agencies. **WSDOT will explore this after the system is developed.**
- Jason brought up the economy. His labor force has been cut in half. Hiring apprentices is displacing journey level workers, but the incentives are there since apprentices are cheaper. Jason mentioned you could hire someone just to observe the work and keep all the journey level workers, but he wondered what opportunity that provides the apprentice. Jason felt it is important for the agency to be able to reduce the goal for short duration projects, or projects with very small crews, especially during the economic downturn.
- Linea summarized by saying that she has heard from a few people about the economy. She asked the committee if they can discuss making some criteria for adjusting requirements. The committee will have time to do this during the open discussion scheduled for later today.
- Randy brought up that this biennium is the biggest biennium ever for WSDOT, and wondered why contractors would be struggling. Linea acknowledged that while there are some big projects coming up, there are still areas that are struggling. For instance, WSDOT's paving program was forecasted to be smaller this year than during the previous six years (though stimulus brought it back up to normal levels). Dave asked if the stimulus projects are primarily paving. Linea confirmed that most of it is, though some is concrete and some is asphalt.
- John said the carpenters have been distracted with the downturn in the economy. Their hours are down 30% from last October. He did note that training opportunities increase when the journeymen are out of work because workers seek training to make themselves more attractive for potential employment. They have been planning for future training and opened a new training center in the Tri-Cities. John also mentioned that the classes and shops are full six days a week. The Carpenters are trying to plan for waves of upcoming retirements. They are looking closely at who is interested in entering the industry and have decided that apprentice preparation is one of the best avenues. They are having an Apprentice Preparation Conference in September. The Committee is invited. They will set up direct entry agreements with the most successful pre-apprenticeship programs.

Budget and Program Update

Linea went over the project delivery graphs (handout). The spending is broken down by region and by phase. The construction program drops after 2013. Linea explained WSDOT is reorganizing the agency and reporting. Jeff clarified that the charts are funded, not projected. Jeff explained how the curve is created. Bob Adams and Linea brought up tolling as a revenue source and public private partnerships. While the chart shows a drop in the future, it is good news that WSDOT is still seeing the construction program increase during the next few years.

Committee Discussion

Linea reminded the group that when the committee first got together they decided not to do anything with geographical exclusions, high ratio of materials to labor or other exclusions. She asked the group if they would like to do any more work on these issues. Randy suggested waiting until more jobs are completed. Bob Abbot had the impression that on the projects that didn't meet the goals, it is more about educating the contractor. He also felt more data is needed. Dave Johnson agreed there had not been a reason to exclude any projects to date. He mentioned the work coming up will be more overlays and chip seals and thought that that the committee should wait for more data on these upcoming, smaller jobs. Craig mentioned that with \$2 million jobs containing apprenticeship, we might see what high ratio of materials to labor might be. He also expected to hear more about the economic issues when the contract size decreases. Bob Abbott and Dave said they also have a hard time putting journeymen out of work to hire apprentices. Bob mentioned the issue with paving crews that have been together for a long time.

Dean agreed that it is not time to make geographic adjustments. Tom mentioned the region-wide project might be a geographic adjustment. He also noted that the other that didn't meet the goal was in a remote location in Eastern Washington at the national border. Bob Adams thought the problem projects were mostly paving and that trend will continue. He mentioned looking at companywide utilization for paving projects. **Tom thought some contractors are already reporting plant hours and said the agency should take steps to make reporting more consistent.** Bob agreed with Tom that the reporting needs to be consistent. The group seemed warm to making an adjustment for paving projects that would allow a contractor to count plant hours performed by apprentices.

Bob Abbott pointed out that subcontractor participation and reporting seemed to be the most common issue. Valerie explained her firm's issue isn't in getting the reports, but subcontractors that cannot meet the goal. Linea felt that education has helped get more people familiar with the program. Dave mentioned the WSBCTC would like to see the requirement apply to all subs.

Linea asked the group for other items that need to be addressed as a committee. **Bob felt the committee should be sensitive to future economic issues. This will be discussed after reviewing data collected at the next meeting in November. The committee will also review the data collected to see if any recommendations about adjustments can be determined.**

Date Setting

The next meeting will take place November 10, 2009 – 1:30 p.m. Set up Meeting.

Meeting Adjourned