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## Access and Opportunity Committee Meeting Minutes

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**Date/Time:** December 11, 2018, 10:14 a.m. – 11:08 a.m.

**Place:** Suffolk Headquarters  
65 Allerton Street  
Boston, MA 02119

**Committee Members Present:**

Jill Lacey Griffin  
Crystal Howard  
Maggie Drouineaud  
Emily Earll  
Priscilla Flint-Banks

Kate Harrison  
Nhat Le  
Jennie Peterson  
Liz Skidmore

*A list of all committee members is available to the public by request.*

**Call to Order**

10:14 a.m. Chair, Jill Griffin, called to order the Access and Opportunity Committee Meeting and there was a round of introductions.

**HOST: Welcome**

10:16 a.m. Brooke Woodson welcomed the attendees to the Suffolk National Headquarters. He gave a bit of history, stating that Suffolk has been around since 1982, and explained that the company takes diversity requirements on its projects very seriously. He is personally very pleased with the results so far on the Encore project, but ensured they're still working toward finishing strong. Mr. Woodson discussed a few programs Suffolk runs to enhance diversity efforts, making special mention of the Trade Partnership Series. He stated that an emphasis on retaining individuals in the trades is important.

10:18 Linda Dorcena-Forry stated that she was happy to be hosting the AOC and to have MGC in the building. She gave a special thanks to Jill Griffin and Emily Earll on Suffolk's behalf and stated that their leadership has been important. Ms. Forry also commended MGC's Build a Life campaign. She stated that the leadership and vision from the top and bringing the right folks to the table for collaboration and building opportunities is critical in diversity efforts. Ms. Forry noted that John Fish, Suffolk's leader, believes in the Access and Opportunity mission, which

means there's a lot of support to work toward bringing women, minorities and veterans to the project and working with their partners and subcontractors to make that happen. She emphasized that diversity is a priority for Suffolk and they're still really focused on the individual numbers, with the intent on exceeding them.

### **Approval of Minutes**

10:22 a.m. The committee approved the minutes from the November 13, 2018 meeting, unanimously.

### **REPORT: Encore Design/Construction Activity** – Jennie Peterson, Director of Employment; Emily Earll, Project Controls Manager

10:23 a.m. Ms. Peterson kicked off the presentation with an update on design contracts, stating that not much has changed. At the end of November, 22.9% of contracts were awarded to MBE, VBE and WBE businesses. MBE's had been awarded 13 contracts with a goal of 7.9% and an 8.6 % actual awarded to date status totaling \$5.4M. For WBE's, over \$5.1 million had been awarded (14 contracts), totaling 8.1% against a 10% goal. For VBE's, there were 4 contracts awarded, totaling \$4 million, which is 6.4% actual against a 1% goal. Ms. Peterson notes that these numbers will not be changing significantly over the remainder of the project.

In construction, 17.2% of contracts, amounting in \$231 million, had been awarded to MBE, VBE and WBE businesses at the end of November. MBE's received 80 contracts, VBE's had been awarded 49 and WBE's received 155. Each segment was exceeding goals at this point, and Ms. Peterson stated they are also watching very closely so that the numbers don't drop as change orders come through.

10:27 a.m. Ms. Peterson provided a workforce update, stating that as of Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>, over 4,555,394 hours of work had been completed on the project by 6,455 workers. Of those, 1,515 were minorities, 409 were females and 288 were veterans. At this time, Encore is exceeding each workforce diversity goal.

10:28 a.m. Ms. Peterson provided information on the outreach efforts for Encore during November, which included attending and presenting at the Nov. 5 event for Veteran businesses hosted by MGC. They also held their own Veterans Tradesperson luncheon on the property on Nov. 13. The monthly Tradeswomens Luncheon was also held, and they attended the annual Mass Girls in Trades Eastern Conference as well, which they noted the event has some of the first success stories, seeing some women who had attended past sessions and are now in the trades.

Additionally, Ms. Peterson noted that Encore considers it a win that the bricklayers are reaching out 6-8 weeks in advance to request a more diverse applicant pool for their apprenticeships. She stated that although its unlikely that if they get into the trades now, they'd be on the Encore project, they're still happy to facilitate future work and diversity in the area.

10:32 a.m. Ms. Peterson and Ms. Earll provided an update on the construction, which is still on track for the June opening. Encore Boston Harbor has received a TCO for the utilities plant, so some of Wynn's team has been able to move in and start those areas. Work continues on the curtain wall. In the hotel, they are now up to 8<sup>th</sup> floor of completed rooms. Additionally, the IT and facilities team are beginning to move in, and people are starting to occupy the property to clean and operate. Landscaping is ongoing including the planting of over 1000 trees. Broadway has begun to look very different as road work continues.

As far as labor projections, Ms. Peterson said that work is starting to tail down, but there are still 1,300-1,500 workers on the site each day. That number will continue to decline for Encore, but is by no means a "small" workforce.

10:35 a.m. Ms. Earll stated that Encore Boston Harbor facilitated just one corrective action meeting this month with East Coast Interiors and they were very receptive. She said that they're finding that as the workforce gets smaller, it's somewhat easier to maintain the percentages of the workforce numbers, but they're in no way backing off as the work declines.

10:36 a.m. Ms. Skidmore congratulated Encore again on their work, stating the 407 women on the project is very relevant and the fact that they're now over the goal for female workers is a really big deal. She explained that she got a call with a concern about T&T Electric, who have had over 100,000 hours total on the project but they're only at 4.3% women to date. She noted that they rose this past month to 8.4%, but are still not where they need to be. Additionally, two women were laid off this month and one was told by a foreman, "We laid them off after we met our hours."

Ms. Peterson said this information was helpful, and that every week their team looks at the turnstyle and badging numbers of individuals onsite and are actively comparing week to week. She said she would be looking further into Ms. Skidmore's inquiry.

Additionally, Ms. Skidmore had heard concerns of an issue for women regarding bathrooms on the project. She asked if there was only one bathroom for the women, and 12 floors to travel to get to it. Ms. Peterson confirmed that Encore is currently trying to move the bathrooms to be more accessible. She also acknowledged that some could consider such things to sound petty, but that bathroom issues really are a big deal with the long hours on the site right now to meet project deadlines, so she assured she wants to address those things quickly. Ms. Skidmore added that it's also imperative because if it takes a woman 45 minutes to go to the bathroom, she's suddenly an unproductive worker.

Additionally there were concerns that there's only one gate right now open from the parking lot, so it's taking 45 minutes to get out of the lot after a shift. Ms. Peterson noted that they recently lost 200 spots on the site, but reminded the committee that they're one of the few projects that provide free parking. They're trying to accommodate road work and site work. It was noted as a concern for safety, and Ms. Peterson said that there is police detail in the lots, but they're

amidst 80 million dollars of road work right now and that's impacting quick exit from the site.

10:44 a.m. There was a discussion regarding certain subcontractors not meeting their workforce goals, but Ms. Skidmore acknowledged that she felt the Encore team was doing all that they could to enforce the goals of the project. She stated that while there are some cases that can be explained by labor shortages, that's not the entire case, and certainly not for some of the constantly underperforming subs. Ms. Skidmore stated, "I don't know what more you could be doing regarding diversity on this project—how are you going to take some of the learnings to other projects?" Mr. Woodson stated that what they're trying to do internally to make change is during the estimating stage, to consider the compliance record before awarding the next contract. He stated that an informed look of the history is helpful, but has to happen at the early stage of the project.

A conversation ensued about how to replicate this work on other projects, and all agreed that it's very important that Suffolk, DCAM and others start this conversation and emphasis right from the start, and it has to be addressed that the same "repeat offenders" are not in compliance and continue to get contracts anyway on other projects.

Ms. Peterson commended Suffolk for communicating early and often with subcontractors on the Encore project, and said each of those opportunities help to get the message across. Where the rubber hits the road is the weekly phone call and request of plan to get them in compliance. She felt that the compliance tracker is a really great tool as well, not only for safety on the project but also for monitoring workforce.

Ms. Griffin added that Suffolk is one player, granted a major player, but there are others- unions, subcontractors and apprenticeship coordinators among others. She was curious what other things Suffolk and Encore would recommend or call out as best practices. Ms. Peterson responded that consistent communication, reiteration, repeating the need and the demand are key. But she also said it's important to celebrate the milestones, the successes, and the achievements. Ms. Earll added that the growing relationships with the unions and apprenticeship directors are really important. They're what create a shift in the reaction, to the forward thinking and planning. Ms. Peterson also noted that they met with every business director and agent from the get-go to see where they were training, starting the relationship there and discussing the goal immediately. That's an effective best practice from the beginning.

10:56 a.m. Ms. Griffin addressed the committee saying that while we tend to focus on the numbers, what it's really about is much more than the numbers. She said that even after reaching goals, the team continues efforts and it shows in that Encore keeps increasing in female and minority workforce representation, and they're continuing to trend in the right direction. Ms. Griffin commended the future focus on the change orders. She reminded everyone that the committee is truly focused on expanding opportunities for people, and the data shows that is happening. She stated that when the casino legislation provided these goals, the MGC looked at

one project that had been very successful for women's workforce numbers, which was the UMass project. That was what that led to this AOC model. She stated that they can tell that it works, with a lot of effort from behind the scenes. Mr. Woodson agreed, saying that in the beginning, it was more contentious, but it really was impactful and it's great to see it evolve and progress. Ms. Flint-Banks agreed and added that it's great to have the community at the table, since the community are the people impacted and those who lack the opportunities, so that's important to have as part of the model.

## **New Business**

11:00 a.m. Ms. Harrison noted that Tradeswomen Tuesdays were very successful in 2018, and will continue through 2019, starting in February. She invited all committee members to stop in to one, as examples of real people who are in the industry, to help those interested relate to the work.

Ms. Flint- Banks reminded the committee that the industry still needs to tackle the daycare issue, as it is a significant roadblock. Ms. Skidmore gave an update of the ongoing work there is being done to try to tackle the national problem, at least locally, citing a new model that is underway with a manufacturing company. She stated they were provided 100,000 dollars to determine a solution, and were trying to find second and third shift home childcare providers to get licensed and work with these employees to provide for parents to be able to work nontraditional shifts.

11:08 a.m. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

### **List of Documents and Other Items Used:**

1. December 2018 MGC AOC Agenda- Final, signed 12/6/18 (pdf)
2. Nov 13 AOC Minutes- Draft update (pdf)
3. 2018 November Encore Boston Harbor AOC Report Final (pdf)
4. 2018 November EBH Construction Workforce (pdf)
5. Encore Everett Access and Opportunity trendline December 2018 (pdf)
6. 2018-19 Meeting Schedule Update- dec (pdf)