

**MCA – MDT Highway Technical Committee Meeting  
Montana Contractors Association Annual Convention  
Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula, MT  
1/16/2020**

55+ in attendance, no sign-in sheet.

Kevin Christiansen led the meeting. Key points summarized:

- Financially, MDT is in good shape. Fully funded for the future. Shifting focus to reauthorization works with a coalition of rural states to help get federal funding.
- Funding is solid through this FY. MDT struggling with recruitment/retention with over 80 vacancies.
- Bids are coming in high, more than they've seen in the past. Not sure why.
- Projecting over-obligation of \$60M before FY 21. Last couple of years there was around \$30M of "grab bag" money available from the feds, have been told not to expect that much this year. MDT is worried that the HHS potential mismanagement/classification of Medicare will affect the state's overall bond rating.
- CM/GC: First 2 projects went to Kewit. Johnson Lane interchange is next. 4th project is series of bridges near Lewistown. Will not tweak rules so that MT contractors are better equipped to bid. They have already changed scoring criteria and experience. Some of the scoring is based on federal requirements.
- DBE: Have not met goal last 2 years. Reminder that this is from the federal side, not the state. Money is tied to it. Projects over \$10M have a lower participation rate. A new disparity study is gearing up. Bob Warren hopes that it will be accurate, and noted that many of the DBE's in the study do not bid work. Last study showed 107, only 40 have worked.
- Partnering: MDT/MCA working together. It was tried 30 years ago and was a fiasco. Kevin and Dwayne went to AGC meeting where partnering was discussed, and left as full-blown converts. It's time to try again and they know MDT needs a paradigm shift to make it happen. We have created a field guide, and have set up trainings. Trevor Livesay, "the goal is to make it NOT suck to come to work." Kevin feels there has been enough change in MDT leadership since 30 years ago that the time is right and it's a good opportunity. Training is mandatory for both sides.
- Kevin answered a question about bridge jobs, and noted that several of them are really behind, but MDT is not sure why.

End of meeting