

Procurement Modernization Commission

Workforce Workgroup

Wednesday, April 13th, 2016
10 AM - 12 PM

1) Attendees:

Gail Bassette – Secretary, DGS
David Brinkley – Secretary, DBM
Henry Bogdan – Maryland Nonprofits
Al Bullock – Chief of Staff, DoIT
Sheryl Brissett-Chapman – National Center for Children and Families
Gabriel Gnall – Procurement Advisor, BPW
Rachel Hershey – Procurement Supervisor, DBM
Kevin Igoe – Chief of Staff, DBM
Sheila McDonald – Executive Secretary, BPW
John Molnar – Integrity Consulting
Janice Montague – GOMA
Suzette Moore – Assistant Secretary, DGS
Marc Nicole – Deputy Secretary, DBM
Merril Oliver – Governor’s Grants Office (GGO)
Devan Perry – BPW
Eileen Straughan – Straughan Environmental, Inc.
Jamie Tomaszewski – Chief of Procurement, DBM

2) Review of Outcomes and Duties for the Workforce Workgroup:

A. Procurement Manual, Best Practices and Training. The Workgroup arrived at consensus that a procurement manual for procurement staff is a top priority. Focus of discussion became how to produce such a manual, which would need to cover procurements for Services, IT, Commodities, Construction, A&E, etc. Input from State staff knowledgeable in each of these areas would need to be channeled through a central conduit, such as the BPW, before content is translated into an approachable, easily-readable manual produced by a technical writer and professionally edited. Manual would need to be a live document, regularly updated and accessible online. One such manual that may be instructive is the Virginia Department of Transportation’s manual, which was recently written to streamline A&E procurements. Another source may be federal procurement manuals. Procurement Best Practices, another suggested change, would be drawn from the procurement manual. An observation was made that program staff, in addition to procurement staff, also would benefit from a procurement manual and knowledge of best practices because program staff often write the scope of work with little communication with procurement, resulting in minimum qualifications and contract requirements that vary widely for similar procurements throughout the State.

The Workgroup also entertained discussion about posting the procurement manual and links to other important procurement information on *eMaryland Marketplace* (eMM) in an effort to enable easier access to consistent procurement information and training for both the

vendor community and the procurement staff. It was noted that immediate action could be taken to post existing materials on the eMM website, thereby encouraging the procurement community to access eMM as a centralized portal to procurement information while new training materials and documents are produced. See **B.ii** below for additional discussion on training.

B. Barriers to Retaining Qualified Procurement Staff. The Workgroup discussion also canvassed how to keep procurement staff. Compensation and training were identified as key to overcoming staffing quality and turnover issues.

- i. Compensation.** Discussion about recruiting from schools that have contract management and procurement programs evolved into a discussion about compensation and the need to pay qualified individuals according to their qualifications. Also identified was the need to standardize procurement classifications and compensation across the State, which currently varies widely from agency to agency. A suggestion was made to look at the federal procurement classifications, qualifications and compensation.
- ii. Training.** Training was identified as a means to improve the qualifications needed among procurement officers, as well as train program staff, in order to compose more effective solicitations, specifically the scopes of work. This observation drew comments that training needs to address and identify communication channels between agency procurement staff, program personnel and control agency staff, as well as mentoring opportunities for procurement and program staff. Assignment was made to look at training developed by national procurement groups such as the National Contract Management Association (NCMA), National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO), and the National Institute for Governmental Purchasing (NIGP) for a review of developed training materials. The Workgroup also addressed how the State should provide training and whether the State should pay for training courses for its procurement professionals. A suggestion was made that, if it did pay for courses or certifications, the State could include a claw-back provision obligating employees to work for the State for a period time or to refund the cost of such training. Other means of providing the training included posting web-based training modules online for easy access and for accountability regarding staff use of those training materials.

C. Develop Self-Directed Training Module for Businesses. The Workgroup discussion focused on existing small business training done by GOMA in a classroom setting that could be converted to an online training utilizing the existing Power Point: “The Anatomy of a Procurement.” Other training and available documentation for businesses could be added to the online eMM centralized portal, including Suzette Moore’s training “How to Submit a Winning Bid” and DBM’s document “How to do Business with the State of Maryland.”

3) Workforce Workgroup Action Items:

A. Research Existing Procurement Manuals and procurement competency testing programs within the State, federal government and other states to mirror or use as examples to create Maryland's online living document for Procurement staff. DBM will compile this information.

B. Survey Maryland procurement classifications and compensation and compare with the procurement job classifications of the federal government and other states to establish credentials for Procurement Officers to obtain consistency across the State. DBM, BPW and GGO will compile this information.

C. Research Training Developed by National Procurement Groups for a review of developed training materials. DBM and GGO will compile this information along with previously developed DBM training materials.

D. Establish Centralized Online Procurement Portal through eMM. Update the eMM home page to create tabs for Procurement Staff and Vendor Training, Resources, BPW and Control Agency Contacts. DBM, DGS, DoIT, BPW and GGO will set-up content of the eMM Home Page. DBM will gather existing vendor training documentation from GOMA, DGS, DBM and other agencies to add to "Vendor Training" web page link from eMM.

- 4) Next Meeting: Thursday, May 5th, 10 a.m., DBM, 45 Calvert Street, Room 158, Annapolis, MD 21401