

**DC Public Service Commission
Advisory Council on Utility Supplier and Workforce Diversity
Combined Business Development and Outreach
Supplier Diversity Working Groups Meeting**

July 23,2020

1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Virtual Supplier Gatherings: Lessons Learned

Executive Director, National Utilities Diversity Council (NUDC), shared lessons learned, best practices and when hosting virtual supplier diversity networking meetings to enhance participants' interactions.

Lessons learned were:

- The event was held during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic which meant that the comfort level with technological meeting tools varied among suppliers.
- It is very important to conduct a tech test with presenters to make sure everyone knows how to access the virtual meeting room using their equipment.
- When facilitating a virtual matchmaking event, plan for adequate lead time for each supplier to have personal one-on-one time with the perspective contractor/buyer within the virtual meeting room.
- Some of the suppliers were used to presenting paper copies of their information, as a result documents shared in pdf formats did not stand out well in the virtual room.

Some key event day successes were:

- The California utilities collaborated to share content and updates on contract opportunities every week for a month.
- Most utility companies had a representative that took part in at least one session.
- California Public Utilities Commission staff presented in two sessions.
- Most sessions had at least 200 attendees.
- Every session had technical assistance topics as well as contract opportunities.

DC Water Business Development Plan

DC Water's Director of Compliance and Business Development, presented the recent revisions to Business Development Plan that were approved by its Board of Directors on June 4, 2020. The Business Development Plan is the guiding document on how DC Water engages with its certified business partners in its procurement program. Notably, the revisions include the establishment of a new procurement program, the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise Program for its non-federally assisted projects over \$1 million and key protection clauses to ensure that diverse suppliers are

treated fairly throughout the procurement process. As a part of DC Water's Capacity Building component of the Business Development Plan, highlighted key initiatives including the establishment of the Local Small Business Reserve Program for purchases under \$100,000 and the Contractors College, for firms seeking to do business with DC Water.

During the presentation, thanked the certified firms, prime contractors, and diverse supplier advocacy groups who contributed to the development of the revisions of the Business Development Plan. He stressed the importance of working as a team with a broad range of stakeholders including contractors, certified and non-certified firms, business development strategic partners, and government organizations in order to successfully build an inclusive supplier diversity program.

Next Steps:

- Washington Gas will present their Supplier Diversity Program's best practices at the next Working Group meeting in August.
- Continue to develop recommendations and suggestions to the Public Service Commission regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)