



POTOMAC
CROSSING
CONSULTANTS

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

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Date: April 15, 2004

Location: Constellation Center, 6009 Oxon Hill Road, Oxon Hill, Md.

Attendees: P. Gudelski, J. Norris, R. Hendrix, F. Flynn – MD-SHA
B. Cox, M. Donnino, R. McTavish, K. Ott, S. Szympruch – VAC
M. Bonin, D. Tackoor, R. Fletcher, L. Anderson, B. Pittsnogle, K. Larson,
J. Arnoux, S. Spears, V. McCoy – PCC
J. Policelli – FHWA
R. Winslow – City of Alexandria
G. Shafer, P. Alterini, A. Kite – Parsons
R. Geyer, D. Maller – Williams Bridge
D. Norman – Skelly & Loy
P. Wentt – L. S. Caldwell

Minutes Prepared By: L. Anderson - PCC

PURPOSE OF MEETING:

Monthly Partnering Meeting #12, Contract BR-3B, Virginia Approach Spans for the Woodrow Wilson Bridge

SUMMARY BY AGENDA ITEM:

1. Introductions

- Bob McTavish chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance. He introduced Mike Donnino, who has taken a senior role on the Granite side of the VAC team. Other new participants were Karl Larson (secondary shop drawing reviews) and Ronnie McCoy (partnering support) from PCC.

2. Partnering Survey Results

- Larry Anderson reviewed the monthly partnering survey results (attached). Counting one rating received late, 38 of 45 eligible individuals submitted rating forms, for a total participation of 84 percent, matching our previous best. The prime contractor had 100 percent participation and the owner 71 percent. Scores rose in seven categories, fell in four, and held steady in two.
- The stratified results continued to show little difference between the average scores of most sub-groups, except for one. For the "schedule" criterion, the prime contractor score rose while the owner score dropped. The "quality" score showed a nice up-tick for both owner and prime contractor, as foreshadowed by last month's comments.
- The digest of rating comments is attached. Concerns about communication on RFI's and RFC's, as well as the adequacy of pedestrian warning signs, were addressed further during the meeting.

3. Review Overall Contract Issues

➤ Environmental Compliance & Permit Issues

- Stephanie Spears said that approval for the proposed ditch line at the south perimeter fence is still in the public comment phase. She doubted that approval to construct it would be received by late April or early May. Reed Winslow said that the City, which operates Jones Point Park, is anxious to see this ditch approved and constructed. The standing water in the Park creates a potential for mosquito breeding (and a resulting public health hazard). This ditch should alleviate the standing water problem.
- Bob said that the Mount Vernon Trail is outside VAC's project limits, and signage for it is the responsibility of others. VAC does have responsibility for the walkway within Jones Point Park. VAC has ordered new signs for this walkway to improve safety and limit unauthorized access. These signs should be installed by May 15. Bob said that VAC has not experienced problems so far with pedestrians wandering onto the job site; pedestrian traffic, however, will increase as the weather continues to improve.

➤ Submittals

- There was a spirited discussion about how to communicate more effectively to resolve controversial non-compliance notices (NCN's). Greg Shafer, Bob McTavish, Dick Geyer, David Tackoor, Paul Gudelski, and Mike Bonin all joined the scrimmage. The resolution was that NCN's would become a focus of the weekly submittal meetings (easier now, since many of the critical submittals are past.) VAC will invite the affected subcontractor or supplier (i.e., Williams, in this case) to be present for the discussion. MSHA will have the representative from OMT present, unless the issue is clear-cut from a plant compliance standpoint. Dick Geyer's concerns about web stiffeners and the requirement to grind smooth the welds on plates of large thickness will be on the agenda for Apr. 20 at 9:00 a.m.
- Bob said that the information about utility interfaces needed to finalize steel fabrication has been coming in and is being expedited to Williams. He said that the mechanical coordination is mostly complete, and just one electrical issue on the outer loop remains to be resolved.
- Bob said that Parsons is helping VAC by providing an expedited review of their recent pile submittal. VAC has not yet turned in related submittals (e.g., hammer, driving plan) but will do so soon.

➤ Materials

- Bob announced that VAC has decided to obtain its future ready-mix concrete from Newington Concrete instead of Virginia Concrete and explained why they are doing so. He said that VAC would propose to use the same mix design that Newington has been supplying successfully on contract BR-3A for both precast and cast-in-place elements. The official source-of-supply request will be turned in today, and VAC hopes to resume casting on Apr. 19 or Apr. 20. Jon Norris said that MSHA would expedite the review and approval of VAC's requested switch.
- Bob was optimistic that Virginia Concrete would be cooperative in helping fix the quality deficiencies which arose on their watch. Bob said that Kevin Ott would take the lead forward with Newington's work, while he personally would oversee the corrective work required.
- Paul Gudelski asked whether Newington Concrete has sufficient capacity to supply both BR-3A and BR-3B jobs concurrently. Bob replied that this question had been addressed in detail, considering both quantity and frequency of the required pours, and the answer is "yes." By the time VAC is scheduled to make its major deck pours, Newington forecasts that some of its other significant jobs will have been completed.
- Bob said that rapid chloride permeability testing on previous casts is still in process. He expects to receive a comprehensive report from W. R. Grace & Co. on this by Apr. 30. While some preliminary results are available now, Bob did not want to accept a piecemeal presentation.
- David asked about Paul Gudelski's site visit to Williams Steel's plant. Paul said that the only issue that arose was a need to have the state contract number stenciled on the completed fabrications. Dick asked where the mark should be made; Paul said that Bruce Abernathy of OMT prefers to see the number on the top of flanges. Dick said that doing this would involve extra work and recommended instead that the number be stenciled on the beam web, where it would be more visible during and after erection. Paul said that Bruce had also expressed concern about not putting a non-compatible paint marking over the primer. Paul said he would get back to Dick with a clarification.

- Dick Geyer asked about marking the secondary pieces (e.g., diaphragms) that are staged in Richmond. Paul said that he would visit Richmond when payment is requested for the secondary fabrications. Generally, he said, if an individual piece mark for erection is used, the item should be labeled also with the state contract number. If items are bundled, they may be tagged as a bundle.
- **DBE/MBE Issues**
 - Ruth Hendrix said that she had not received March statistics yet; as of February, VAC was at goal for female employment, and minority employment is okay, all in all.
 - Bob said that VAC is trying to recruit two more trainees. Ruth lamented that too often the female trainees recruited through DLLR begin campaigning for an office job as soon as they arrive on any construction site, which defeats the initiative to offer them higher skilled, better paying employment.
- **Community Concerns**
 - Reed said that coordination with the community has been pretty smooth on this contract. He is anxious to get the standing water problem resolved in Jones Point Park (see above), and regretted learning about it second hand, during the permit review. He asked to be involved sooner on items of this sort, so he can help speed resolution of them.
- **Corridor Coordination**
 - Bill Cox explained the situation involving the Hunting Terrace apartment ceilings. He said that direction from VDOT on this has not been finalized, but evidently will involve a switch to drilled shafts for construction of the southwest trail. This work and piling for the southwest quadrant of the urban deck necessarily precedes construction of the new Beltway exit ramp, which is needed for delivery of long beams to the BR-3B site. Bob noted that the ramp is needed by mid-June to support the BR-3B schedule. Bill said that Corman has not received a contract modification yet to perform the changed work on VA-4.
- **Precast Yard**
 - David said that VAC's precast yard performance is improving. Compressive strengths are more consistent, fewer repairs are required, and NCN's are getting fixed. He sees room for further improvement, however.
 - Bob said that VAC has successfully fixed the early challenges faced in the precast yard and is dealing now with new, different challenges. He described steps that VAC has taken to improve shear key lubrication for better release, to stabilize the location of void forms during casting, and to maintain post-tensioning duct alignment. Bob said that additional bladder material is being delivered early next week for the duct alignment effort. David said that PCC observed no duct alignment problems on the latest leg cast for pier V6.
 - Greg Shafer said that some of Parsons' adverse partnering comments concerning quality may be based on old issues and do not reflect the steps VAC has taken recently to improve precast quality. Bob said that reviewing NCN's with Parsons at the weekly submittal meetings should help keep Parsons informed about what VAC is doing.
- **Pier Erection**
 - David said that VAC has cast 68 segments to date and has erected 28 of them. In March, VAC cast 23 segments and erected 12 segments.
 - Bob said that pier erection is just beginning to come up to pace for VAC. He has assigned a dedicated two-man team to the task of stressing and grouting tendons. He predicted that their task would become a well-practiced routine by the end of April.
- **Schedule**
 - Bob said that VAC's precast production has gotten faster. On the 14-foot bed, one segment is being cast every other day. This meets the assumed CPM pace and is nearly as fast as Bob expects this line to run at peak. On the 16-foot bed, one segment per day is needed. This rate has not yet been achieved. With input from the crew, VAC intends to try a skip-casting sequence to speed things up. They have determined that rebar can be successfully inserted between skip-cast segments, and the 20-foot bladders can maintain the required duct alignment. This will be attempted first on the segments for pier V3, Outer Loop Southeast.
 - Bob said that Williams Bridge plans to mobilize in early or mid-July to begin setting beams. A specific date will be established in May. Williams expects to be able to set steel more rapidly than piers are completed, overrunning the concrete work. Nevertheless, they plan to start earlier than might be necessary in order to be able to refine their process and shake out any problems.

- Bob said that VAC is negotiating with Corman to possibly construct the foundation pedestals for the Inner Loop required under BR-3B.
- Bob reported that the first tie beam precast off site was delivered successfully without incident. The 40-foot tie beams can be routed normally through city streets. The longer beams will need to come in directly down the proposed Beltway exit ramp. Bearings are on site, ready for erection. Resolution of finger joints (per Redline Revision #2) is still pending.
- **Safety**
 - John Arnoux discussed VAC's safety statistics, which show VAC falling out of first place among the WWB superstructure contractors. He described two incidents that affected these statistics.
 - There was further discussion about the marking and signing of the job site to minimize pedestrian hazards and trespassing. Bob McTavish, John Arnoux, Bill Cox, Reed Winslow, and Mike Bonin all chipped in. Mike asked John to undertake a holistic review of the situation and propose a reasonable approach. PCC would then approach MSHA and VDOT about allocating responsibilities.
- **Progress Payment**
 - Bob said that one minor issue had arisen concerning payment. VAC will bring this issue to Paul Gudelski in the near future and abide by whatever Solomon-like decision he renders.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Mike Bonin said that PCC has responded to VAC in negotiations regarding Redline Revision #2. The only outstanding issues are some pricing concerns for Williams and King Fabricators, and some minor questions on quantities.
 - Mike said that his team is addressing the Maryland-related issues directly for Redline Revision #3 and is working with VDOT to establish a preferred analysis method and approval process for the VDOT share. Bob said that Williams needs to know how to proceed with the steel, and VAC needs to know how to proceed with the barrier wall. VAC needs to order barrier rail forms in the near future. It was agreed that Bob would write a letter to MSHA concerning this decision, and Paul Gudelski would forward the matter formally to VDOT.
 - Bob opened a discussion concerning the impact of industry-wide steel price fluctuations on this contract. He said that VAC is experiencing lots of pressure from vendors. Victory Steel, for example, cannot honor changes at the established bid unit prices. Metrocast (piling supplier) has passed on an impact of about \$30,000. VAC has taken a hard line with DSI, Williams Steel, SIP (deck pan supplier) as well as other suppliers, but is concerned about default. Dick Geyer summarized some of the up-to-the-minute developments in the industry:
 - The fire-damaged coke plant has been returned to service;
 - Scrap metal prices have softened, as purchases from China have eased;
 - Plant capacity and demand are now roughly equivalent; some 30 mills have closed since an earlier period when there was overcapacity.

Dick forecast that prices would begin to moderate, but would probably not return to their previous levels any time soon, because a new base has been established that will remain independent of factors like the coke fire and the scrap shortage. Dan Maller noted that the higher cost of energy now is another factor that will keep prices high.

4. Identify Problem Areas

- Bob McTavish summarized the significant problems and action plans as reported above:
 - VAC is changing its supplier of ready-mix concrete in order to overcome the inconsistent quality problems that had been manifest.
 - Non-compliance Notices will be reviewed at each weekly submittal meeting, and suppliers and fabricators will be engaged in these discussions as needed.
 - John Arnoux will assess the access and signage in the Jones Point Park area and Mount Vernon Trail, to recommend how it might be made safer for pedestrians.

5. Develop Action Plans

- Not used.

6. Present Action Plans

- Not used.

7. Recognize Good Efforts

- Bob McTavish thanked Ruth Hendrix and Pawnee Wentt for spending time recently with Phillis Stephens and Vernon Rogers on the trainee program. Their insights should help VAC meet its trainee commitments in a more effective way.
- Ruth Hendrix thanked VAC and Bob, Phillis, and Vernon specifically for trying to meet the intent of the trainee program, not just the letter. She described a situation where VAC had employed a female trainee to become a carpenter. When it became evident that she did not have the aptitude to succeed as a journeyman, they kept her on the rolls and are coaching her to be an effective carpenter helper.
- Earlier during the meeting, Bob thanked Parsons for their expedited review of the recent pile submittal.

8. Actions and Postscripts

- The group confirmed that the next meeting would be on Tuesday, **May 11, 2004**, at the Constellation Center, 6009 Oxon Hill Road. The meeting will start at **10:00 a.m.** PCC will provide refreshments. The next meeting dates in the near future, both at 10:00 a.m., are June 16 and July 15.

NOTE: Please contact Larry Anderson at 703/329-0300 ext. 340 if you have additions or corrections to these minutes.

DISTRIBUTION LIST:

ATTENDEES plus the following: G. Baker, M. Baker, Cleveland, Constable, Douglass, Healy, Jenkins, Marrero, Matty, Mohler, Ott, Pedersen, Ruddell, Rose, Seering, Walker, Weisner, Kaub, Atkins, Barton, Brown, Filipczak, Fortier, Johnson, Rafferty, Schwandt, Williams, Corum, Cumberland, Nichols, Clark, Kouroupis, Stephens, Medley, Muckenfuss, Fuhrman, Saraf, Arreguin, Price, Ferrell

ATTACHMENTS

BR-3B Contract Partnering Trends, April 2004
Digest of Partnering Rating Comments