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BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

*GOVERNOR'S RECEPTION ROOM, SECOND FLOOR, STATE HOUSE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND*

December 4, 2024

10:06 a.m.

PRESENT

HONORABLE WES MOORE

Governor

HONORABLE DERECK DAVIS

Treasurer

HONORABLE BROOKE LIERMAN

Comptroller

JOHN GONTRUM

Secretary, Board of Public Works

ATIF CHAUDHRY

Secretary, Department of General Services

EMILY WILSON

Director of Legislative and Constituent Services,
Department of Natural Resources

JOSELYN JOHNSON

University System of Maryland

VALERIE RADOMSKY

Chief Procurement Officer, Department of Transportation

LISA GRIGSBY

Recording Secretary, Board of Public Works

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PROCEEDINGS

GOVERNOR MOORE: Morning, everybody.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thanks.

(Chorus of Good Morning.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Please take a seat. Good morning, I trust that everyone had a wonderful and a blessed and a -- and an overateen Thanksgiving break, but it's good to see everybody back. We'll go ahead and get started with the business of the day.

Secretary Gontrum, good morning. Hope you had a great, great Thanksgiving holiday.

MR. GONTRUM: Good morning, Governor. Thank you, I hope you did as well. Good morning to you, Mr. Treasurer and Madam Comptroller. There are 15 items on the Secretary's Agenda this morning. I'm happy to assist answering any questions.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great. Is there any discussion on the Secretary's Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Not from me.

TREASURER DAVIS: Item 11 looks problematic.

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Don't touch that.

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No jokes about (indiscernible).

TREASURER DAVIS: I'm good.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Any questions, comments, and concerns on anything other than Item 11?

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COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No.

GOVERNOR MOORE: May I have a motion to approve the
Secretary's Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: So moved.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thank you so much, Mr.
Secretary.

We'll proceed with the Department of Natural Resources. Ms.
Wilson, good morning.

MS. WILSON: Good morning, Governor, Mr. Treasurer, Madam
Comptroller. I'm Emily Wilson with Maryland Department of Natural
Resources. We have 13 items on our DNR Real Property Agenda for your
consideration today. Happy to try to answer any questions.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great, thank you so much.

Is there any discussion on DNR's Agenda? May I have a motion to
approve the agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thank you so much.

MS. WILSON: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Hope you had a great holiday.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Should we expect to see more
pickleball courts in the future meetings?

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yeah, more courts.

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GOVERNOR MOORE: Would be nice, would be nice.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yep.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Let's see, Ms. Johnson's all ready. You're already primed and -- primed and ready --

MS. JOHNSON: -- to go.

GOVERNOR MOORE: From the University Systems of Maryland. Good morning.

MS. JOHNSON: Good morning, Governor --

GOVERNOR MOORE: (Indiscernible) a great holiday.

MS. JOHNSON: -- Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. Joselyn Johnson, representing the University System of Maryland. We have two items on the agenda for consideration, and we are more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great. Thank you so much. Are there any questions on the USM Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No questions. Excited to see the School of Social Work continue to move forward. I had the chance to be at the groundbreaking, which was a really phenomenal event. And it's going to really open up a whole other block of that section of Baltimore. And it's great to see the MBE goals so high and everything being met. So thank you.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: It really is. I mean that -- what you have for the goal, et cetera -- and the bid package is great. So thank you.

Motion to approve the USM Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

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GOVERNOR MOORE: Fantastic. Thank you so much.

Mr. Radomsky -- I love it. We don't have to wait. I know the routine. I know what's going on. Mr. Radomsky, good morning.

MS. RADOMSKY: Good morning, Governor, Madam Comptroller, and Mr. Treasurer. For the record, my name is Valerie Radomsky, Chief Procurement Officer for the Maryland Department of Transportation. Today, we are presenting six agenda items for your consideration and withdrawing Item 7-M. We are seeking approval of two awards to duly certified small disadvantaged business enterprises valued at \$11.5 million. We have representatives available to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much.

Are there any questions on the agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Nope.

GOVERNOR MOORE: May I have a motion to approve the agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Ms. Radomsky, thank you so much. Hope you had a great holiday.

We will conclude with the DGS Agenda. Secretary Chaudhry?

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: Whoever put this agenda together knew what the heck they were doing.

GOVERNOR MOORE: That's what I'm saying.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: We should just change it up next time. Like go from one thing --

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GOVERNOR MOORE: I was going to say we -- it seems like people know the know the routine at this point.

MR. CHAUDHRY: (Indiscernible) today.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Secretary Chaudhry, good morning.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Good morning sir. Good morning, Mr. Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. For the record, I am Atif Chaudhry, Secretary of the Maryland Department of General Services. Today, we have a little bit of a light agenda for you today -- only 27 items. Our agenda does feature one capital grant for \$800,000 in State support to Leisure World in Montgomery County for critical upgrades that will replace aging water and sewer infrastructure with new dual culverts.

As we continue to keep an eye on our minority business participation, our agenda does feature 13 contract awards and modifications to certified minority businesses totaling more than \$13 million -- I'm sorry, more than \$10 million. We've also added, as part of our agenda, four certified MBE prime subcontractors to our Consulting And Technical Services, also known as CATS+ Master Contract. And we have agency representatives here to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding, thank you so much. And I know looking at Item 1-CGL, we've already heard feedback from our friends over at Leisure World. How excited they are about this.

Are there any other -- any questions or -- questions or comments on the agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes, Mr. Governor. I have a couple comments.

First on Item 8-S this is the -- for the Governor's Office of Children's Study of Maryland Poverty Measures and Indicators. I just want to say

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how happy I am to see this moving forward. This is -- a solution to the problem of how we count poverty for the Blueprint is really long overdue. I'm sure folks know that school systems that count poverty under the Community Eligibility Provision Program do not have a comparable way to count poverty at the school level. And that's really foundational to the Blueprint achieving its goals.

So as a result, poverty at many schools around the State remains undercounted. And this issue is exacerbated for undocumented students or citizen children of undocumented parents, and really penalizes schools that serve a large number of immigrant children and others who participate in the CEP program. And that includes all of Baltimore City Public Schools. And as a Baltimore City Public School mom, I have a lot of strong feelings about this and have worked on this issue for many, many years.

So having the data that ERS is going to calculate under this contract will help ensure that we're accurately counting poverty levels that feed the Blueprint formula accurately. Just as an example about why this matters, this year MSDE has proposed using individual school poverty data from 2013 in Baltimore City, despite the fact that Baltimore City Public Schools has closed 48 schools since 2013, often in some of the highest poverty parts of the City. Using that approach would dramatically undercount poverty in City schools.

So the work that ERS is going to do is really essential for developing a formula for accurately counting poverty across the State using a consistent methodology based on reliable data by the -- from the American Community Survey. So I really hope that the results of ERS's work can be utilized during the next legislative session to resolve this issue once and for all. It's been an issue that I worked on every single year of my term -- two terms -- and we need to have a solution once and for all to make sure that we're accurately counting poverty at Maryland public schools. So really happy to see Item 8-S and

to see it move forward. Thank you, Mr. Governor.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Of course, thank you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: And then, I'd like to call an Item -- DGS Agenda Item 9-S, the very next one. I'm excited to present this item today as this marks the first major step as we prepare to modernize and transform Maryland's financial systems. We are one of the last states in the nation to undertake this, but better late than never. And then we will be -- have the newest system and all the other states will be looking at us trying to catch up.

So as many of you know, the Office of the Comptroller has systems that are running on borrowed time. These are not just systems that we use internally. Indeed, although many Marylanders don't see it, our systems are running the financials of the State, whether that's bringing in the money or sending it out. Every Maryland taxpayer is affected by our systems. Every organization or business that has ever received a payment is affected by our systems. Every employee who receives a paycheck, and every agency that is trying to send out money. I like to think of us as the spine of the State. You never see us, but we're holding it all up.

And therefore, one of my office's core priorities is implementing critical agency-wide improvements to help our State government work better. And that includes modernizing technology across the agency so that all Maryland residents and businesses, as well as State agencies, can interact more efficiently with our State government. A number of our critical financial systems are not only far behind their useful lives, but also based on outdated technology, like COBOL, creating serious challenges for improving the customer service experience for all.

I'm grateful that the General Assembly passed HB708 and SB659 in 2023, which directed us to implement one centralized enterprise resource

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planning system, or ERP, used by all State agencies to replace the current financial management information system, otherwise known as FMIS. This is managed by the Office of the Comptroller in partnership with DoIT and it comprises accounting, purchasing inventory, and reporting applications. So to say it plainly, every single dollar that comes into the State and that goes back out to taxpayers, vendors, nonprofits, et cetera, is accounted for through FMIS. This is how we balance our books which, by the way, was implemented when I was in high school.

Because of the importance of this system, the legislation requires our office to work on this initiative alongside a governing council that consists of the State Treasurer's Office, the Department of Budget and Management, the Department of Information Technology, and the Department of General Services. And although we're talking about technology today, it's critical to underscore that this undertaking is about much, much more than transforming a mainframe technology system to the cloud. But also standardizing our financial processes and training personnel, which will ultimately impact every agency through State government and every Maryland taxpayer.

In January, we're doing something really exciting. We're launching a Maryland Accounting Academy. I know you haven't heard the words exciting and accounting in the same sentence recently, so wanted to start --

TREASURER DAVIS: Never.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: -- just start your day off --

TREASURER DAVIS: Never, Madam Comptroller.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: -- with that. That will help ensure our agencies have the expertise and training they need to help us balance the books and ensure we're not just implementing a new financial system, but changing the culture and practice of financial management in Maryland State

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government.

So at this time, I'd like to turn things over to our Chief Deputy Comptroller, Andy Schaufele, to formally introduce and further explain the transformative initiative that we are undertaking. Thanks for being here, Andy.

MR. SCHAUFELE: Thank you, Comptroller Lierman. Thank you, Governor. Thank you, Treasurer. It's an honor to be here. And thank you for framing the project so well. I'll amplify a few points. I think you're behind-the-scenes caricature is so accurate. It is behind everything that we do -- paying staff, paying vendors. Government does not move forward unless this system moves forward. The State's financial business is highly complicated, and I've yet to see it get any simpler. Each year it gets more and more complicated.

This project will require the project team to connect with and understand the needs of more than a hundred very different State agencies, all county and municipal governments, and many private and nonprofit entities. They'll need to revisit and reconfigure processes that are almost 30 years old. And they'll need to work not just on current requirements, but work to anticipate and now lay the foundation for the future. Given the sheer number and diversity of this project's stakeholders and the complexities of our financials, it's fair to say that this might be the most complicated and far-reaching technology project that's ever been undertaken by the State.

And with that framing, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce Chris Kratzen to my right over here and our CIO, Rob O'Conner. They'll be leading this project. I think it's very important for the folks in this room to get a visual of these two gentlemen. Chris brings a strong accounting background. He's also a systems thinker meaning that he prioritizes and drives standard operating procedures, business analysis, and exemplifies a continuous improvement ethos. Rob O'Conner has a tremendous amount of experience with

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ERPs, expense too.

(Laughter.)

MR. SCHAUFELLE: That experience is going to be critical to our success. So we're here, we have two items related to the project. And I know that we're on the DGS piece, but I want to take a minute just to note that you've approved the creation of the ten additional new State positions. Six of those will join Chris' team directly. The other four will augment our team and our general accounting staff, which will enable our accounting staff, our senior accounting staff, to directly participate in this project at a high level.

That is critical. We've seen over and over again throughout the State and within our own agency that when we don't allocate staff 100 percent to projects, those costs overrun, the timelines go wrong. It is critical that we start with a strong foundation and I greatly appreciate your support in this measure.

We're also here to bring in -- to introduce Guidehouse to the project to support Chris's team and our myriad stakeholders, the growth of this project necessitates a firm of large scale and depth. Today, we are recommending Guidehouse as our project management office support. The vetting process was significant and I'd like to thank several senior State executives for their direct efforts in this vetting. Secretary Grady, Secretary Savage, Secretary Chaudhry, Deputy Treasurer Martin all played a critical role and so did their staffs.

There was a lot of sweat equity put into this project to date. The teamwork has been very valuable from the diverse skills and approaches to the proper scrutiny under which decisions are being made. We are much stronger from the approach and the Governance Council. It is working as anticipated. It's worth noting that the Governance Board unanimously approved Guidehouse and recommended them for the PMO lead. The team was impressed with their offered approach, staff, and technology. We also completed reference checks across

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several federal and state governments including FEMA, the FDA, Indian Health Services, and the state of Oklahoma.

Several of those projects bore similarities to the project we were about to embark on, meaning that Guidehouse was managing several vendors throughout the project. There was high praise for their ability to meet project deadlines and budget targets, but beyond the Xs and Os, they were also -- there was also praised for their willingness and ability to create subcontracting opportunities for local companies that have local expertise. Further, we -- and by we, I mean Chris and Rob -- were able to negotiate in accord with Comptroller Lierman's directives. They negotiated very favorable pricing as well as a large but achievable MBE commitment.

Guidehouse is committed to meeting the State's diversity goals by providing 29 percent of the total award to minority businesses and 3 percent to small veteran owned businesses. We view this aspect of the contract with significant weight. And while this marks a major milestone, we're at the beginning of the hard work. We'll have future procurements coming before this Board. At the very least, we would think we'd see phased procurements for the ERP software and the system implementer. We are very excited to get going here with our PMO. Thank you for your support now and in the future. And I'm here for any questions you have.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you, Chief Schaufele, for your tireless efforts to help bring this to the starting line along with Rob, our CIO, and Chris, and the whole Governance Council. If I may, I just wanted to ask one question to our Chief Procurement Officer. Oh, he's hiding in the back -- who has been -- who is not named but has been a truly phenomenal partner on this project. I'm really excited to be able to work -- to have worked with you so far. Looking forward to working with you as this project unfolds. You know, Mr. Sermons,

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you bring a wealth of knowledge from the federal government and now are embedded in the State and so it's been great to partner with you.

Our Chief Deputy just outlined the Governance Council's approval process for -- and noted that we used an intergovernmental cooperative purchasing agreement, and that our Governance Council did -- had very in-depth scrutiny. Given the amount of collaboration that's gone into reaching this point and your professional experience -- and the State has done ICPAs in the past, of course, but we thought it would be helpful for you to talk about the benefit of this approach here. Could you comment on that?

MR. SERMONS: Absolutely. And let me start off by saying good morning to you all. So Mr. Governor, Mr. Treasurer, Madam Comptroller, it's a unique opportunity that I have here to come approach the podium. Generally --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Always welcome.

MR. SERMONS: Oh, I appreciate it.

(Laughter.)

MR. SERMONS: Really that honor is granted to Secretary Chaudhry. So again, it's a privilege to be here today.

I want to first acknowledge all of the subject matter experts and State colleagues that have supported and contributed greatly to this project. I believe we will see performance of this well into years to come. The approach that we took here is simple. It's akin to what the federal government has done historically with best-in-class contracts, government-wide acquisition contracts. And for anyone familiar with the Federal Supply Schedule or the Multiple Award Schedule or interagency agreements, it is leveraging the buying power of the Country.

The particular vehicle, the OMNIA Cooperative Agreement, is actually one of two of the largest cooperatives in the country. They manage about

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\$30 billion in contracts then that is utilized by not only state agencies, but they're utilized by counties, local municipalities, and educational institutions. I think that what we've done here through the due diligence is really a best practice model and I believe to be truly a whole of government approach.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you. Look forward to working with you further on this project moving forward.

MR. SERMONS: Thank you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Governor and Treasurer, I just wanted to close by thanking you both and thanking all the members of the Governance Council for working together on this endeavor. The Council is an excellent example of how our Administration's working to break down silos and collaborate effectively to deliver the best service possible and the best value for Marylanders. So thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Of course, thank you. Thank you, thank you.

Any further discussion on the DGS agenda?

TREASURER DAVIS: Can I -- if I can, Governor. It's not a discussion on the agenda, but it's more of a personal privilege. I want to thank members of your staff, especially Secretary Martinez and Secretary Chaudhry, who didn't know he was going to participate. He just found himself on the stage. But the Black Caucus held its legislative weekend two weeks ago.

And at one of the events, the Business Over Breakfast, there was a discussion about contracting and so forth and information that was provided -- it was Tammy Thompson (phonetic) with TEDCO and I think it was Mr. Gartner at the Transportation Authority, the members found it really helpful, as well as the guests. A lot of questions were answered about how the process works, and they were very detailed and I know those in attendance, and there was a few hundred,

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they were very appreciative.

So again, I wanted to publicly thank you and your staff, and certainly again, Mr. Secretary, because he did not know he was part of the panel. I was moderating it. I saw him and I was like, if we're going to have a conversation on contracting, that dude needs to be up here speaking more --

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: -- more than any of the rest of us. And without missing a beat, he stepped up and it was helpful.

So thank you, Mr. Secretary. Didn't mean to put you on the spot. Well, actually I did.

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: I knew you could handle it. So thank you.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Thank you, Mr. Treasurer. Happy to help. Always happy to assist any way we can. It was very convenient. The Treasurer said I happen to have an extra microphone sitting right here.

(Laughter.)

MR. CHAUDHRY: -- and but that's totally fine. Happy to support in any way we can.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you, thank you. And I echo -- I echo his points. The work that you and the team continue to do on this issue. And we'll talk about it at the next meeting, but there's a whole lot that the State -- and frankly, I want to thank you both for your work too -- to be proud of in terms of really ways of being able to push forward a real strong agenda, and at the same time making sure that it's a participatory. So well done.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you.

May I have a motion to approve the DGS Agenda?

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COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. This now concludes the meeting of the Board of Public Works. And it was quick because everybody was just like lined up and ready to go.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yeah.

GOVERNOR MOORE: We will see you all on December 18th.

Thank you so much everybody.

(Whereupon, at 10:28 a.m., the meeting was concluded.)