

Location: via Teams

Meeting ID: 286 966 538 619 **Passcode:** 528oxQ

Committee Members: (18 members, 10 = Quorum)

x	Lekha Fernandes, OMWBE, Co-Chair	Santosh Kuruvilla, Exeltech, Co-Chair
x	Irene Reyes, Excel Supply Company, Co-Chair	Matt Rasmussen, Benton County
x	Robert Blain, Benton County	x Cathy Robinson, University of WA
	Jackie Bayne, WSDOT OEO	John Salinas II, Specialty Contractors
	Frank Boykin, MBDA	x Young Sang Song, Song Consulting
	Stephanie Caldwell, Absher Construction	Cheryl Stewart, Inland Northwest AGC
x	Bobby Forch, CPARB DBE Representative	x Chip Tull, Hoffman Construction
	Shelly Henderson, Mukilteo School Dist.	Jerry Vanderwood, AGC
x	Aleanna Kondelis, Hill International	Charles Wilson, DES
	Brenda Nnambi, Sound Transit	x Olivia Yang, WA State University
		x Janice Zahn, Port of Seattle
		Vacant, DES
		x Keith Michel, Forma Construction, proxy Marissa Woodard-Nave, Forma Construction

Guests and Stakeholders:

x	Angela Battle, HNTB	x	Jason Nechanicky, City of Spokane
x	Steven Ellis, Association of Washington Cities	x	Steve Russo, UMC
x	Maja Sutton Huff, WSU	x	Christina Shelton, LNI
x	Jessica Letteney, MFA	x	Kara Skinner, Integrity
x	Cindy Magruder, UW	x	Monica Acevedo-Soto, UW
x	Monique Martinez, DES	x	Robin Strom, Mortenson
x	Brianna Morin, Association of Washington Cities	x	Marissa Woodard-Nave, Forma Construction

The meeting began at 1:45 p.m.

Welcome & Introductions

Co-Chair Lekha Fernandes welcomed everyone to the Business Equity/Diverse Business Inclusion (BE/DBI) Committee and reviewed the agenda.

Approve Agenda & Minutes from 05/21/2025

Cathy Robinson moved to approve the agenda. Irene Reyes seconded. The motion passed through a unanimous voice vote.

Irene Reyes moved to approve the minutes from 05/21/2025. Chip Tull seconded. The motion passed through a unanimous voice vote.

Federal Executive Orders

In response to a verbal poll, 10 meeting attendees said that projects they oversee or are involved in receive federal funds. Co-Chair Fernandes encouraged a discussion on any tips, tricks, or advice for others on how public owners navigate directives from federal executive orders (EOs) and whether anyone has messaging to help Washington owners operate in a way that people understand and know. She asked members to weigh in on whether they feel well-versed in the requirements and changes.

The group agreed to add changing the name of the committee to a future agenda.

Bobby Forch said that, regarding Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), project actors may receive a signal to carry on, then an EO is issued, and key players must evaluate how to move forward. The most recent example is the March EO regarding language access. He has seen people working on countermeasures to realistically address issues and maintain the best position to meet WSDOT's mission and values.

The group discussed that different agencies have different legal representation and interpretations of public-sector requirements. This BE/DBI committee helps small businesses navigate the differing requirements, measurements, payment terms, and now, perhaps, approaches to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Navigating this may be an additional barrier for smaller businesses. WSDOT created a race- and gender-neutral program certification. They need to be proactive on CPARB for the benefit of small businesses because most minority businesses are small businesses.

Best Practices and Survey Documents

Change Order Work Group

The group reviewed the draft Change Order Best Practices and Change Order Survey Questions.

For the Change Order Best Practices, Aleanna Kondelis will provide some language that notes that best practices are more universal practices and principles, rather than guidance on specific statutes. She is concerned that the recent changes to the Revised Code of Washington 39.04.360, Payment of undisputed claims, are not reflected in the draft document.

Irene Reyes moved to vote that the Change Order Best Practices document as revised and finalized with cleaned up comments and including Aleanna's preamble statement be submitted to CPARB for discussion during the September 11, 2025, meeting. Chip Tull seconded the motion. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

The Change Order Survey Questions are ready for Co-Chair Fernandes and her team to get the survey ready for posting and administration in the field. She will coordinate with her team and Committee Chair Steve Russo on that effort. She will send an email with a timeline.

Maja Sutton Huff reminded the group that findings from the surveys are supposed to inform what is included in best practices. Co-Chair Fernandes agreed and noted that getting the best practices in front of CPARB for feedback is still a good idea because it may take them a while to digest the information. The BE/DBI Committee can indicate to CPARB that survey findings may influence the best practice documents. When

the committee presents to CPARB, they will ask for a vote on getting the best practices published. Each set of best practices will be a separate document.

The change order and retainage surveys can be administered in the field at the same time and as one effort, and responses can be disaggregated on the back end.

Retainage Work Group

The group reviewed the draft Retainage Best Practices.

Irene Reyes moved to vote that the Retainage Best Practices document as revised and finalized with cleaned up comments be submitted to CPARB for discussion during the September 11, 2025, meeting. Chip Tull seconded the motion. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

The group reviewed the draft Retainage Survey Questions.

The group discussed the merits of open-ended and multiple-choice questions. For question 2, Cindy Magruder will remove the multiple choice options and leave the question open-ended.

The survey will employ a skip pattern to move owners and contractors through the survey and the questions relevant to each.

Co-Chair Fernandes will coordinate with her team and all of the committee chairs as well as Irene. She will send an email with a timeline.

Aleanna reminded the group that the committee will need to send a list of potential survey participants to the survey development team, using the general survey list as a basis.

Next Meeting Agenda

Co-Chair Fernandes polled members on whether they need to meet in August and September. Due to the timing of the CPARB review of best practices and the likelihood that the analysis for the survey will not be done until later in September, the committee agreed that October 15, 2025, will be the next time the BE/DBI Committee will meet.

- Welcome & Introductions
- Review & Approve Agenda and Minutes from 07/16/2024
- Federal Executive Orders/Committee Name
- Committee Membership
- Retainage and Best Practices Feedback from CPARB
- Survey Update
- Next Meeting Agenda
- Adjourn

Action Items

1. Aleanna will provide introductory language on best practices for the draft Change Order Best Practices.
2. Monique will clean up the Change Order Best Practices document.

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3. Co-Chair Fernandes will coordinate with her team and committee chairs to get the surveys ready for posting and administration in the field. She will send an email with a timeline.
4. Co-Chair Fernandes will discuss BE/DBI Committee membership structure and the committee name with CPARB Chair Riley-Hall for a possible future discussion at a CPARB meeting.
5. Co-Chair Fernandes will discuss having a general contractor representative on the BE/DBI Committee with Jerry Vanderwood.

Co-Chair Fernandes adjourned the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 p.m.

References

Draft Retainage Best Practices, Retainage Survey Questions, Change Order Best Practices, and Change Order Survey Questions on the BE/DBI site: <https://des.wa.gov/about/news-center/events/2025-07/business-equitydiverse-business-inclusion-committee-meeting>

[RCW 39.04.360, Payment of undisputed claims](#)

[BE/DBI Legislative Report June 2023](#)