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Talia Baker, CPARB Administrative Staff
Engineering & Architectural Services
Washington State Department of Enterprise Services

RE: Letter of Interest for CPARB Chair

Dear CPARB members,

I respectfully submit my letter of interest for our CPARB Chair position. It has been an honor to serve with you for the last two years, and I am excited for this opportunity. My involvement in CPARB spans over a decade: first as CPARB Port proxy in 2005, then participating in many subcommittees and serving on the PRC for three years. While PRC Chair, I ensured that owner certifications and project applications were conducted per RCW39.10 with fellow committee members. It's been a pleasure to work together and build consensus amongst the many stakeholders, find common ground, and develop workable policy solutions that advance our industry for the public benefit. CPARB subcommittees that I actively participated in over the last 15 years include:

Business Equity/Business Inclusion

IPD Best Value Task Force- completed

Data Collection

RCW 39.10 reauthorization - completed

GC/CM Best Practices

Prompt Pay - completed

Design-Build Statute Review - completed

Best Value selection - completed

Design-Build Best Practices - completed

Bidder responsibility - completed

Heavy Civil GC/CM - completed

As a licensed Civil Engineer and Certified Construction Manager, I bring 33 years of horizontal and vertical construction experience from the Maritime, Aviation, Transportation and Environmental Remediation industries. I have served as the Assistant Director of Engineering, responsible for construction management oversight of major construction projects, Project Labor Agreements, and Apprentice Utilization oversight at the Port of Seattle for the last 13 years. As a CPARB member representing the Washington Public Ports Association, I understand the importance of listening, learning and bringing statewide perspectives to our work.

More than half of my career has focused on delivering projects using RCW 39.10 alternative delivery methods (General Contractor/Construction Manager, Design-Build, Progressive Design-Build, and Job Order Contracting). My breadth of industry knowledge from both the public and private sector is a benefit to CPARB as we continue to bring many diverse voices together in order to deliver projects the most effectively for the entire state of Washington. As a public sector leader, I believe in mentoring, coaching, and leading project teams in order to create a culture of inclusivity and prepare owners for successful alternative delivery. To that end, I also participate as a trainer to improve our entire industry.

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We have billions of dollars of construction projects to deliver throughout Washington state, and it is critical that our public works opportunities are accessible to our diverse businesses and workers. Our success will depend on our ability to cultivate and sustain small, women and minority-owned businesses in partnership with general contractors, prime designers, and labor. I am excited about the work requested by the state legislative in SB5032, section 20, to advance equity in our construction industry. I believe my knowledge of public policy and governance (from my Masters of Public Policy and public sector experience) and serving on multiple racial equity committees (locally and nationally) will be helpful as our CPARB Chair in the work ahead.

The pandemic has been tough, and our industry is not out of the woods yet. Virtual meetings have made it difficult to have meaningful engagement amongst the board members as we work through reauthorization, local government, and business equity/business inclusion committees. The board development and process review efforts will be essential to help us be an even more effective board, where all voices are able to engage in the most meaningful way as we perform our state legislative policy development work together. This will take time and I am ready to lead us in this effort.

I am in full support of the vision and priorities CPARB adopted at the last meeting. We do need to focus on board development, process improvements, and our equity work. In addition, properly onboarding new board members will be essential, to ensure their perspectives are valued and heard, to be an inclusive statewide board. I would also like to work with DES to update our CPARB website so that information is more readily accessible – for both CPARB members and others who are interested in our work. One idea is a consolidated calendar-at-a-glance and a visual dashboard of key activities/deliverables. It is challenging work and yet I am very hopeful about what we can accomplish together with the many diverse perspectives and voices.

I am committed to the important work ahead of us. The Port of Seattle understands the level of time required to successful serve in this important leadership role and fully supports my time commitment to CPARB if elected Chair. Thank you and I appreciate your consideration of my interest to serve as CPARB Chair.

Sincerely,



Janice Zahn, PE, CCM, EMPA

REFERENCES:

Rebecca Keith
City of Seattle

Exceltech Consulting

Lisa van der Lugt
Office of Minority Women's Business Enterprises

Bill Dobyms
Lydig Construction, Inc.

Santosh Kuruvilla