

MINUTES OF THE  
PROCUREMENT STRATEGIES COMMITTEE  
DALLAS CEO ALLIANCE ROUNDTABLE

*Prepared by Bruce Topletz, Chair*

The following are the synopsis minutes for the Procurement Strategies Committee held on Thursday, July 11, 2002, at the Dallas City Hall.

I. The meeting convened at 10:00 a.m. in Room L1B, Dallas City Hall. Attending were Chair, Bruce Topletz, Assistant Vice President, DART; Vice- Chair, Mark Duebner, Assistant Director/Purchasing Agent, Business Development and Procurement, City of Dallas; Bob Stone, Manager, Administrative & Technical Support Services, DART; Gene Gentry, Executive Director, Purchasing Department, DISD; Gerry Young, Administrative Manager, DFW International Airport, and Philip Todd, Director of Purchasing, DCCCD.

II. Approval of Minutes. The minutes from the meeting on May 30, 2002, were reviewed and unanimously approved.

III. Old Business (Discussion Topics). The following old business was discussed:

A. Common Procurement (Bidders) Database.

1. Bruce Topletz asked the Committee to address the issue of developing a common procurement database for use by the affected agencies and to determine where the Committee was in terms of considering this action. Mark Duebner stated that he felt that for nonspecialized commodities, the agencies could benefit from a common database. The key concept was that bidders could register, voluntarily, through a single portal and access all of the agencies' bidders lists by doing so.

2. Gerry Young noted that this should be accomplished through a metroplex-wide agency other than NCTCOG. Mark Duebner concurred and added that the concept embraced development of a consolidated or centralized database.

3. Philip Todd noted that this was to be done as a bidder registration process. In response to a query regarding the types of codes that would be used to identify bidders' areas of interest, we can use either NIGP or NAICS with a 99% degree of correlation.

4. In response to G. Young's question about the ultimate objectives of this action, M. Duebner stated that from the outset, we were taking a broader view of the Committee's (Procurement Strategies Committee) functional mission than that incorporated into the original Dallas CEO Alliance mission statement. But two of our

most fundamental missions were to (A) allow agencies to buy goods and services more cheaply and efficiently and (B) broaden the supplier database (with a particular emphasis on developing local minority and women-owned business enterprises). The major consideration for the database would be “open access,” that is, the ability of the agencies to access the information as easily and freely as possible while maintaining individual agency data records and databases for a particular agency’s use or needs.

B. Committee Objectives.

1. B. Topletz again focused on what the Committee was expecting to accomplish and to report to the August 30, 2002, meeting of the CEO’s. In that context, he identified the following objectives with specific “steps” to be undertaken to accomplish those objectives:

(A) *Common Webpage.* Done. The Committee previewed the copy of the webpage developed by P. Todd in conjunction with the DCCCD website. It provides a unified home page for the Dallas Alliance agencies.

(B) *Procurement Roundtable.* Done. The Committee will continue to conduct regular (perhaps quarterly or as needed) meetings even after the August 30, 2002, CEO meetings to share information, develop new objectives and missions, and refine existing initiatives.

(C) *Bidders List.* This was extensively discussed during the issue of developing the Common Database. In addition, the Committee focused on three specific developmental steps: (i) what will it be, (ii) what will it do, and (iii) notification.

Step (i): The Committee concurs that the Common Procurement Database will provide bidders an opportunity to register themselves and their desired NAICS/NIGP codes with a consortium of agencies through a single portal. Additionally, the Committee can use this database to develop a list of common commodities and services purchased throughout metroplex agencies. P. Todd noted that the database could work quite simply using the NIGP/NAICS codes for data points. Bob Stone inquired whether separate systems would still be preserved. This was addressed in

Step (ii): The Committee concurs that the website on which the Common Database resides should transparently take bidders into the common database site or at least link to it. G. Young asked about public disclosure of information? P. Todd stated that the mechanics of the database were still “under construction.” But in response to B. Stone’s query on how to use the system, the consensus was that the bidders would be permitted to indicate whether they did or did not wish to be registered with more than the agency to which their initial query was directed and it was again reiterated that we are discussing bidders (vendors and potential vendors universe), *not current*

*vendors or existing contracts.* The latter information is not keyed to the database at this time and, if such information were to be made available to the member agencies, it would have to be protected from inadvertent disclosure.

Step (iii): The Committee next addressed the mechanics of developing a system that will provide for automatic notification of registered bidders about upcoming and/or issued solicitations. To answer any concerns about why the Committee supported a notification initiative, B. Topletz stated that it was intuitively obvious that there are going to be a lot more bidders for seven (or more) agencies rather than for just one agency. And, since one of the key Alliance objectives was to maximize opportunities for local small and emerging businesses (especially MWBEs), the more bidders in the universe, the better for competition and obtaining best pricing for the agencies.

P. Todd also stated that the system will not “prequalify” vendors and so would result in a “win-win” for the community. B. Stone further noted that this would allow for identification of common commodities and services, as previously discussed, and this segued directly into the next item of business.

*C. Interlocal Agreement (ILA) and Cooperative Purchasing.*

1. The Committee next reconsidered the possibility of establishing a viable ILA or cooperative purchasing arrangement, consistent with Alliance objectives, among the various member agencies. The first question was an appropriate title for such an initiative and while this can be finalized at a later date, the tentative name “Metroplex Purchasing Network” was agreed upon by the Committee.

2. M. Duebner stated that pending a final determination, the City of Dallas would agree to “host” or act as the sponsoring entity for this organization (NOTE: The Committee extensively discussed various agency interests in terms of sheer quantity and type of procurements, dollar magnitude, and ability to perform this function and while a number of agencies such as DISD, DART, DCCCD, DFW Airport, and City of Dallas all could be identified based on these criteria, the initial consensus was to use the City of Dallas since it already has familiarity with such agreements, has a large and varied procurement practice, and is willing to do it).

3. The key according to M. Duebner is that the City of Dallas would not serve as a central procuring entity. The concept is not to create a parallel to a state or federal contracting schedules but, as appropriate, identify specific common areas of procurements from which the member agencies could benefit through cooperative purchases. As one member stated, “We do not have to define the term “local” at this time and we do not need to mandate use of this system to piggyback requirements.”

4. The Committee then turned to the underlying issue of how to establish this network. One suggestion was to use the resources of the NCTRCA since it already has databases and certification authority for MWBEs. However, there was

considerable concern about using this entity and at least one member present nonconcurred. Other issues were whether a Metroplex Cooperative Purchasing Network (MCPN) would be in competition with existing entities such as the Texas Cooperative Purchasing Network and the Houston-Galveston Area Council. But as noted, some of these entities are governed under the Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 252, and some actually outsource the management of the cooperative network to private or semi-public third parties. The Committee, without vote, concurred to defer the specific issue of creating this MCPN but endorsed the concept.

#### IV. NEW BUSINESS

##### A. Procurement Training.

1. G. Young and P. Todd discussed arranging a half-day program for training agency buyers (and specialists) as a Procurement Workshop. The specific dates and arrangements were deferred.

2. B. Topletz noted and M. Duebner concurred that due to budget constraints and revenue shortfalls, the expenses of conducting training were prohibitive unless we could do it "in-house." The Committee endorsed the concept of providing such training among the member agencies as part of this Procurement Workshop. Such training could be accomplished at virtually no charge other than the time necessary to attend.

B. Joint Trade Show. Various Committee members expressed interest in conducting a joint agency trade show (also known as Vendor Fairs) sometime in FY03. Again, by pooling resources, costs to individual agencies, especially those with major budget constraints, could be limited.

1. The website can be used to promulgate notice to bidders.

2. The Committee then endorsed the concept of developing plans for an event ("Super Fair") and designated the following individuals to work on this issue:

DISD: Gene Gentry

DCCD: Philip Todd

DFW Airport: Gerry Young

DART: Larry Brown (Manager, Purchasing and Outreach)

DHA: Sheila Ann Reynolds

C. CEO Briefing. The Committee will ask the Chair and Vice-Chair to develop a written statement for briefing the CEO's at the August 30, 2002, meeting concerning Committee initiatives, accomplishments, and future objectives.

V. The Committee agreed to meet on Thursday, August 8, 2002, at Dallas City Hall, same location, to discuss development on pending initiatives and to prepare for the

briefing to the CEOs on August 30, 2002. B. Topletz will prepare the Minutes and disseminate them to the members prior to that meeting.

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Bruce I. Topletz, Assistant Vice President  
Procurement Department, DART  
Chair