



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Commissioner Barbara McGowan convenes public discussion of Minority, Women-Owned and Small Business contracting ordinance

Approximately 100 minority-owned, women-owned and small business enterprise (MWBEE) representatives took part in a public forum focusing on the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's (MWRD's) contracting ordinance last month.

In 1975, the MWRD began development of a program to mitigate discrimination in public contracting, and by 1978, the Board of Commissioners adopted the first Affirmative Action Ordinance.

In response to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling, the MWRD Board adopted a new ordinance in 1990 to ensure participation of minority participation on MWRD contracts. The affirmative action program is periodically reviewed during public study sessions in order to gain insight on discriminatory barriers that MWBEs encounter.

Beth Doria, Executive Director, Federation of Women Contractors, said that the MWRD has an effective program in place and appreciates the opportunities provided to their members. "We encourage the District to continue to support MWBEs."

Steve Garth, owner of Garth Construction, has been in business 40 years. "Minority contractors work very hard, and most of us are well qualified within our trade. There should be no decrease in future minority contracts."



MWRD Board of Commissioners Vice President Barbara McGowan (on the right) and Executive Director David St. Pierre welcomed input during an MWRD-hosted public forum held last month that focused on the contracting ordinance that impacts Minority, Women-Owned and Small Business Programs.

Robert McGee, president of II in One, is involved in two projects at the Thornton Quarry, which is one of the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP) reservoirs the MWRD is currently constructing. He said that "the District is light years ahead of every other agency in this part of the country. Their standards are very, very high and they pay a fair price for what they do. They make you bring the best that you have. The District is on the cutting edge of opportunity."

"The Board of Commissioners values the input of minority-owned, women-owned and small business enterpris-

es," said Vice President Barbara McGowan, chairman of the MWRD's Affirmative Action Committee. "This study session provided the setting for the public to let us know the impact of our program on their firms, and we received excellent insight today. It's important that we continue our goals of fairness, inclusion, transparency and diversity in our commitment to continue to serve the residents of Cook County."

Additional information about MWRD contracts can be found at www.mwr.org.