

The Maryland QBS Council - 1994 to 2010

The Maryland QBS Council Board: The Maryland Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) Council is celebrating its 16th year as a strong, proactive organization dedicated to assisting the selection process that uses A/E firm qualifications as the basis for awarding architectural, engineering, landscape architecture and interior design contracts. The Council assists owners in establishing a selection process that is fair and equitable, resulting in the selection of the most qualified design professional based on qualifications and competence in relation to the scope of work of the project and tailored to the clients' needs.

The Council is directed by appointed representatives from the eight sponsoring design associations from Maryland, District of Columbia and Northern Virginia listed below. The Council meets four times a year at The Engineers Club, 11 West Mount Vernon Place in Baltimore. **In 2010 the Council dates are 16 February, 11 May, 3 August, and 12 October 2010.** All Meetings are on a Tuesday at 10:00 AM and all members of the supporting associations are invited to attend. The Council is the only QBS Council in the United States to include all the design professions of site and building planning, architecture, and interior design, all engineering disciplines and landscape architecture. The Council provides free assistance to all government, nonprofits and private clients and to our member firms, public officials and individuals.

MD QBS Council - Established 1994:

On December 28, 1994, Steve Parker AIA, AIA Maryland Society President and Jim Wheeler AIA, Treasurer submitted a MD QBS letter requesting a grant for \$10,000 to AIA National, ACEC and NSPE. On April 5, 1995, MD QBS Council received the \$10,000 grant and combined with \$17,600 dues from our sponsoring organizations we got started. On September 11, 1995, the Council selected Arnold J. Prima, Jr., FAIA as Executive Director to set up our QBS office, develop our outreach programs, and plan and provide conferences and workshops for all our government and private clients and chapters' members and firms.

Government Client Assistance:

The Council representatives are constantly monitoring, meeting client agencies, providing public testimony and advocating QBS to every state agency, county, and school board in Maryland. The Council works with these agencies by furnishing sample forms and proven QBS procedure examples. We even help them develop their own QBS selection procedures, tailored to their needs, including legislation, regulations, manuals and contract documents. The Council actively tracks many agencies and provides technical assistance to their legislative, design and construction programs.

Private Sector Clients Assistance and National QBS Awards:

The Council has been honored to be recognized twice by American Consulting Engineers Council and the National Society of Professional Engineers for providing outstanding QBS assistance to our Private Sector Clients at their request. These National QBS awards have been presented to Goodwill International Headquarters in Bethesda, MD, at a member dinner in 1999 and to the Universal Unitarian Fellowship of Frederick, MD, at a member lunch in 2000. The Council has also presented QBS awards to the University of Maryland Medical System in 2002 and other County governments for their excellence in the use of QBS in their procurement programs.

MD QBS Brochure:

The council developed and has distributed over 3,000 copies of our popular brochure "*Selecting a Design Professional Qualifications Based Selection*" to clients and our members. Copies are available to our members for their client marketing and education at no charge. It describes the following QBS process and other information on getting free assistance from the Council.

- 1. Announcement:** The agency announces and publishes the required A/E services scope and issues a Request for Qualifications (RFQ).
- 2. Screening/Evaluation:** The agency reviews and evaluates all submissions and develops a "Short List" of three to five firms.
- 3. Interviews:** The agency interviews all the A/E teams at either the firm or agency offices.

4. **Ranking/Selection:** The agency rates all the firms and selects the top ranked firm in order of qualifications, philosophies, proposed project management and client references.
5. **Negotiation:** The top-rated firm is invited into negotiations with the agency to develop a detailed scope of work, a formal contract and the fee based on an approved scope of work.

If the agency cannot negotiate a reasonable fee with the first firm, it terminates negotiations with that firm and starts negotiations with the second firm and then the third if required.

Continuing Education Conferences and Workshops:

The Council has developed and presented major QBS conferences and has presented our QBS program at many client meetings every year. We also participate in programs and workshops sponsored by all our sponsoring chapter organizations. Here are a few examples.

Value Based Negotiating of Professional Architectural & Engineering Services: The Heart of the Issue of QBS

On October 3, 2002, over one hundred clients, government officials and private sector A/E's attended the Council's very successful A/E Negotiating Conference at The Engineers Club in Baltimore. The day-long conference, "Value Based Negotiating of Professional Architectural & Engineering Services: The Heart of Issue of QBS" featured client representatives from the Pentagon Renovation program, Baltimore Corps of Engineers, Towson University and Maryland Departments of Transportation and General Services. All these top level government officials are responsible for A/E Scope and fee negotiating. The conference was moderated by Michael Strogoff, AIA one of the nation's leading experts in negotiating client-design professional A/E contract agreements. The program format provided many opportunities for lively audience participation with the six speakers. Topics listed below were addressed by each speaker and then all the audience and other speakers joined in and had a very educational experience.

Topics Explored:

- **Defining Value: Tangible** and intangible value. What Clients most value, expect and potential benefits.
- **Selecting the Design Professionals-Screening Clients:** Getting the best A/E and Client Fit:
 - **Clients:** Check list on what to look for in selecting the best A/E for your project.
 - **A/Es:** What are the Client's issues and other factors needed for a successful project for your firm?
- **The Negotiating Process:** Position-based vs. Interest-based dynamics; Successful negotiations, reaching agreement and developing effective contracts.
 - Managing risk, liabilities, damages and contract changes.
 - Design competitions with compensation.
 - Defining Scope of services.
 - Identifying expanded services.
 - Preparing for and handling barriers to effective negotiating.
- **Negotiating Pricing of Services:**
 - When should price be discussed?
 - Methods for pricing services.
 - Downside of competing firms based on fees.
 - Strategies and how to determine reasonable fees.
 - Innovative negotiations.
 - How do I know if I left anything on the table?
 - What do I do about it later?

This all-day conference with breakfast and lunch included, provided Five (5) HSW Continuing Education Credits to all AIA Members.

IIP 2000: Innovations in 2000 Procurement: Design-Build & Construction:

In May 2000, the Council organized and presented ten government officials from the Federal and Maryland State and county governments at a conference at the Engineers Club in Baltimore. The focus of the program presented QBS Design Build and the latest methods and innovations in the acquisition of real estate, facilities, A/E design services and construction in both the government and private sector.

The Council has worked with all these agencies using traditional QBS for design services for many years. Now we are working with these agencies using QBS in Design-Build, Developer Partnerships: Best-Value selection and Pure Performance Specification. The Council received very positive reviews from all of the 160 government clients and A/E design and construction firm members in attendance.

Maryland Department of Education Public School Construction Program Endorses our Maryland QBS Council:

On February 20, 1996, Dr. Yale Stenzler, Executive Director, Maryland Public School Construction Program, sent a letter with our MD QBS brochure to all Superintendents of Schools in the State of Maryland and encouraged them to seek assistance from the Council. He stated, "The Maryland Public School Construction Program recognizes the merit in the use of QBS method of selection and encourages its use by local educational agencies." The Council has presented workshops three of the Department of Education state-wide meetings and also at Association of School Business Officials of MD & DC and MD Association of Boards of Education Annual Conference & Exhibition.

Public Awareness:

Some examples of the Council public outreach programs are our testimony before the MD Governor's Council on Management and Productivity, "Architectural/Engineering Procurement Practices in the State of Maryland" and the National QBS Teleconference: CEC/MD -APWA "The Selection and Use of Consultants." We have also developed and delivered our QBS position paper "Why Fee Competition for Selection of Architectural/Engineering Firms is Not in the Best Interest of Government Clients and the Public They Serve." Other workshops participation has been with the American Public Works Association of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia and the County Engineers Association of Maryland.

The Maryland QBS Council for Member & Chapter Assistance:

The council continues its support of chapter workshops and provides free assistance to private organizations who seek our help. The council has a number of sample documents and sponsors conferences to help both our clients and members in their A/E procurement and marketing programs. We also provide individual assistance to all members and firms.

Need Help? Call for FREE assistance:

For more information please visit our Web sites: www.mdqbs.com <http://www.mdqbs.com/links.htm> www.aiamd.org or www.CECMD.org. You are also encouraged to contact Arnie Prima, FAIA, Executive Director, at (301) 656-8062 or E-mail Arnie at PRIMAAAA@aol.com for assistance. There is no charge for this service.

Richard Berich, PE, Chairman

Michael J. Wiercinski, PE, Treasurer

Arnold J. Prima, Jr., FAIA, Executive Director