

# ACEC / NCDOT JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALS

## April 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was held on April 21, 2021 using a virtual Teams Meeting at 1:30 pm. In no specific order, those in attendance were:

<b><u>NAME:</u></b>	<b><u>REPRESENTING:</u></b>	<b><u>EMAIL ADDRESS:</u></b>
Matt Hilderbran	NCDOT – Materials and Tests Unit	mrhilderbran@ncdot.gov
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## **SUBCOMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **Review of Minutes of January 20, 2021**

Approved minutes as updated.

### **Subcommittee Committee Members**

This meeting marks the last subcommittee meeting for Davis Diggs and Eddie Bishop as they roll off after their designated tenure. Two new members are to be voted in once ACEC turns over the acceptable resumes for the roles.

## **Training**

### **Materials and Tests Training Updates**

*Update by Jim Sawyer*

- Training updates will be posted soon for classes in July through September.
- With CDC allowing up to 25 attendees per class, M&T has opened classes to 23 students (plus 2 instructors) as long as social distancing guidelines can be followed at the venue.

## **Discussion Items**

### **CEI Guidelines**

- The document has been finalized and will be distributed to the industry shortly.
  - o There will be an announcement memo created in the next week and posted for distribution.
- NCDOT is aiming to start webinars to review the new guidelines at the end of May or early June. However, there is a potential for conflicts with the upcoming Resident Engineers workshops.
- Separate webinars will be held for NCDOT and industry staff with morning and afternoon sessions.

### **Training Class Substitutions**

- With the number of technicians requiring training, and the minimized staffing of projects, the industry inquired if the Department would be willing to adjust the limitation of no substitutions for training classes.
  - o M&T is willing to allow substitutions up to 5 days in advance.
  - o One hesitation is it is a logistical issue keeping up with multiple subs, not knowing if the person showing up is really supposed to be there. This becomes a security issue for the trainers.
  - o M&T is considering alternatives such as if something happens after the 5-day cut off, M&T could possibly reimburse the firm for the cost of the school. Other options will be explored.
  - o It was reported that M&T staff is attempting to address this issue. They will be having a series of meetings to discuss the topic. They are also bringing in an Assistant Resident Engineer to discuss issues involved with project staffing needs and class conflicts.

- It was also noted that M&T is not satisfied with the current training class registration process. They will be exploring additional options.
- The industry is asked to cooperate by trying to limit substitutions as much as possible, and to provide documentation of substituted attendees for security purposes.
- Absences due to illness (COVID) will not be penalized. Refunds or reschedule for the attendee will be provided.
- Call Vickey Hutchins if substitutions are necessary.

### **CEI “Loaded Rates” or “Blended Rates”**

- After a pilot program was run for two years the Department has opened discussions to the potential of moving towards a “loaded labor rate” for future contracts.
- The reasoning is to alleviate the biggest issue that NCDOT has found with CEI contracts, negotiation of individual inspector billable rates.
- This would also open the industry to pay inspectors what they find is a fair negotiated rate with each individual inspector.
- As representatives of the industry we’ve held three meetings including firms that have experience, and a better understanding of other contracts’ language.
- The conversation was closed with everyone concurring further research and discussions is needed.
  - A deadline was set to conclude with a final decision by the time the current statewide on-call ended.
  - Should it be found to be the best option CCU will need to get approval from the Chief’s Office.
- It was determined a joint task force would be formed to keep the subject moving forward.

### **Staffing Projection**

- NCDOT is unsure when this information can be made public as it is not current.
  - They are unsure when the next projection will be available at this time.
- CCU does not feel comfortable sharing information on a Division level, as they do not have definitive information, but are still open to sharing the statewide estimates when the next projection is complete. This is typically done every two years.

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- The industry requested that active project specific contracts be removed from the projection to give a better understanding of the need.
- M&T does not run staffing projections like CEI and is typically more reactive to the needs.
- Reduced Hours & Overtime
  - o The Chief's Office has recently posted a memo relaxing restrictions even further than the current maximum of 50hrs/week for both NCDOT and CEI staffing. The Divisions will have to justify why this is needed on a case by case basis.

### **Upcoming CEI Projects**

Anticipated projects list was updated March 26.

1. I-5986C / R-5777D – Broadband Project
  - o CEI advertisement anticipated mid-May.
  - o Division 4 will be responsible for the contract administration.
  - o There's potential for the CEI contract to be split up.
2. I-6064A,B,C – I-95 – Division 6 Robeson & Cumberland Co
  - o Construction letting June 15, 2021
  - o CEI advertisement anticipated July 15, 2021
3. R-2233BB – US221 – Division 13 Rutherford Co.
  - o Construction letting December 21, 2021
  - o CEI advertisement anticipated August 15, 2021
4. R-3300B – US17 (Hampstead bypass) – Division 3 Pender Co
  - o Construction letting January 18, 2022
  - o CEI advertisement September 15, 2021
5. U-2579AB – Winston-Salem Beltway – Division 9
  - o CEI advertisement August 15, 2021
6. I-3306A – I-40 in Orange County – Division 7
  - o CEI advertisement September 15, 2021

### **Other Items**

- CCU discussed CEI technicians changing firms – Best Business Practice
  - o Guidance was expressed in 2019, and reiterated, the firm losing the technician will be given the first chance to fill the position on the contract.
  - o This firm will be given a minimum of two weeks to submit a resume to fill the position – the Division will need to give strong consideration to the personnel proposed if they are qualified for the subject technician level.
  - o A memo is anticipated from the Chief’s Office documenting the guidance.
- CEI Engineer’s rates – there is no update at this time. A meeting is being set to continue the discussion.
- CCU has set up a meeting to discuss “Shift Premium” with a Division. Guidance to the industry should follow.
- CCU looking at dates for potential monthly informal meetings to keep all discussions moving forward.

**Next Meeting:** June 21, 2021 at 1:30 pm.

**Adjourn**