

ACEC / NCDOT JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALS

July 15, 2020 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was held on July 15, 2020 using a virtual GoTo Meeting at 1:30 pm. In no specific order, those in attendance were:

<u>NAME:</u>	<u>REPRESENTING:</u>	<u>EMAIL ADDRESS:</u>
Wright Archer	NCDOT – Division 9	warcher@ncdot.gov
Jamal Atkins	Volkert	jamal.atkins@volkert.com
Eddie Bishop	Terracon	eddie.bishop@terracon.com
Michael Davis	RS & H	michael.davis@rsandh.com
Davis Diggs	KCA	ddiggs@kcaeng.com
Frank Gioscio	BREE & Associates	frank.gioscio@breeassociates.com
Brian Hunter	NCDOT – Materials and Tests Unit	bhunter@ncdot.gov
Wiley Jones	NCDOT – Construction Unit	wwjones1@ncdot.gov
Christine Goins	RK & K	cgoins@rkk.com
Jim Sawyer	NCDOT – Materials and Tests Unit	jsawyer@ncdot.gov
Brian Skeens	NCDOT – Construction Unit	bskeens@ncdot.gov
Daniel Shuller	NCDOT – PMSU	dshuller@ncdot.gov
Bryan Edwards	NCDOT – Construction Unit	Bledwards1@ncdot.gov
Boyd Tharrington	NCDOT – Construction Unit	btharrington@ncdot.gov
Todd Whittington	NCDOT – Materials and Tests Unit	twhittington@ncdot.gov
Sherell Williams	NCDOT – Construction Unit	sherellwilliams@ncdot.gov

SUBCOMMITTEE BUSINESS

Review of Minutes of April 15, 2020 – Group

Approved minutes as updated.

New Subcommittee ACEC Committee Members

Christine Goins has joined the committee and will be serving for the next three years.

Training

Materials and Tests Training Updates

Class Training Calendar

- Mr. Jim Sawyer advised that August training classes have been cancelled due to the governor's extension of Phase II for the COVID 19 guidance. There is a possibility of classes being cancelled for the remainder of the year if COVID 19 trends continue. All registration fees would be refunded if that happens in order to start 2021 off with a clean slate.
- The 2021 training scheduling has started but looks to be tentative as well.
- Firms have been requesting provisional extensions, and this will need to continue at this time. Each request must include the certificate holder's name, ID number, and which specific certification extension is being requested. Requests are to be submitted to Jim Sawyer at M&T. Provisional extensions will only be granted if the certification status is "active" for the technician.
- Field certifications are still taking place on an as-needed basis.
- M&T is working on a website for future training videos. Details of which trainings will be recorded and the extent to which these will be used was not discussed.

Discussion Items

COVID 19 Updates

NCDOT has established an "Office Procedures and Protocols for COVID-19 Operational Safety," which has been forwarded out to the industry July 17, 2020. Contractors and CEI staff working within the Divisions are expected to adhere to the plan as NCDOT staff. This plan requires face coverings to be worn where social distancing cannot be achieved, both in the office and in the field. Companies are expected to supply their staff with proper PPE as needed. Contractors were required to sign an agreement to follow this plan. The Construction Unit expects everyone to follow this protocol but did not want to become the "mask police" on projects. The Construction Unit suggested that CEI firms elevate any concerns to the RE if any safety concerns arise.

2020 CEI On-Call Selection

The Department has a process in place to complete the LOI reviews. The selection committee plans to meet in August to review their results. Currently, it is the Department's intent to select firms, write each contract, but wait to execute them until the cash balance steadily stays above the cash floor.

The industry had concern with the timing of execution and the ability to get new purchase orders executed. The Department responded noting House Bill 77 allows for supplemental agreements to existing purchase orders with current staffing. This is only for active projects. The Construction Unit has notified Resident Engineers that this is now allowed for CEI contracts as well as construction contracts.

Several in the industry had mentioned having issues with the new submittal system (LOISS). The Department reminded us, it's still a new system and they were working out some of the last few kinks. Should any firm have an issue with a submittal be sure to email the PSMU group email in the RFLOI so they can track when you were attempting to submit and your issue.

It was also mentioned that there were a few firms that had copies of purchase order Notice to Proceed letters, but when they attempted to invoice, the funds were not available yet. The Department feels there may be up to a 30 day in NTP and the funds being available, but if there are any issues in the future in which funds are not available they would like to hear from us as an industry.

CEI Guidelines

Ms. Sherell Williams advised the CEI Guidelines have had a review internally and they were still working on a few items. Upon completion, it is anticipated to be sent to the subcommittee for concurrence prior to being activated and sent out to the industry. The Construction Unit plans to hold a webinar with NCDOT and industry personnel to go over the updated guidelines.

There were three main points that were addressed in the update: vehicle reimbursements, Project Managers' visit time allotment, and a standardized invoice cover sheet.

CEI/M&T Technician Rate Study

Ms. Sherell Williams advised the committee that the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) was reviewed for the previous year and shows that our rates are due to increase by 1.5%. This increase will be effective August 1st. A request is not required, but a letter to the contract administrators (typically RE's) is required to alert them of the rate increase and confirm two items: it was correct per the previous rate, and was still within the technician rate category range.

This increase did not match the 2.5% increase the Department employees received as per the contract language adjustment seen in 2017. This language de-coupled the CEI/M&T industry rates from the employee rates.

(Additional information came out about this in an email dated August 3, 2020 from the subcommittee.)

Ms. Williams is to forward the industry the rate adjustment memo, along with the CPI website used to determine the increase, after the meeting. Along with the memo a new rate calculator and adjustment spreadsheet will be posted on the Connect website: Consultant – Guidelines and Forms. *Note: The CPI link was forwarded to the industry*

by Mr. Michael Davis on 7/23/20; <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm> Refer to code 17-3022 Civil Engineering Technicians for our industry.

Vehicle Reimbursement Study

Ms. Williams informed the group that the Department had completed a study on vehicle reimbursement rates. The findings have led to the rate adjustments as follows:

	Current Rate	After August 1
2x4	\$770	\$835
4x4	\$840	\$915

*** *Revision**** These rates will be effective for new contracts executed on or after August 1, 2020. As per the standard contract note, “The Vehicle Base Rates shall remain the same for the duration of the AGREEMENT.”

Vehicle gas mileage rates changed on July 1, 2020 in accordance with routine semiannual adjustments. The new rates are \$0.13/mile for 2WD and \$0.14/mile for 4WD.

(Additional information came out about this in an email dated August 3, 2020 from the subcommittee.)

Future CEI/M&T Needs Forecast

Currently, the Department is continuing to pull data and reviewing what the needs will look like in the next 6+ months; consequently, they are not comfortable giving any speculations at this time. However, with House Bill 77 and bond sales, it does give the Department the ability to utilize funds for on-going projects, and the possibility to fund a few of the future projects everyone was waiting for. Once the fund situation settles and lettings restart, they will be able to look at workload by Division.

Financial Cash Report

A weekly cash balance report can be found on the NCDOT Connect site (<https://www.ncdot.gov/about-us/how-we-operate/finance-budget/Pages/cash-watch-numbers.aspx>). The industry had noted the balance looked to be above the cash floor. The Department had not been notified the standing of the cash balance, or if the balance was considered to be above the cash floor.

Upcoming Projects

Ms. Sherell Williams advised a 12-month let list will be coming out. It was also mentioned that there are a few CEI project specific advertisements that they're discussing internally, and she will let us know as soon as final determination is made. The following were anticipated to be seen on the list:

- I-5986C & R-5777D - ITS Broadband through Divisions 2, 4, 6. Currently the anticipating DB/P3 proposals in September, with CEI advertisement November 1, 2020. The project will be administered by Division 4.

The industry had mentioned there are a few project specific contracts that make mention to the possible addition of future projects. Ms. Williams let us know that she's been in contact with the Divisions and no decisions had been finalized at that time.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at 1:30 pm.