Minutes from Branson, Missouri 5-4-08

1 – Call to Order – Mattox
2 – Roll Call – self introductions
3 – Minutes – approved
4 – New Members – ACEC introduced new subcommittee chairs
   Audit Subcommittee – Lynda Konomos
   Rail & Transit Subcommittee – John Kurgan
   Funding Subcommittee – Peter Strub
   Aviation Subcommittee – Jerry Stump
   State Liaison Subcommittee – Scott Murray
   Environment Subcommittee – Hal Kassoff
5 – AASHTO Report – John Horsley
   ▶ Thanks to Pete Rahn
   ▶ Technical Corrections Bill passed Congress which was a boost to research programs
   ▶ Projected $13 B cut in HTF
     Baucus and Grassley have a package to restore $5B to sustain the program
     This package may pass this week, however Hutchison opposes because the fix is on the FAA Bill
     Crucial that a fix passes in May
   ▶ Preparation for Reauthorization
     Congress is beginning to internalize the Commission’s recommendations
     Looking for Congress to begin holding hearings
     AASHTO and ACEC worked closely together to influence Commission - ACEC helped to fund the Vision Conference which was very effective
     Oberstar is saying that the next bill needs to be “transformational” – accountability for results
     AASHTO is considering performance accountability
       ▪ Horsley asked ACEC for ideas
       ▪ Tony Kane’s committee is putting together ideas for more accountable performance
     Crisis we hope to avert this year shifts the problem to next year – HTF flows are projected to be $36 in and $46 out
     Next year the cut could be $20 B unless Congress finds revenues to sustain the program
     Not since 1956 has this happened
     AASHTO proposed tax credit bonds
     Thune and Wyden introduced a new bill – Build America Bonds – that could help grow the program
     ARTBA – freight fees
     ACEC joined AASHTO to fund the Commission’s Road Show
   ▶ Pete Rahn’s ideas as President –
     National Marketing Campaign to restore faith in the program
     AASHTO is working on a public, national grassroots campaign and would like to partner with ACEC
     Comment from David Oates (ACEC) – funding of the next Highway Bill is a top priority for ACEC. We share this priority with AASHTO. ACEC brings a strong lobbying force to the table. This was a focus of our recent DC Convention and ACEC took our message to the Hill.
     Comment from Pete Rahn (AASHTO) – Funding is a real challenge for all of us. We need to work collaboratively for common goals.
6 – FHWA Report – King Gee
Lots of staff changes:
- Jim Ray – Deputy Administrator is now Acting Administrator
- Bud Wright – retiring
- Rick Capka – leaving
- Jeff Paniati – FHWA Executive director
- New Deputy Chief Counsel
- Jim Cheatham – Head of Planning
- Butch Wlaschin – Head of Asset Management
- Fred Scare will be retiring as head of Office of Environment

- Bridges – MN Bridge Collapse
  - We all are aware of the issue of design on gusset plates on bridges
  - FHWA has a heightened focus on bridge safety
  - Critical bridge evaluations – push to get them done
  - Push to get all bridges assessed for vulnerabilities by Nov
  - All bridges will have an action plan by Nov of 09
  - 67,000 bridges with unknown foundations – all considered defacto scour critical
  - FHWA will possibly come out with a rulemaking

- State of oversight of local projects
  - FHWA charged divisions to look at state oversight of local projects
  - 1st assessment due last Oct
  - Annual assessments will be conducting due to what they found
  - Quarterly reports will be due until oversight is up to standard

- CSS – multi year effort to promote CSS

- Secretary Peters priorities include congestion reduction, safety…
  - 4 partnership proceeding
  - NY not going forward - $ redistributed to Chicago and LA

- Freight Mobility
  - Rural Safety – focus on safer drivers, better trained emergency responders, safer roads

- Question from David Oates (ACEC) to King Gee – what issues exist with consultant procurement?
  - Response – local agencies have ingoing relationships with consultants. Locals were going with their on-board agency. FHWA says they must compete.

7 – Update on Improving the Quality of Environmental Documents Rollout Effort –
- Hal Kassoff (ACEC) – this is a joint taskforce that produced a report after years of work
  - ACEC has held webinars and conference sessions to educate people on the issues.
  - More guidance is needed – FHWA may issue additional guidance

- King Gee – thanked everyone involved for the successful effort
  - National Association of Environmental Professional distributed the report
  - Feb 2nd was a national webinar with 850 practitioners involved
  - ACEC/CO held a workshop and FHWA would like to do more of that

- Working with University on writing a manual for NEPA documents
  - Working on readability of NEPA documents

- John Horsley – Sustainable Transportation and Climate Change
  - How are we going to address this?
  - How do we deal with flooding? FHWA report on Gulf Coast Flooding is finalized
  - How do we collaborate and study this issue?
    - Global warming and carbon emissions
    - Going to have to deal with these issues
    - What are we as an industry doing to reduce carbon emissions?
    - Don’t want to approach this on a project basis

8 – Bridge Design Questions from NTSB Peer Review of Complex Structures – Ken Kobetsky
- NTSC wants to know if firms are being asked to do a peer review for complex bridge structures
- What are states doing with ACEC firms?
There seems to be some peer review, but don’t know to what level ACEC offered to ask the Transportation Committee and State Organizations for their input. ACEC asked Ken to send the NTSB questions so we can circulate them to ACEC as it turns our NTSB has worked with a selected number of departments directly.

- MN Bridge Collapse – 1 year anniversary
- PR Effort – positive effort
- Help convince people of the need for funding

9 – Improving Contract Plans and Administration – John Kurgan (ACEC)

- This is an outstanding issue from 2006
- John Kurgan attended the AASHTO-ARTBA-AGC breakfasts across the country in 2007 and this issue was not raised
- Regarding the AASHTO-ACEC Working Group on this issue – John Kurgan from ACEC was appointed however the AASHTO member appointed has since retired.
- Kurgan recommended tabling the issue due to the lack of discussion, involvement and interest
- John Horsley (AASHTO)
  Janet Oakley’s committee originally raised these issues and Janet will resurface the specific problems.
  AASHTO will appoint a person to work with John Kurgan

10 – OIG Audit Update

- AASHTO, ACEC, ARTBA partnership
- Handed out OIG one-pager
- Jack Basso –
  IG has yet to issue a draft report
  There has been a change in IG staff
  We have challenged the IG’ methodology and requested exit interviews
  Jack has had private conversations with Scovel
  There are issues we all agree on – lets work on those and move forward
- King Gee –
  Being inside FHWA doesn’t give him great insight
  FHWA expects a draft report by the end of the month – a promise they have heard before
  These are issues for the Audit and Finance Committee within AASHTO
  Standard level of quality of audits to establish indirect cost rates
  Establish clear guidance for cognizance
  Effective oversight
- David Oates –
  We all have the same common goals in this effort and appreciate the continued close working relationship between AASHTO and ACEC

11 – Report from SCOR on the NCHRP 2009 – Ken Kobetsky

- SCOR approved the 2009 and the list of NCHRP projects for 2009 can be found on the [http://www.trb.org/CRP/NCHRP/NCHRP](http://www.trb.org/CRP/NCHRP/NCHRP).

12 – NCHRP 20-7 (225) Management of Design Errors and Omissions – Mike Ryan (ACEC)

- $75,000, 11 month study
- Mike Markow has 3 objectives
- David Oates commented that ACEC has information on this subject that we’d like to submit.
- ACEC asked that we are allowed to add representatives to the study panel.
- AASHTO agreed to add representatives to the panel and two members have been appointed

13 – Scanning Program – Ken Kobetsky

- Linking Performance and Accountability to National and State/Provincial/Metropolitan Budget and Revenue Increase (Combined with European Approaches to Determining Highway User Satisfaction)
- Survey of Innovative Pedestrian and Bicyclist Infrastructure Improvements and Policies to Increase Safety and Mobility
Reducing Congestion, Enhancing the Environment, and Funding Transportation Using Road Pricing


14 – FHWA Work Zone Safety Grant – Brad Sant – ARTBA
   - Power Point
   - FHWA Work Zone Safety Grant created in SAFETEA-LU and has 4 primary grantees
   - Interactive training tools

15 – Environmental Center Update – Shannon Eggleston
   - Handouts – Above and Beyond Report – Practitioners Handouts
   - SCOE – storm water conference in June in San Diego

16 – Membership –
   - King Gee offered to talk to FTA to get a representative back on the Joint Committee and will report back at the next meeting.

17 – Old Business –
   - ACEC offered their document on freight movement for AASHTO’s comment (sent to AASHTO 10-6-08)
     - AASHTO asked for the document electronically and they’d comment
   - ACEC asked AASHTO for state TRAC contacts so our state member organizations can reach out to them

18 – New Business –
   - Ken Kobetsky – Consultant Contracting – March 2008
   - Sustainability Issue –
     - As AASHTO moves forward they will ask ACEC for insight
     - David Oates (ACEC) – we’ll look at it within our committee and report back
     - AASHTO is doing studies and that will help gather info

19 – Next Meeting – Hartford, CT

20 – Adjournment