

**ACEC Transportation Committee
TDOT Partnering Meeting Summary
November 18, 2011**

The ACEC/TDOT Partnering Meeting met on November 18, 2011 at 10:00 AM in the 7th Floor Conference Room at TDTO Headquarters. The following were in attendance:

TDOT:

Paul Degges	Jeff Jones	Carolyn Stonecipher	Jim Waters
Freddy Miller	Chris Christianson	Charles King	Steve Hall
Ralph Comer	Richard Emerson	Toks Omishakin	Said El Said
Brian Egan	Wayne Seger		

ACEC Committee Members:

Robert McIvor	Stan King	Brad Winkler	Todd Kemp
David Harrell	Will Reid	Patrick Neal	Robert Campbell
Jeff Mize	Tom Clinard		

The following summarizes the meeting's discussions:

General Comments (Paul Degges)

Federal Spending

Paul Degges welcomed everyone and started the discussion with highlights on federal spending. He indicated that \$100 million was cut from the December letting and that money would continue to be tight.

The US Senate passed a transportation bill but did not identify where up to \$50 million would come from. In the bill there is considerable change in program areas. If the changes are lasting, it will be a transition bill from the way we have funded things the last twenty plus years to a new streamlined approach.

Federal fund codes will probably be rolled into four major programs. There is a big push to focus on the National Highway System. The NH and IM funds will roll into this category. Some bridge money will be included as well. STP funds roll into a mobility fund and the Appalachia program is at risk in its waning years.

TDOT is trying to be active and provide comments on things we like or don't like. The Department will continue to watch closely and try to make sure that the bills provide the most benefit to Tennessee.

TDOT Budget

TDOT's position, from a revenue standpoint is to spend every penny that is allocated. It is not TDOT's position to lobby for more revenue unless directed to do so by the Governor.

The Commissioner has been raising awareness about future funding in light of electric vehicles and improved fuel economy. The Department is working on this issue with the General Assembly.

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Top to Bottom Review

Mr. Degges indicated that the Department finished their Top to Bottom Review in October and sent findings to the Governor who will determine how this information is rolled out. The Governor is putting together a team across state government to look at all recommendations. TDOT must hear back from the governor to see how he wants to roll out top to bottom. From TDOT's perspective there are things that can the Commissioner would like to start implementing. He met with the Division Directors earlier in the week and presented an overview.

One of the big things is utilization of consultants since the Department has been under an extended hiring freeze. In some cases, the Department has used consultants to fill vacant positions and work inside of TDOT. The Department wants to back off of some of those types of consultant usages. TDOT will have to find a way to do this internally. A second item will be areas of overlap. One critical area is environmental reviews on projects.

Consultant usage on CEI has ramped up over the last few years. The Department would like to re-staff some of the construction offices.

Mr. Degges is concerned with the Department losing core competencies and ability to deliver projects. One thing to do is build back up those competencies. This will take 3-5 years on construction side and 2-3 years on design side.

One of the biggest issues identified in the Top to Bottom Review was the quality of plans (both consultant and in-house) . Steve Hall asked construction personnel to run numbers on overruns, change orders, and so on. Mr. Degges does not know how much of this is attributable to plan quality.

Three major areas that attribute to this assumption:

- Designer makes assumptions on how to build a project and this doesn't agree with how contractor wants to do it
- Designer wants an item done a certain way and construction does it a different way
- Mistakes and unknown conditions

If plans were that bad, then the Department would be inundated with claims and that is not the case. However, Mr. Degges wanted to pass this along since it had been heard in the Top to Bottom Review.

The Department will start implementing some changes. The organizational structural will be changed. The Department wants to improve the project delivery process. The other side is an operational issue. The Department has to manage the existing system.

Carolyn Stonecipher mentioned that a big item on plans is inaccurate quantities and pay item numbers. The Design Division will start requiring rough quantities on ROW plans. The Division will be looking for 90% plans at ROW stage. This will give Construction more time to review plans. In addition, the turn-in date will be extended another week (now 10.5 weeks).

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Invoicing

One issue ACEC has brought up is the discrepancy in payment among the various TDOT Divisions. Degges indicated that there may be a need for a central contracting office and possible regimented process. Jeff Jones indicated that this was not a problem exclusive to invoicing. It has been brought to his attention that different Divisions even procure work differently and this causes consistency issues. Mr. Jones requested that a working committee be established between TDOT & ACEC to evaluate invoicing options. Brian Egan nominated Said el Said to serve on this committee.

CMGC

Mr. Egan reported on the status of CMGC and indicated it is about at where it was last time. The Department has proposed language to the governor and there is required legislative action before this can proceed. This is envisioned to be used on larger projects and would entail a contractor and designer working together to deliver the plans. Mr. Egan indicated the perception of CMGC from contractors is that some are a little apprehensive of the process and the transparency. There appears to be contractor concern on how consultants are selected.

Webinar – Everyday Counts TTAP

Brian Egan indicated there is a webinar on December 15, 2011 that is geared toward local agencies. One of the areas will be CMGC and the other FHWA Everyday Counts Initiative.

Design-Build

Brian Egan indicated that technical proposals for the I-40 DB in Wilson County are due December 2, 2011 and bid opening is scheduled for December 19, 2011. The Department should know more about this in December. There are five other projects that are being monitored that are similar to the current DB project and were procured at approximately the same time. The goal is to have one Design-Build per year. It is anticipated that the next project will be in Region 1.

Electronic Signatures for Plans

Jim Waters reported on the status of electronic signatures on plans. The work flow has been developed and the Department is tracking several projects that will be implementing electronic signatures. Mr. Waters provided a handout (attached).

TDOT has purchased tokens for Design, Structures and Geotechnical. The goal is to do a project that has multiple components. The process has been going through testing. Freddy Miller is trying to identify a few consultant contracts to implement the process. TDOT uses Entrust. The software does not have to be Entrust but it must be Adobe Certified. TDOT will help train on-site or at a regional facility.

Independent plan (roadway, structure, utility) can be merged into a PDF portfolio. This way it can be packaged as one. In cases where there will be multiple seals on a sheet there will need to be multiple versions of a sheet with individual seals at this time. This will need to be revisited.

Schedule Next Meeting

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Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 2, 2012 at 10:00AM at TDOT Headquarters 7th Floor conference room.

Cc: Meeting Attendees

Attachments: Digital and Electronic Roadway Design Plans (Summary of TDOT Test Projects)