



Legislative Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

11:30am – 1:00pm

ACEC Office, 13th Floor Wells Fargo Building + Virtual Meeting

Purpose

ACEC/NC is the sole organization in North Carolina that represents the business interests of the engineering industry in our state. A key component of ACEC/NC's mission is to "promote the business interests of engineering companies by providing *legislative advocacy*". We work on behalf our member organizations to support and promote issues that are of importance to them and the engineering industry, both on the state and federal level.

Meeting Notes

The notes below represent the general discussion, information and resulting action items:

1. Welcome/Review/Approve Meeting Minutes

- Seth Poole, Legislative Committee Chair, called the meeting to order. He reiterated the purpose of the ACEC/NC Legislative Committee.
- Seth asked if attendees had any additions or modifications to the agenda. No comments were provided.

2. FEDERAL Legislative/Regulatory Updates/Discussion – Joe Angell

- Joe Angell (Wiley Wilson) introduced himself and his role on the Legislative Committee. He is also the ACEC/NC Building and Infrastructure Committee Chair.
- He stated that there are incredible opportunities and billions of appropriated dollars flowing into North Carolina:
 - Department of Defense (DoD) – NAVFAC (Lejeune, Cherry Point), USACE/MICC (Liberty, SUNY Point, Port of Wilmington), USAF (Seymour Johnson AFB)
 - DLA - FRC
 - DHS – USCG – Elizabeth City
 - DHHS – NIEHS, CDC
 - GSA – 2nd biggest property manager after DoD
 - DOI – NPS – Great American Outdoors Act
 - DOJ – FBI, Bureau of Prisons
 - DOT – FHWA, FAA
 - Veterans Affairs (VA) – Durham, Raleigh, Fayetteville, Salisbury, Asheville, CBOCs
- Joe provided an update the challenges and opportunities:
 - \$1 - \$2 Billion per year is coming through USACE/NACFAC.
 - 50% of contract is subcontracted - \$500M / year.
 - Approximately a 5-year program.
 - High percentage of construction and design work being performed by out-of-state firms.

- The challenges include lack of experience with military buyers and selection boards; lack of experience with federal contracts and liability issues; lack of political engagement; and work force restrictions.
- There is a struggle with engagement and working with other industry organizations (DBIA, AGC, AIA, ASCE, CMAA, NDIA, NSBA etc.) and streamlining our message is the new approach.
- The goals are to create position papers in support of NC Based Federal Agencies and advocate federal and state elected officials for support.
- The barriers to cost effective and timely completion include workforce issues, supply chain issues, procurement issues, and regulatory impacts.
- Joe met with the State Construction Office on January 7. The State Building Council is being reformed and we are providing input on the composition of that council responsible for NC Building Codes.
- Joe's contact information is jangell@wileywilson.com or 919-622-7341 and he is soliciting additional support from member firms.

3. STATE Legislative/Regulatory Updates/Discussion

- Seth is working to assemble a group of volunteers interested in attending Legislative Day.
- David Ferrell provided a State Legislative Update:
 - House Leadership:
 - North Carolina has a new House Speaker: Destin Hall (Caldwell): Focus on mini budget for Hurricane Helene Relief (looking to avoid past missteps)
 - Speaker Pro Tempore: Mitchell Setzer (Catawba): Also focused on recovery efforts for Hurricane Helene victims
 - Senate Leadership
 - Lt. Governor Rachel Hunt (Mecklenburg): Policy interest include public education, childcare, women's health
 - Senate President Pro Tempore: Phil Berger (Rockingham): noted renewed needs for disaster preparedness in wake of Hurricane Helene
 - State Committee Chairs
 - Appropriations / Base Budget Chairs: Brent Jackson, Ralph Hise, Michael V. Lee
 - Transportation: Bill Rabon, Vickie Sawyer, Michael Lazzara
 - House Committee Chairs have not been announced yet.
 - House is one vote shy of a super majority.
 - What to Expect: Budget and Policy will be the focus. Expect western NC storm relief early in the session.
 - Senate Bill 382: Included 'No Local Government Down-Zoning Without Consent of Affected Property Owner'. This bill limits changes of zoning regulations or a zoning map that down-zones a property without the written consent of all property owners subject to the down-zoning. American Planning Association of NC expressed concerns with retroactively changes in the last 6-months. Bill vetoed by the Governor but overridden by supermajority.



4. LOCAL Legislative/Regulatory Updates/Discussion

- Seth provided an update on the Charlotte Tax Referendum for 1% Sales Tax, which is an estimated to generate \$19.4 billion over 30 years. Senator Sawyer indicated the bill has a 50-50 chance of passing, noting a challenge for the Republican-led legislature to agree to a tax increase.
- Patrick Waterman, Radha Swayampakala, and Claire Brinkley provided what they have heard on the topic. The tax referendum aims for November 2025 ballot.

5. PAC Updates Fundraising

- ACEC/NC exceeded the 2024 National PAC goal by raising \$44,000+.
- The 2025 National PAC goal is \$35,617.
- The Board of Trustees is working to identify fundraising events for the year.
- The ACEC/NC State PAC is in progress to reform and currently working with the legal department.
- Coordination with ECNC will continue.

6. Future Meeting Dates

- Seth closed the meeting by saying the next Legislative Committee meeting will be on March 11 in Raleigh at the ACEC/NC office or virtual.
- The upcoming events will be FUEL NC on May 15 and ACEC/NC Legislative Day date to be announced.

Action Items

Topic	Action	Point Person	Deadline
Legislative Day	Assemble group of volunteers interested in attending Legislative Day	Seth Poole	1/14
Events	Review opportunities to engage with other professionals associations	Mike Surasky	3/14