

# MEETING MINUTES

## 2024-2025 Board of Directors Meeting #4 - Minutes

January 23, 2024 – 12:15pm to 3:00pm

Location: Lancaster Marriott, Lancaster, PA

### Attendees Present:

Board Members: Mark Markosky (President), Mike Bougher (Immediate Past President/National Director), Mike Girman (President Elect), Rosanna Smithnosky (Vice President), Eric Meyer (Treasurer), Casey Moore (Secretary), Maggie Talarico, Colleen Meiswich, Mark Kinnee, Josh Wilson, Tony Dougherty, Damon Rhodes, Dan Laird, Scott Zeevaart, Joseph Riley, Matt Macey, Larry Bankert (**Quorum satisfied – all but Maloney present**)

ACEC/PA Executive Director: Brent Sailhamer

ACEC/PA Staff: Sarah Babski

Not present: Jim Maloney (excused)

Guests: Jim Ritzman, John Robinson, Ryan Whittington

### **I. Call to Order/Roll Call – Mark Markosky**

- Markosky called the meeting to order at 12:15pm.
- Markosky reminded attendees of the antitrust policy and to review.
- Attendees were informed the meeting would be recorded to prepare a summary of minutes.
- Roll call was conducted by Moore. (*Quorum satisfied – all present. Attendees above.*)

### **II. Prior Meeting Minutes and 1/23/2025 Consent Agenda – Casey Moore**

- Reviewed final draft board meeting minutes from November 20, 2024. No comments or proposed edits. Moore asked presenters of agenda items to reflect on these minutes for any follow-up items or action items when they spoke at today's meeting.
- *Motion made by Meyer; Laird seconded to approve minutes. Unanimously passed.*

#### Consent Agenda

- Discussion: No items pulled for individual discussion.
- *Motion made by Rhodes; Riley seconded to approve consent agenda. Unanimously passed.*

### **III. Events Report – Sarah Babski**

- Refer to agenda packet for summary of report.

#### Regional Meetings

- Western Region had 130 attendees in January.

- Scheduled meetings for February and beyond with several PennDOT Districts, with specific speakers noted.

### Special Events

- **Diamond Awards:** Attendance at 295, slightly down from last year, but sponsorship exceeded budgeted income by \$7,000.
- **Legislative Day:** Set for May 13, 2025 with reception. Details to be worked out with Government Affairs committee.
- **Annual Leadership Meeting:** Tentative agenda up on the website, registration to open soon. June 1-3, 2025 in New Mexico.
- **2025-2026 Regional Meetings:** Will keep current venues unless notified.

### Future Planning

- Discussed events and budgeting for 2025-2026, with a strategic focus on merging certain events for increased effectiveness.
- **Infrastructure Conference:** Scheduled for September 8-10, 2025 at the Wyndham in Gettysburg. Cost considerations.
- **Golf Outing:** To be held separately from Infrastructure Conference, likely end of September 2025. Focus on each event separately.
- **Fall Day:** To be combined with Legislative Day in Spring 2026

### Strategic Initiatives

- Exploring specific social-oriented events to increase engagement among young professionals.

### Questions and Discussions

- Future of the Diamond Awards was deliberated regarding scheduling and alignment with national submissions. Evaluate categories and number of awards, but ours are set up to match national ACEC.
- Suggestions on maintaining the element of surprise for winners while improving attendance at events.

### **Action Items:**

- Finalize details for the 2025 annual leadership meeting.
- Plan and coordinate the infrastructure conference in Gettysburg.
- Plan and finalize details for upcoming regional meetings and 2025 Legislative Day.
- Schedule the golf outing separately from the Infrastructure Conference.
- Combine Fall Day with Legislative Day in 2026

## **IV. Membership Report – Rosanna Smithnosky**

### Current Status:

- Membership: No changes from prior month

## Membership Survey:

- Completed in December with 42 respondents, data being summarized for strategic planning meeting of Board in March. Lots of sentiments and perceptions.

## Membership Value Proposition:

- Updated member value proposition handout distributed.
- Collaboration with Brent and feedback from board members incorporated.
- Goal: Create a streamlined one-pager to attract new members and facilitate discussions.
- Current value proposition includes categories similar to the prior version with emphasis on advocacy, networking, and national benefits.
- Graphics to be developed by AD Marble.
- Future updates to the website to align messaging.
- Riley asked about ACEC Life Health Trust Insurance program.
  - Discussion:
    - Eligibility tied to firm size; requirement of a claims pool of \$100,000.
    - Current State:
      - Available to firms meeting the size criteria.
      - Example: A firm with 3 employees and \$16,000 claims does not qualify.
    - Challenges:
      - Unclear origin of the \$100,000 requirement (Pennsylvania State assumption).
      - Potential bias against smaller firms.

## **Action Items:**

- Sailhamer to consult John Krebsbach from the Insurance Trust for clarity on qualification cutoffs.
- Provide firms with approximate employee benchmarks (e.g., 20-30 employees).

## Video Testimonial Initiative for member value and advocacy:

- Smithnosky/Sailhamer described three potential options after discussion with national.
  1. **Paid Option:**
    - Cost: \$2,000.
    - Hire a video person for recording and editing.
  2. **Free Options:**
    - Use a simple app for recording testimonials (similar to Zoom).
    - Editing and final production handled by Jeff Urbanchuik from ACEC National.
    - Potential to record during ACEC National Events in May.
- Complete two videos – one for member value and one for advocacy
  - Emphasis on natural, passionate testimonials from our membership.
  - Target diverse firms (e.g., one large firm, one small firm).
  - Encourage board members to participate and recruit enthusiastic members.
  - Potential for multiple testimonials focused on member value and advocacy.

Membership Committee Meeting:

- Next meeting March 18, 2025
- Board members to speak to member firms they were assigned to provide feedback. Check Teams.
- *Motion to approve made by M. Bougher; seconded by Rhodes. Membership report unanimously passed.*

**Action Items:**

- Summarize and distribute the membership survey results.
- Update the membership value proposition and marketing materials.
- Coordinate the video testimonial initiative and implement.
- Send out email invitations to board and members for participation.

**V. Financial Report and Audit – Eric Meyer**

- Refer to Treasurer's memo provided in Board packet for meeting – budget vs. actuals
- Reporting Period through December 31, 2024.

Financial Highlights

- Year-to-date profits are positive.
- Infrastructure Conference revenue revised upward.
- CEPA PAC: Did not meet the goal of \$25,000, reaching about \$19,000.
- Outstanding Dues:
  - Total Outstanding: Approximately \$11,000 from six firms.
  - Discussed communication process for members dues invoices and sending statements for improving timing for dues payment, including when benefits/services may be suspended
  - Plan to implement a 90-day payment deadline with incremental warnings at 30 and 60 days.
  - Consideration of adding a processing fee or interest for late payments.

Other discussion:

- Markosky asked about Meyer arranging for Finance Committee meetings, to discuss 2025-2026 budget and other processes. Bougher urged that Finance committee meet to discuss next budget asap since it will take several iterations of review. Meyer and Sailhamer should request draft of insurance company charges to put in budget.
- *Motion to approve made by Moore; seconded by Bankert to approve Treasurer's report. Financials unanimously passed.*

**Action Items:**

- Follow up with delinquent firms to enforce payment deadlines.
- Establish a process for late payment fees and cut-off dates for non-payment.
- Discuss potential interest charges for late payments.

- Establish and communicate the new dues collection process.

## **V. National Director Report – Mike Bougher**

- New calendar year - ACEC/PA Board Members are reminded of making contributions to ACEC/PA CEPA PAC and ACEC National PAC.
- Discussed the Pennsylvania and National PAC goals and importance to reach them, as well as how ACEC National assisted with end of year.
- Emphasized the importance of advocacy and legislative receptions participation.

### *Fly-In (Drive-In) Washington DC Event for ACEC/PA at ACEC townhouse*

- Timing:
  - Scheduling for 2025 based on success of 2024 visit with legislators.
  - June, July or September 2025. Bougher to get available dates when PA delegation members are in DC and available.
  - Coordinate dates with ACEC/PA Board members to confirm with availability.

#### **Action Items:**

- Coordinate “fly in”/Drive-in dates with ACEC/PA Board members to confirm with availability for Washington DC trip with legislators.
- Continue to encourage board members to lead by example to attend legislative receptions and support advocacy efforts.

## **VII. Government Affairs – Jim Ritzman**

- Legislative Day set for May 13, 2025 in Harrisburg for ACEC/PA.
- Update provided on House Bill 291 regarding parking protected bicycle lanes.
- Nolan Ritchie to serve as the Executive Director of the Senate Transportation Committee as part of Senator Judy Ward’s staff.
- Board encouraged to engage with their own and other legislators to be active in advocacy.
- Bougher noted that every firm on ACEC/PA Board at a minimum should be active with the Government Affairs Committee and if the Board rep cannot be at a meeting/event, someone from their firm should attend.
- Dougherty asked that every Board member be added to the Government Affairs Microsoft Teams page. Sailhamer to complete.

#### **Action Items:**

- Prepare briefings for Legislative Day on May 13.
- Encourage committee members to engage with local legislators proactively.



## VIII. Committee Reports – Ryan Whittingham and John Robinson

### • **Water, Energy, Environmental Committee (Ryan Whittington)**

#### ○ **Membership:**

- Approximately 40 email subscribers and 20 active participants.
- Water committee's efforts are to build relationships with water departments.
- Efforts to engage agencies like Philadelphia Water Department and Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority.

#### ○ **Focus Areas:**

- Permitting efficiency and quality.
- Impact of executive orders on environmental policies, including impact to EV's, rollback on American justice protection, streamlining judicial review, and big increase in AI.
- Energy subcommittee's interest in hydrogen hubs.
- Interested in different grant programs.
- Freeze on federal level hiring and uncertainty of Executive Order changes.

#### **Action Items:**

- Continue relationship-building with key WEE agencies.
- Analyze and respond to new executive orders affecting the industry.

### • **Workforce Development Taskforce (John Robinson)**

- **Future Now:** Geared towards younger staff (ideally under 40), focusing on learning and networking opportunities.
  - Planning for one to two events per quarter.
  - Some other state M.O.s have junior boards for future leaders and use it as a way to engage future leaders and training ground for succession candidates. Discussed merits and that this should be vetted in more detail during strategic planning meeting in March 2025.
  - Develop broad framework for a junior board and allow them to complete it.

### • **General Discussion on ACEC/PA committees (Board)**

- Schedule more in-person committee meetings tied to a larger event. Need to investigate cost and logistics. Could help drive larger event attendance.

#### **Action Items:**

- Future NOW follow-up to establish junior board framework.
- Work with Sailhamer and Babski on establishing opportunities for Committee breakouts in conjunction with other ACEC/PA events or at ACEC/PA offices.

## **IX. Strategic Plan Update – Mike Girman (reporting for Jim Maloney)**

- **Meeting with Industry Advisory Group:**
  - Members: Mark Compton, Cheryl Moon-Sirianni, Nolan Ritchie, & Bob Latham
  - Productive discussion. View ACEC/PA as voice of the engineering industry
  - Spoke about federal funding changes
  - Asked about ACEC/PA lobbying and advocacy programs
  - Made recommendation that ACEC/PA be more involved with TQI
  - Some disappointment with low submissions for Diamond Awards
  - Asked what ACEC/PA is doing to build and address future leaders of our org.
  - Suggested we be more involved with Innovation Council
  - Some perceptions discussed were more so for contractors
  - Preference for unified advocacy through ACEC Executive Director rather than individual firms or Board members
- **Upcoming Workshop:** March 3, 2025 at Noon to March 4, 2025 at Noon in Gettysburg.
  - More details to be discussed at scheduled strategic plan agenda meeting on January 30, 2025 with Rose Bougher (moderator) and Jim Maloney.

### **Action Items:**

- Facilitate strategic planning sessions.
- Incorporate feedback from industry advisory meetings into the strategic plan.
- Finalize the strategic plan and forward it to the industry advisory group for review

## **X. Executive Director's Report – Brent Sailhamer**

- Reminder for Diamond Award speakers to rehearse using the teleprompter.
- Update on recent ACEC/PA leaders meeting with DEP leadership and collaboration.
  - Want to engage community through ACEC/PA
  - Looking for feedback and practical application recommendations
  - Next meeting to be held in April
  - Any DEP/Conservation District issues should go through Brent to DEP.
  - Sailhamer asked DEP to prepare video to educate more about the Speed Act.
- Discussion on a potential fundraiser for Governor Shapiro in June 2025.
  - Partner with APC to share/split minimum event cost of \$100k.
  - Discussed value and merits of doing the event for our members, and at what level of financial commitment. Advocacy is large part of our strategic plan.
  - Decision on how exactly to move forward was tabled until Board had time to digest the information discussed. Board to hold special meeting with this as sole agenda item on February 5, 2025 to make decisions.
- Right to know request and its implications for member firms.
  - Discussed RTKR from Maryland firm that all members got.
  - Going forward and how to handle was discussed so we can position our firms better with approved PennDOT language that can be provided in SOI's to protect us.
  - Zeevaart found language from 4/29/2016 that he circulated to Board.

- Markosky suggested that Admin Committee be assigned any further follow-up to assist our member firms from the RTKR in future.

## **Action Items:**

- Discuss and vote on fundraising event at special board meeting.
- Explore standard language for SOIs to protect proprietary information.
- Assign the admin committee to develop guidelines and support members facing right-to-know requests.

## **XI. President's Report – Mark Markosky**

- Discussion on the impact of federal rule changes and executive orders on DEI programs and potential impact on the Pennsylvania DBE program.
  - Monitor and educate our ACEC/PA members
  - How is ACEC National possibly going to educate firms?
  - Unknown how IJA and other programs may be impacted with new administration.
- Markosky reflected on legislative visits with Rep. Leslie Rossi and Sen. Pittman.
  - Visited each and just took opportunity to educate and allow for questions.
  - Promoted work of ACEC/PA and assistance we can provide.
- Two wins from the last PennDOT task force meeting,
  - Cross-referencing ECMS numbers in system to provide related “E” numbers with project advertisements.
  - All ADE’s committed to some lump sum projects in each area of the state. ACEC/PA offered to share language.

## **Action Items:**

- Address uncertainties surrounding the DBE rule and communicate potential impacts to members. Educate members on recent changes.
- Monitor legal developments and provide updates.
- Enhance advocacy efforts by maintaining strong relationships with key regulatory agencies.

## **XII. New Business – Mark Markosky**

- None

## **XIII. Member Feedback – Mark Markosky**

- Markosky read member email of positive feedback on the indemnification update and work of ACEC/PA.

## **Action Item:**

- Continue to communicate the value of ACEC's advocacy efforts

## **XIII. Executive Session – Mark Markosky**

- N/A



## **XV. Meeting adjourned at 3:02pm.**

- o *Motion to adjourn made by Meyer, seconded by Wilson, and unanimously approved.*

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### **Action Items:**

#### **1. Minutes (C. Moore):**

- Finalize and distribute approved 11/20/2024 meeting minutes to Sailhamer.

#### **2. Events (S. Babski):**

- Finalize details for the 2025 annual leadership meeting.
- Plan and coordinate the infrastructure conference in Gettysburg.
- Plan and finalize details for upcoming regional meetings and 2025 Legislative Day.
- Schedule the golf outing separately from the Infrastructure Conference.
- Combine Fall Day with Legislative Day in 2026.

#### **3. Membership (R. Smithnosky):**

- Summarize and distribute the membership survey results.
- Update the membership value proposition and marketing materials.
- Coordinate the video testimonial initiative and implement.
- ACEC Life Health Trust Insurance (**B. Sailhamer**)
  - o Consult John Krebsbach from the Insurance Trust for clarity on qualification cutoffs.
  - o Provide firms with approximate employee benchmarks (e.g., 20-30 employees).

#### **4. Treasurer (E. Meyer):**

- Follow up with delinquent firms to enforce payment deadlines.
- Establish a process for late payment fees and cut-off dates for non-payment.
- Discuss potential interest charges for late payments.
- Establish and communicate the new dues collection process.

#### **5. National Director (M. Bougher)**

- Coordinate “fly in”/Drive-in dates with ACEC/PA Board members to confirm with availability for Washington DC trip with legislators.
- Continue to encourage board members to lead by example to attend legislative receptions and support advocacy efforts.

#### **6. Government Affairs (J. Ritzman):**

- Prepare briefings for Legislative Day on May 13.
- Further encourage board members and ACEC/PA members to engage with legislators and attend ACEC/PA government affairs programs and other legislative receptions, in addition to Legislative Day.

#### **7. ACEC/PA Committee Reports (WEE and Workforce Development):**

- Continue relationship-building with key WEE agencies.(WEE)
- Analyze and respond to new executive orders affecting the industry (WEE)
- Future NOW follow-up to establish junior board framework.(WF Dev)

- Work with Sailhamer and Babski on establishing opportunities for Committee breakouts in conjunction with other ACEC/PA events or at ACEC/PA offices. WF Dev)
- 8. Strategic Plan (M. Girman/J. Maloney):**
  - Conduct the strategic planning workshop on March 3-4 in Gettysburg.
  - Incorporate feedback from industry advisory meetings into the strategic plan.
  - Finalize the strategic plan and forward it to the industry advisory group for review
- 9. Executive Director (B. Sailhamer):**
  - Coordinate with DEP on collaboration and feedback.
  - Follow up on the potential fundraiser for Governor Shapiro. Discuss and vote on fundraising event at special board meeting.
  - Assign the admin committee to develop guidelines and support members facing right-to-know requests. Explore standard language for SOIs to protect proprietary information.
  - Provide guidance to member firms on responding to right to know requests.
- 10. President (M. Markosky):**
  - Monitor and educate members on the impact of federal rule changes and executive orders on the DBE program. Address uncertainties surrounding the DBE rule and communicate to members.
  - Monitor legal developments and provide updates.
  - Continue engagement with legislators and provide updates to the board.
  - Enhance advocacy efforts by maintaining strong relationships with key regulatory agencies.

## **Future Meetings**

- **Next Board Meeting:**
  - **Date:** Tuesday April 8, 2025, from Noon to 3pm at the ACEC/PA and APC office building at 800 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Harrisburg, PA
- **Special Board Meeting:**
  - **Date:** February 5, 2025, at 10:00 AM
  - **Focus:** Vote on potential fundraising event for Governor Shapiro with APC.
- **Strategic Planning:**
  - **Workshop Dates:** March 3-4, 2025
  - **Location:** Hotel Gettysburg