

MEETING MINUTES

2024-2025 Board of Directors Special Meeting (#5) - Minutes

February 5, 2024 – 10:00am to 11:00am

Location: Virtual MS Teams Call

Attendees Present:

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

ACEC/PA Executive Director: Brent Sailhamer

Not present: Mike Girman (President Elect) , Scott Zeevaart

Call to Order/Roll Call – Mark Markosky

- Markosky called the meeting to order at 10:04am.
- Roll call was conducted by Moore. (*Quorum satisfied. Attendees above.*)
- **Purpose:** This board meeting focused on strategizing on the potential of a high-impact fundraiser for Governor Shapiro to bolster ACEC/PA engineering industry relationships and achieve support for crucial infrastructure funding initiatives.

Summary of Main Topics Discussed - All

1. Proposal for Fundraiser for Governor Shapiro

- **Objective:** Strengthen the relationship with Governor Shapiro, recognizing his rising political career and potential benefits for the organization. More to be done on ACEC/PA government affairs and advocacy involvement. Make a big impact so others notice.
- **Initial Event Concept:** Joint proposal with APC to host a fundraiser, aiming for a substantial financial contribution to influence infrastructure funding.
- **Funding Goal:** Minimum of \$100,000, APC prefers a split closer to 50/50 between ACEC/PA and APC, moving away from recent years of an 80/20 split on events, with APC carrying most of the load

2. Governor's Budget Address and Infrastructure Funding

- **Investment in Transit:** Included nearly \$300 million as proposed last year.
- **Legalization and Video Gaming Taxation:** Disbursed through the general fund for various priorities, diverging from Senator Pittman's original intent for infrastructure funding.
- **Exclusion of Road and Bridge Funding:** Not included in the current state budget package, leading to negotiations with Senate Republicans who insist on its inclusion.
- **Strategic Advocacy:** Emphasis on leveraging ACEC/PA and APC relationships with the governor to secure road and bridge funding through strategic discussions and advocacy.

3. Advocacy Strategies

- **Carrot vs. Stick Advocacy Approach:**
 - *Carrot:* Building positive relationships and offering support to legislators.
 - *Stick:* Criticizing and pressuring legislators for desired outcomes.
- **Exec Director Recommendation:** Utilize a balanced approach, aiming for positive engagement to foster productive relationships rather than leaning on applying pressure.
- **ACEC/PA Advocacy:** Our organization has a strategic objective in the plan on advocacy. Move from strategic planning and discussing to taking concrete actions to elevate ACEC/PA's ACTIVE role for and with our members in advocacy.

4. Relationship with APC

- **Collaboration:** Joint effort with APC to maximize fundraising capabilities and influence.
- **Funding Event:** Governor events seek a minimum of \$100,000, and APC's preference is to sponsor with a 50/50 split with ACEC/PA. The board members debated the appropriateness of this split during the meeting.
- **Mutual Benefits:** Strengthening both organizations' advocacy efforts and political influence through combined resources toward a common goal.

5. Event Planning, PAC Budget and Fundraising Discussion

- **Event Timing:** Targeted for June 2025
- **Current CEPA PAC Budget:**
 - Total available: \$75,000
 - Current 2025 contributions: Minimal, with only \$250 from one member.
- **Future Fundraising Needs:** Recognition that this investment will necessitate ongoing fundraising efforts with member firms and individuals to replenish PAC funds for future legislative meetings and advocacy.
- **Sponsorship and Donations:**
 - Target individual contributions ranging from \$500 to \$5,000. It was generally agreed that \$500 would be minimum entry fee to event.
 - Check potential for in-kind donations (e.g., venue space, catering) from members and their firms. Sailhamer to look into this if an appropriate option.
- **Host Committee Formation:** To include influential members who can secure larger donations and enhance the event's prestige.
- **Funding Sources:**
 - Commit an upset limit of spend from CEPA PAC toward event.
 - Remaining dollars to achieve a goal of \$50,000 ACEC/PA commitment then to be raised through individual member donor contributions, member firm PAC donations, and potentially forming a host committee

6. Motion for Action

- **Motion:** made by Bankert to pursue a joint ACEC/PA and APC organization event for the governor with up to a 50/50 split of a \$100,000 event commitment being the target goal for ACEC/PA to provide.
- **Discussion and then recommendation of motion:**
 - Aim to achieve a 50/50 split with APC on event commitment.
 - Authorize up to \$30,000 from the existing CEPA PAC fund.
 - Remaining \$20,000 to be raised through individual member contributions, member firm PAC donations, and potentially a host committee.
- *Seconded by Riley*
- *Unanimously passed by all present*

7. Future Implications and Precedents

- **Long-Term Commitment:** Recognize that initial funding will set a precedent for future contributions and advocacy efforts.
- **Political Dynamics:** Consideration of potential changes in administration and the importance of maintaining strong relationships across political lines.
- **Sustainability:** Ensuring that the organization remains financially capable of supporting ongoing and future advocacy initiatives without overextending PAC funds.

Action Items:

1. **Negotiate with APC (B. Sailhamer):**
 - Sailhamer, with the understanding of the approved motion and CEPA PAC funding spending allocation, will coordinate with APC and Bob Latham to finalize the fundraiser proposal and confirm a funding split goal.
2. **Consider a Host Committee (B. Sailhamer with APC):**
 - Establish a host committee comprised of top donors (\$ amount to be set) to receive PR recognition and who will help secure additional donations and support.
3. **Raise Additional Funds (B. Sailhamer/Host Committee/ACEC/PA Board):**
 - Pursue individual and firm-level PAC donations to meet the remaining \$20,000 goal for the fundraiser.
4. **Event Logistics Planning (B. Sailhamer with APC and Governor's team):**
 - Organize venue, catering, and other logistical aspects, evaluating and potentially utilizing in-kind donations from member firms, if able.
5. **Message Tightening (B. Sailhamer/M. Markosky/M. Bougher):**
 - Develop a concise, consistent and unified advocacy message in collaboration with APC to present to Governor Shapiro and his administration.

Follow-up Items:

- **Event Date Confirmation (B. Sailhamer/APC):**
 - Finalize an exact date in June for the fundraiser.
- **Progress Updates (B. Sailhamer):**
 - Provide regular milestone updates to the ACEC/PA Board on fundraising progress and negotiations with APC.

- **Host Committee Coordination (Brent Sailhamer/APC):**
 - Engage with potential host committee members and outline their roles and contribution expectations.
- **Future Fundraising Strategy (ACEC/PA Board and B. Sailhamer):**
 - Develop a plan to replenish CEPA PAC funds and sustain ongoing advocacy efforts.
- **Evaluation of Outcomes (ACEC/PA Board and B. Sailhamer):**
 - Assess the effectiveness of this level and type of event and fundraiser in achieving advocacy goals and strengthening political relationships for ACEC/PA members and the industry in PA it represents.

Conclusion:

Key decision included authorizing up to \$30,000 from the PAC, partnering with APC for a 50/50 funding split, and securing additional funds to reach up to \$50,000 through members, member firm PACs and potentially a host committee. The organization aims to elevate its advocacy efforts, ensuring sustainable political influence and financial stability for future initiatives.