

**American Council of Engineering Companies  
of Louisiana  
Board of Governors' Meeting  
November 19, 2024  
ACECL Board Room, Baton Rouge, LA**

**BOG present:** Nathan Junius, Chad Poche (ZOOM), Colby Guidry, Rob Delaune, Brett Bayard (ZOOM), Sherri LeBas (ZOOM), Byron Racca, Jordan Pearson, David Stelly, Don Arrington, Kimberly McDaniel, Jim Ellingburg, Mike Pugh and Nick Ferlito.

**BOG with prior engagements:** Brian Moldaner and Brin Ferlito

**STAFF:** Barker Dirmann and Janet Landry

**GUEST:** Ralph Junius

Chairman Poche called the meeting to order and asked Ms. Landry for roll call. Quorum established.

Chairman Poche called for approval of the agenda. A motion was made by Mr. Arrington and seconded by Mr. Junius. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Poche called for approval of the October 9, 2024, minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Ellingburg to approve the Minutes, as amended, and seconded by Mr. Pearson. Motion passed unanimously.

**Secretary/Treasurer Report:** (Financials Attached)

Mr. Dirmann presented the October 2024 financials noting a October 31, 2024, total asset balance of \$424,220. Mr. Dirmann reminded the Board that the Board approved the FY24-25 budget with a \$3,000 deficient and year to date ACECL is outperforming with \$40,000 over anticipated budget. After discussion and overview, a motion was made by Mr. Stelly and seconded by Mr. Pearson to accept the financials presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Dirmann advised that ACECL has negotiated the outsourcing bookkeeper contract at the rate of \$1,300 monthly. The bookkeeper firm will be responsible for bank reconciliation and all financial statements.

**Chairman's Report:** (Poche)

- Chairman Poche commended the ACEC Fall Convention held in New Orleans and noted the meeting with the Southeast MO leadership was informative and take-away ideas were: (1) hosting a vertical infrastructure conference (TN); (2) assigning Board Members to connect with current member firms for retention purposes; and (3) a new formula is needed for PAC Goals.
- Mr. Poche noted that due to the many events held this Fall, he recommends the Leadership Holiday Dinner not take place in New Orleans in early December. All Board members agreed. Mr. Junius requested the New Orleans Chapter to hold a Christmas dinner. Mr. Dirmann advised he would reach out to Chapter leadership Brian Moldaner and Fannie Bennett.

### **National Director's Report: (Junius)**

- ACEC (National) Fall Conference was held at the Hyatt Regency in New Orleans, October 20-23, 2024 with a record of 36 Louisiana attendees. ACECL hosted the West Closure Site Road Show and a reception at the Vintage Rock Club on Saturday, October 19. ACECL leadership met with the ACEC Board presenting an update on the Boston Consulting Group report issued.
- ACEC will be presenting a three-year budget at the Annual Convention in Washington, D.C. in May for vote which will include an additional 5% increase on top of the CPI. Mr. Dirmann advised that the MO's are opposing this increase and the proposed increase will be the topic of discussion at the NAECE December meeting.

### **President & CEO Report: (Dirmann)**

- Update on LaDOTD Reform Report: Mr. Dirmann reported that LaDOTD will be preparing a legislative package based on the BCG report noting some will need statutory authority.
- Public Project Payment Task Force – The 2024 Regular Legislative Session passed a concurrent resolution to form the Task Force with the focus on bring state agencies before the Legislature to discuss payment processes and any “bottlenecking” issues, along with future software enhancements. ACECL along with AIA will appear before the Task Force on December 11 to discuss FP&C and Mr. Craig Campbell will testify.

### **Chapter/Area Committee Reports:**

**Baton Rouge:** Ms. McDaniel advised on October 14 Mark Goodson gave an update on the LSU Lakes project. December 9 meeting will host Jeremy Kliebert, CPA, on upcoming tax changes.

**New Orleans:** Mr. Dirmann reported the New Orleans Chapter hosted Jesse Noel, Regional Director for the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority, on November 14. Next meeting is scheduled for January 16, 2025.

**Lafayette:** Mr. Stelly reported the Lafayette Chapter hosted District 3 DOTD Administrator Eric Dauphine and future speaker will be on the refurbishing of ULL Stadium.

**Shreveport:** Mr. Pearson advised he will organize a luncheon in December or January.

**Monroe:** Mr. Ellingburg will work with the Shreveport Chapter and ACECL staff to organize a meeting.

**Lake Charles:** Mr. Dirmann reported he and Mr. Stelly will contact Beau Pleasant on accepting the Chapter President position. Also, it was suggested that Austin Doucet, C.H. Fenstermaker, be named Vice-President.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Membership:** (Report Attached) October 2024 reported one additional firm (Eustis) bringing the total to 121 member firms representing 3,894 employees and 22 affiliates.

**Legislative Committee:** (Report Attached)

Mr. Dirmann and Mr Junius presented the Legislative Committee's recommended ACECL 2025 Legislative package for Board approval:

1. DBE legislation that would require local DBE programs to use DOTD certifications and data. After discussion, a motion was made Mr. Junius and seconded by Mr. Ellingburg to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Legislation specifically defining engineering and architecture (architects cannot design anything within 5 feet outside foundation of building) to be authored by Senator McMath. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Junius and seconded by Mr. Stelly. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Amend the Hammett Act to prohibit designers from submitting price-related information when illegally solicited by a public entity. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Junius and seconded by Mr. Stelly. Motion passed unanimously.
4. Add ACECL as the nominating organization for the two (2) "private practice" and two (2) "industry practice" seats, totaling 4 seats, on the LAPELS Board. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Arrington and seconded by Mr. Delaune for a vote. Mr. Racca abstained as he is a member of the LAPELS Board. Secretary-Treasurer Arrington called for a vote and recorded results as: 2 nay (McDaniel & Ellingburg), 11 yea. Motion passed with a majority vote.

## **CLIENT LIAISON COMMITTEES**

### **Transportation:**

Ms. LeBas reported continued issues with LaDOTD paying invoices in a timely manner, along with the handling of travel reimbursement items on invoices. It was advised that a separate meeting, from the COG meeting, should be scheduled with the correct LaDOTD administrative staff to discuss.

Mr. Dirmann reported he would organize the first meeting of the newly formed CMAR Subcommittee. Also, he has only received one response/comment from the Transportation Committee on the newly released BCG Report.

Next COG meeting agenda should include: travel regs & policies; negotiations and the need for a process; and rates/overhead.

**Water Resources:** Mr. Dirmann reported Dustin Davidson, Deputy Secretary, La. Dept. of Energy & Natural Resources, spoke at the Fall Conference. Also, Mr. Dirmann will work with the Committee Chair, LeeAnn Fitch, to schedule the next Committee meeting.

**Facilities:** (Report attached).

Mr. Stelly advised that on October 30, 2024, ACECL, AIA and FP&C met to discuss complexity factors along with other items of concern. He noted Mr. Husser is very susceptible to recommendations and will get with Directors to ensure complexity factors are consistent.

### **LES/LAPELS:**

Mr. Racca reported that LAPELS approved the promulgated rules for "licensed by endorsement" licensees to include the requirement of noting the classification on the professional's seal and any official letterhead. Also, there is concern with the Office of Professional Licensure & Certification being abolished and the Attorney

General's office creating a new division, that the Attorney General will be charging each agency a rate of \$3.95 per member, which would cost LAPELS a renewal fee of approximately \$100,000.

**AGC/AIA:** No report.

**Unfinished Business:**

**New Business:**

**Next Meeting:** Next Board meeting is scheduled for , January17, 2025, from 9:00 – 12:00 at the Offices of GEC, Baton Rouge.

A Motion was made by Mr. Arrington and seconded by Mr. Ferlito to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.