

THE FIRST WORD

May, 2016

Legislative Session Heads Toward Late-May Adjournment Still No Agreement On Solving \$1.3 Billion Deficit

With the May 27th adjournment deadline just three weeks away, members of the Oklahoma House and Senate are still wrestling with how to solve the state's \$1.3 billion budget crisis.

While there are many ideas being discussed behind closed doors, at least publicly there has been little movement on how the crisis will be addressed.

While ACEC OKLAHOMA doesn't like to deal in rumor and speculation, things we are told by "sources" are being discussed include imposing the state sales tax on a number of items which are currently exempt; transferring "reserve" funds from certain state agencies, boards, & commissions to the General Revenue Fund; removing certain tax credits; and, other things too numerous to list.

One piece of good news is that, regarding sales tax exemptions, we don't believe that imposition of the sales tax on Professional Services will be considered. Of course, in the final days of the session, anything could happen, so we'll keep watching!

As for transportation funding, there is still talk of taking some \$300 million in cash from the ROADS fund, and replacing it with an equal amount of revenue bonds. The House favors bonding, but the Senate is looking at a "roll-back" to 2013 funding levels. ACEC OKLAHOMA favors the bond option of the House as the Senate's "roll-back" would be devastating to the current ODOT program.

All-in-all, only a few people know what's really going on and being considered. The rest of us won't find out until some final agreement is reached between the Legislature and Governor.

ACEC OKLAHOMA will watch things very closely, and will keep you up-to-date as session moves closer to May 27th!

ACEC OKLAHOMA Leaders Meet with Congressman Steve Russell (R-OK5) during ACEC National Convention



(L-R) Jim Sullins, Jim Hemphill, Stacy Loeffler, Tom Hendrick, Cong. Russell, Mike Vahabzadegan, Brandon Claborn, Brent Schniers

Welcome New Members!

ACEC OKLAHOMA is excited to welcome **Craig & Keithline, Inc.** and **NEO Design, LLC** as our newest members!

Kevin Kriewall is the principal of **Craig & Keithline**, a 14-person civil engineering firm based in Tulsa.

NEO Design is headed by Steve Nicholls, and provide structural engineering including bridge design & rehabilitation.

Welcome to **Craig & Keithline, Inc.** and **NEO Design, LLC** and we look forward to having them as active members of the Council!



Follow us on Twitter: @ACECOKLAHOMA



ACEC OKLAHOMA Graduates "Leadership For Engineers" Class #7

The 7th Class of ACEC OKLAHOMA's "Leadership For Engineers" program successfully completed the 3 month, 6 session program in April. The class of 15 future firm leaders brings the total number of graduates of the program to 105 individuals. ACEC OKLAHOMA Chairman of the Board Brent Schniers, himself a graduate of the program, presented the newest members of the "Leadership" club their plaques, and challenged them to continue their leadership development as well as stay active in ACEC OKLAHOMA.



Gary Quinonez, Manhattan Road & Bridge



Ryan Bellatti, Guy Engineering Services



Josh Johnston, Triad Design Group



Marvin Valencia, Guy Engineering Services



Stephen King, CEC



Ryan Pierce, Meshek & Associates



Zach Korenak, Guernsey



Sumesh KC, Tetra Tech

Leadership Class Graduates (Cont.)



Matthew Youngblood, Garver



Samuel Feezor, Garver



Felicia Jackson, CEC



Jose Joseph, Crafton Tull



Michael Way, Cabbiness Engineering



Liesel Polwort, Olsson Associates



Tommy Evans, Poe & Associates

OFFICIAL NOTICE of ACEC OKLAHOMA Annual Meeting

This shall serve as official notice of the Annual Meeting of the Council, at 2:15pm, Friday, June 3, 2016, at the Chateau on the Lake, Branson, MO.

The 2016-17 ACEC OKLAHOMA Annual Budget will be presented for consideration and approval, annual reports will be presented, and election of officers for the 2016-17 year will be conducted.

The Annual Budget and the Nominating Committee Report will be e-mailed to all ACEC OKLAHOMA members prior to the Annual Meeting.



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President's Report

May, 2016

David Raymond, ACEC President

Great to see you all at our Annual Convention in Washington, D.C., where ACEC's "citizen lobbyists" rallied for FAA reauthorization, comprehensive energy legislation, and in opposition to burdensome changes in overtime rules. What a good feeling to hear Senator Lisa Murkowski, Chair of the Senate Energy Committee, credit ACEC for our close involvement in shaping her energy bill, which passed the Senate – and former White House Press Secretary Dana Perino credited us for effective engagement on regulatory matters. We recognized outgoing chair Ralph Christie and his executive committee members for their impressive service to the Council, and welcomed Peter Strub and the new ExCom members for 2016-17. We also thanked retiring Ohio executive director Don Mader for his many years of outstanding service, and welcomed his successor Beth Easterday. The incredible Billy Joel band was quite a hit!

General

- ◆ Over 1,300 attendees at the ACEC Annual Convention in Washington, D.C. lobbied on Capitol Hill for infrastructure, energy and regulatory reforms; participated in a wide range of business programs; heard prominent speakers including former White House Press Secretary Dana Perino, and TED Talk luminary Daniel Pink.
- ◆ The Convention's congressional panel – Representatives Rodney Davis (R-IL), Sean Patrick Maloney (D-NY), and Bruce Westerman (R-AR) moderated by Politico founder Jim VandeHei – discussed prospects for bipartisanship; and a panel on "Big Data," including officials of CISCO and other well-known IT companies, discussed challenges and opportunities.
- ◆ ACEC's Board of Directors approved the Council's new three-year budget (FY 2017-19) maintaining strong advocacy and business programs.
- ◆ ACEC's new national leadership took office with Peter Strub succeeding Ralph Christie as Chair.
- ◆ The Engineering Excellence Awards Gala honored 151 projects, including Grand Conceptor Award winner Walter P Moore for the San Francisco airport's new seismic resistant air traffic control tower.
- ◆ increase in Airport Improvement Program funding for 2017.
- ◆ ACEC-backed Water Resources Development Act of 2016 – which authorizes new Corps water projects, improves drinking water programs, and expands QBS – was passed by the Senate Environment and Public Work Committee.
- ◆ Secured adoption of an amendment by the House Armed Services Committee to the National Defense Authorization Act to prohibit DOD from implementing the so-called "blacklisting" rule.
- ◆ ACEC/PAC activities at the Convention raised a record \$271,700, just ahead of last year's pace to \$1 million; South Carolina and Tennessee met their 2016 ACEC/PAC state fundraising goals, joining Indiana, Hawaii and Wisconsin.
- ◆ Met with officials from the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Office of Management and Budget to oppose a proposed overtime pay rule that would increase the salary threshold by 113%.
- ◆ Supported legislation to require DOL to conduct additional economic analysis prior to moving forward with its proposed FLSA changes.

Government Advocacy

- ◆ Senator Lisa Murkowski, Chairwoman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, spoke to Convention attendees and thanked ACEC for supporting her Energy Policy Modernization Act; the bill passed the Senate later the same day.
- ◆ Secured Senate passage of FAA reauthorization legislation that includes a \$400 million (12 percent)
- ◆ CEC's Federal Agencies and Procurement Advocacy Committee and the Office of Construction & Facilities Management of the Veteran's Administration signed an MOU to promote the use of QBS and continued engagement between the Council and the VA.
- ◆ Opposed a proposed DOL sick time rule in formal comments, as it would cause member firms to incur significant fees for required weekly reporting and reduce flexibility for employee benefit packages.