

NC DOT / PCI Meeting Minutes

July 16th, 2008 1:30 PM

Attendees

Peter Finsen – GCPCI
Richard Potts – Standard Concrete Products
Jeff White – Prestress of the Carolinas
Mike Means – S & G Prestress
Reid Castrodale – Carolina Stalite

Mike Robinson – NCDOT
Jack Cowsert – NCDOT
Allen Raynor – NCDOT

Ernesto Villareal – FHWA

Introductions - Because of some confusion about the meeting date, attendance was low. The meeting was very informal.

Presentation - None

Letting List - There was a brief discussion about the distribution of steel and concrete bridge projects on the letting list. Mike Robinson mentioned that from construction reviews with contractors, it appears they have no real preference regarding steel or concrete. He also mentioned that life cycle costs are not considered in making material selections.

Value Engineering - The use of value engineering proposals was briefly discussed. Contractors do not seem to be using it. It was pointed out that the current process places a lot of liability on the contractors, and doesn't give them enough incentive to make it worth the effort.

Future Projects - It was mentioned that while there were about 170 bridges let in 2008, there will probably only be about 90 let in 2009. This reduction is partially due to escalation in construction costs. Therefore, the Department is looking for ways to reduce construction costs.

The use of the subregional criteria may help this situation. It has been approved and will begin to be implemented. An example is the use of asphalt overlays on cored slabs instead of a concrete slab, where conditions are appropriate. Some projects that have already been designed may be revised using the criteria to reduce costs. The Department is also trying to accelerate the preparation of planning documents, which has been a choke point.

Allen Raynor indicated that there is a booklet describing the new criteria which will be made available to consultants, since it involves changes to the Design Manual. He will get the link.

The Structure Design Unit is currently very busy, but expects to have much less work by the end of 2008.

The Department may be looking at more deck girder and full-depth deck projects in the future. They are considering a research project that will pull information on accelerated construction together so it can be implemented in a programmatic way.

The project with the precast approach slabs did bid. Tom Koch is working on it. It was difficult to find a company to manufacture the slabs.

Several significant projects were briefly discussed:

Oregon Inlet - The Bonner Bridge over the Oregon Inlet is still expected to come out soon. The shorter alignment was selected.

Washington Bypass - The project is now going smoothly.

Wilmington Bypass - Is still in the works.

The North Carolina Toll Authority is still planning to have 2 projects.

AGC Meetings - Peter Finsen asked if GCPCI should participate in the AGC Bridge Committee meetings. Mike Robinson did not think it would help. Outside experts are invited to the meeting as needed. It was noted that the minutes of NCDOT/AGC meetings are posted on the NCDOT website. Jack Cowsert agreed to check on whether the NCDOT/GCPCI meeting minutes could be posted on the M&T website.

AASHTO LRFD Design Specifications - The specifications are now being used for new designs.

Standard Superstructure Plans - The Department has developed some standard designs for superstructures. Some projects using the new standards are in the September 2008 letting. The next step will be to develop standard substructure plans. The use of standards is expected to reduce project costs.

2008 PCI Convention - The GCPCI again offered to support 4 engineers from NCDOT to attend the convention – 2 each from Structures and M&T. Mike Robinson felt that there was not a need to send someone from Construction.

Future Meetings - November 12, 2008

Adjourn - The meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM.