



Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 12, 2024

11:30am – 1:00pm

ACEC Office, 13th Floor Wells Fargo Building + Virtual Meeting

MINUTES:

1. Welcome/Review/Approve Agenda and Meeting Minutes (All-5min)

- a. Agenda and Meeting Minutes were approved with no comments

2. David Ferrell – Post Election Update (David Ferrell-20min)

- a. Q&A

- b. David Ferrell provided a high-level overview of the election results.

- i. Trump won NC by his largest margin – three straight wins in NC
- ii. Don Davis (D) won the one competitive US House race in the state
- iii. Republicans hold a 10-4 advantage in US House seats
- iv. Council of State is a 5-5 split between parties
- v. Josh Stein won the governor's race convincingly.
- vi. Lt. Governor flipped to Democrats (Rachel Hunt)
- vii. Jeff Jackson (D) is the new AG, replacing Josh Stein
- viii. Dave Boliek and Brad Briner will have to step down from UNC Board of Trustees because they won their elections, so there will be openings next year on that Board
- ix. Brad Briner is more favorable to bond releases than Dale Folwell
 1. ACEC should meet with him as a small group to support his decision making
- x. Allison Riggs, who was appointed to her seat, is in a tight race with Jefferson Griffin. It might be headed to a recount, but it is still too close to call.
- xi. Republicans won all three Court of Appeals races.
- xii. Republicans maintained a supermajority in the State Senate with two races potentially heading to a recount.
 1. All the existing leaders will return which means it will likely be business as usual
 2. Jim Perry, finance chair, retired so that will be the one change in leadership
 3. All three transportation chairs return to the Senate.
- xiii. Republicans were one seat short of a supermajority with several seats too close to call. Some may be headed to a recount which could change this number of seats for each party.
 1. There are a handful of Democrats who may be willing to vote with Republicans on a handful of issues to give them a working supermajority.



2. A couple important legislators lost their seats, but in general this will be similar to the previous House operating environment.
3. Destin Hall is the anticipated new Speaker with Tim Moore moving on to Congress.
4. Budget Chairs are also in flux so this will lead to new faces in key roles moving forward.

xiv. Questions

1. Were there any races that were surprising?
 - a. There were two House races that were split in Rocky Mount, which was an odd result but also reflective of the purple nature of that area.
2. How has party identification for judges impacted voting?
 - a. Likely leads to most folks voting along party identification, since most folks don't know much about the actual judicial candidates
 - b. There are also a large number of folks looking at each race on an individual level.
3. When are folks sworn in?
 - a. January 15th is the ceremonious first day, with January 29th the actual first day of session.
 - b. Legislators will come back in session for four days next week which will likely consider conference reports and disaster relief.
 - c. Might also come back for other items that they can't pass without the supermajority next year. This could include some separation of powers legislation.
4. When will we know committee assignments?
 - a. These will be released between Jan 15th and Jan 29th
5. Will there be any changes to Board of Transportation?
 - a. This will be influenced by the current case before the Supreme Court.

3. Board/Administrative Updates (Seth-5min)

- a. Member Reception with NC Congressional Delegation Update (Mike S.)
 - i. Large amount of participation from ACEC NC members. Mike is putting together a memo summarizing what they learned. Here is a rough list of what was discussed:
 1. Heard about some challenges with grant money and how this strains other projects.
 2. Discussed some of the expiration of tax cuts next year but the outcome of these will be impacted by the election results.
 3. Discussed the replacement of gas tax with VMT



- 4. Congressional Delegation was thankful for the work ACEC is doing
- 5. Encouraged to provide do even more advance coordination work to make for a more beneficial visit with the legislators.
- b. ACEC/NC Member Voices with ACEC National Representatives – December 10
 - i. Two of the experts on private markets and an update on economic markets. All are invited to attend.
- c. Board of Directors Long Session Planning Meeting – January 10
 - i. Planning meeting will help determine what initiatives we should focus on during the long session.
- d. Thursday 11/14 will be a gala to award the Engineering Excellence Award.
- 4. STATE Legislative/Regulatory Updates/Discussion (Seth/David/Mike H.-15min)**
 - a. ACEC/NC Legislative Tracker – Pending Legislation
[Legislative Tracker - ACEC of North Carolina \(acecnc.org\)](http://acecnc.org)
 - b. State Construction Conference is still up in the air. ACEC is hoping to help with the selection of topics for this conference.
 - c. Joe Angell did a good job presenting on federal procurement and was invited to speak again at a conference in 2025.
 - d. Hurricane Helene Related Legislation
 - i. The Disaster Recovery Act of 2024
 - 1. Establishes Hurricane Helene Disaster Recovery Fund
 - 2. \$273M transferred from the Savings Reserve
 - 3. Waived some DMV fees and some permit requirements
 - 4. Provided NCDOT flexibility in hurricane response procurements
 - ii. The Disaster Recovery Act of 2024 – Part II
 - 1. \$604M transferred from the Savings Reserve
 - 2. Focuses on school scholarships, loan programs, disbursement of funding, etc.
 - e. Joe Angell is trying to get more visibility on federal money for disaster relief that hasn't been released yet. He is trying to figure out how those funds can be released and what the requirements are to access those funds.
 - f. There will be hundreds of millions of dollars for future NCDOT work through Progressive Design Build that will be released in the coming months.
 - i. This will create challenges with contractor and consultant staff constraints
 - ii. There are other constraints on material selection and Buy America requirements
 - g. Much of this long session will be impacted by the recovery of western North Carolina
 - i. This will likely limit the ability to ask for dramatic changes to Transportation funding.
- 5. FEDERAL Legislative/Regulatory Updates/Discussion (Joe-5min)**



- a. Military Updates
 - b. Other Federal Updates
 - i. New administration is discussing many cuts to federal spending. There are other changes coming that could impact our industry.
 - ii. Joe Angell is increasing advocacy regarding large federal infrastructure inside of NC. He's trying to work together with other professional groups to be united about potential changes
 - iii. There are some shifts in bases that may move from the East coast to the West Coast.
 - iv. Special Operation Forces funding has been reduced recently.
 - v. There is increased investment in several bases here in NC.
 - vi. DOD and DOT are working to upgrade global Transpark as aircraft is moved.
 - vii. NC Military Business Summit in Wilmington in April 2025 is a large event to discuss federal program impacts to NC.
 - 1. Federal subcommittee will continue to meet between April and October
 - 2. Mian Issues: Workforce, Supply Chain, Procurement, R&D Amortization
 - 3. Planning to prepare issue papers to start influencing legislation. The goal is to be more proactive on these issues.
 - viii. Joe is looking for more help on the Federal Subcommittee
 - ix. Tara mentioned that an intro course of how to get into the federal market would be helpful to our member firms
 - 1. B&I committee could likely help with this development.
 - c. ACEC National Bills/Update (R&D Amortization Bill, IJJA, QBS, etc.)
- 6. LOCAL Legislative/Regulatory Updates/Discussion (Seth/All-10min)**
- a. Charlotte Tax Referendum – 1% Sales Tax
 - i. They have purchased the ROW.
 - ii. This will be influenced on what happens in the General Assembly.
 - b. 2024 Transportation Bond – Mecklenburg County
 - i. \$238M for Sidewalks, New Projects, Vision Zero, Congestion Mitigation, Resurfacing, Intersections, etc.
 - ii. This was passed.
 - c. Bond referendums that did not pass:
 - i. Town of Cary Parks and Rec bond failed by a large margin
 - ii. Town of Zebulon transportation bond was also voted down
 - iii. Belmont also voted down bond referendums
 - d. Wake County Library bond passed
 - e. All four City of Asheville bonds passed – they were \$20 million each
 - i. These were added to the ballot prior to the Hurricane



7. PAC Updates Fundraising (Seth-5min)

- a. National PAC Goal Update
 - i. Winter Get-Away PAC Blitz
 - 1. Firm goal selected based off NC FTE count (approximately \$7 per FTE)
 - 2. Started and finishes in early December
 - 3. 6-night all-inclusive get away is the reward for the winner
 - 4. If firm reaches their goal, each contributor gets an extra ticket in the drawing.
 - 5. Hoping that each firm will take an invested role in this event.
- b. State PAC Update
 - i. Pending audit report and feedback from the BOE.
 - ii. Once the audit report is cleared, we can refile for the State PAC.

8. New Business (Seth/Others-10min)

- a. Developing a Model-Based Design Transition Plan (Seth)
 - i. Had a productive call with member firms on 9/24
 - ii. Task Force is digesting these results and providing a report to deliver to the Board for guidance on concerns and next steps
- b. Prepare for 2025 Legislative Day
 - i. Volunteers needed – please let Seth Poole know if you would be interested in meeting with legislators in your home district
 - ii. We are considering a legislative reception at the Wells Fargo building in concert with Legislative Day.

9. Open Discussion (25min)

- a. B&I meeting is tomorrow.

10. Future Meeting Dates (all virtual and in person as noted) –

- a. [Event Calendar | ACEC of North Carolina \(acecnc.org\)](https://www.acecnc.org)
- b. Next Legislative Committee meeting – January 14th in Raleigh
- c. Engineering Excellence Awards Dinner – November 14th
- d. Member Voices Series (ACEC National) – December 10th in Raleigh
- e. Charlotte Holiday Member Reception – December 11th
- f. Raleigh Holiday Reception – December 19th