

**ACEC/NHDOT
Consultant Quality Initiative (CQI) Committee**

Meeting Minutes – August 18, 2021

Meeting Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Day/Time: Wednesday (1:30 pm – 3:00 pm)

In Attendance:

Mike Long, MJ	Darren Blood, GM2
Ted Kitsis, NHDOT	Marty Kennedy, VHB
Loretta Girard Doughty, NHDOT	Alex Koutroubas, ACEC
CR Willeke, NHDOT	Chris Mulleavey, HTA
Jim Marshall, NHDOT (Scribe)	Rob Faulkner, CHA
Tobey Reynolds, NHDOT	Bob Bollinger, FHWA

Unable to attend:

Bill Oldenburg, NHDOT (Chair)

1. Assigned Scribe: J. Marshall (NHDOT)
2. Approved June Meeting Minutes
3. Topics of Discussion:
 - a. M. Kennedy summarized ACEC's request to raise the NHDOT's Rate Cap
 - January 2016 last increase salary cap from \$50 to \$60
 - Will submit similar material as the previous request
 1. Dietrich Associates Salary Survey Data
 - a. Using New England Region – Labor Classifications 6 to 9
 - b. Previous request (Sept 2002 to Sept 2014) showed 3.1% annual increase
 - c. Current data (Sept 2014 to March 2020) shows 2.9% annual increase
 - d. \$60 rate cap in Jan 2016 would equal \$71.23 in Jan 2022 (at 2.9%)
 2. Table of recent NHDOT projects
 - a. 8 to 10 projects
 - b. Shows total hours charged, total rate capped hours, lost revenue, and effective profit
 - c. Shows effective profit is substantially less than 10% fee
 3. Rationale – One of fairness and economic reality
 - a. All other New England states (except for Maine) have eliminated rate cap. Maine uses \$50 for Engineers and \$62 for PM's and Senior QA/QC with a liberal waiver process.
 - b. Matter of supply and demand – not enough engineers, need to pay more
 - c. Increase in demand with infrastructure spending bill will exacerbate the problem
- ACEC wants to present proposal to Front Office ASAP

- Jim to meet with Pete next week to determine appetite for a rate cap increase.
Subsequent to the meeting Pete said prepare a package for consideration.

b. Develop a Purpose and Need Statement for this Committee

- The genesis of the CQI committee evolved after a Commissioners Breakfast many years ago when ACECNH was then CENH. There seemed to be friction between DOT engineers and consulting engineers. To improve communications to assure quality NH project were designed the committee allowed senior consultants and senior DOT personnel to better understand each other. Hence the name Quality Initiatives Committee. The committees goal was to work towards creating quality projects uniformly produced efficiently and effectively.
- Jim will send Chris a sample of what the Highway Sub-Committee developed.

c. Identify items that slow the process down. Look for efficiencies

- Currently on the Highway Design side the lack of resources is hindering efficiency
- The consultant side is having trouble hiring staff as well
- Recognizing that staffing issues exist now and will exist for the foreseeable future how will “we” as a profession mitigate this issue.
 1. Increase communication amongst all levels within DOT and Consultant
 2. The remote work environment may not be the best learning environment for young engineers.
- Consider training on the consultant side along with DOT to educate staff on project development process
- Maybe a lessons learned, no blame, 5 things that “annoy” each of us.
- ConnDOT: Consultant “Liaison” Engineer

d. Mike’s ask for next time:

- Send any ideas that could improve the process, Send to Mike and cc the group for discussion at our next meeting.

4. LPA Topics

- a. Process sometimes slows us down.

5. Status of Sub-Committees

a. Consultant Contract Sub-Committee (*subsequent to meeting*)

- *Standardized Scope of work/Fee Matrix*
 1. *Jim noted that Highway Design portion of the scope is 75% complete and has stalled. Jim will try and get that moving again.*

b. Bridge Design Sub-Committee

- Met June 17th will provide an update at September’s meeting

c. Highway Design Sub-Committee (*subsequent to meeting*)

- *Discussed the new CADD software release ORD.*
- *Currently training staff.*
- *Looking to require all new projects to use the new CADD platform by end of the year, 2021. (still looking for input)*

6. Next Meeting Wednesday September 15th, 2021

The Parking Lot (Additional Topics)

- Engineer of Record Collaboration
- Statewide Unrecoverable Costs
- DOT Plan Addendums vs. Consultant Plan Ownership
- Salary Cap – Waiting for ACEC to submit proposal