

## MINUTES

ASCE TEXAS SECTION

### SUMMER 2019-2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

July 17, 2020 | 2:00 – 5:00 PM

Canyon of the Eagles | 16942 Ranch Road 2341, Burnet, TX 78611 | Live Oak Room



#### 1.0 Convene

**1.1 Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by President Susan K. Roth PE at 2:08 PM Central Time.

**1.2 Roll Call, Determination of Quorum.** The Executive Committee convened for a hybrid meeting. Some committee members attended by means of video conference. Executive Director Lindsay O’Leary PE called role and a quorum was present.

Position	Name	Present/Absent
President	Susan Roth PE	P
Past President	Art Clendenin PE	P
President Elect	Sean Merrell PE	P
VP Educational	John Tyler PE	P
VP Educational Elect	Natalie Weiershausen PE	P
VP Professional	Tiffany Reed-Villarreal PE	P
VP Professional Elect	Griselda Gonzales PE	P
VP Technical	Andres Salazar PhD PE	P
VP Technical Elect	Robert Stevens PhD PE	P
Senior Director at Large	Sergio Mendez PE	P
Treasurer 2019-2020	Chris Nance PE	P
Executive Director	Lindsay O’Leary PE, CAE	P
Board Secretary	Mike Sosa	P

#### Guest List

1. Jenni Peters, Communications Specialist
2. Patrick Beecher PE, 2020-2021 President Elect
3. Jean-Louis Briaud PhD, PE, 2020-2021 ASCE President Elect
4. Ron Reichert, 2020-2021 VP for Technical Affairs Elect

**1.3 President Susan Roth Welcomed Visitors**

**1.4 President Elect Sean Merrell PE led attendees through Pledge of Allegiance & Moment of Silence to Pray**

**1.5 Executive Committee Photograph** (moved to break)

**1.6 ASCE President Dr. Briaud Provided Society Comments**

Discussion: Dr. Briaud spoke about his president goals – communications with members, fostering the relationship between technical institutes and geographic units (starting with Institute-Region Summits held several times each year), and focusing on the student member transition (currently about 17% of the 50,000 student members). He has started a group of 27 Student Chapter Presidents to create a list of priority issues related to the student member transition and they are currently addressing the top three issues of nine total that were identified.

**1.7 Region 6 Governor & President-Elect Sean Merrell Provided Comments**

Discussion: Merrell spoke on behalf of Region 6 Chair Jerry Paz PE. He noted that the Region 6 Board of Governors recently met to discuss the changes to ASCE’s Constitution. He also spoke about several items of note from a recent ASCE Board Meeting, including:

- ASCE does not plan to change their dues model this year, but they do plan to make some changes within the coming years regarding the dues model.
- ASCE has not had a balanced budget for over six years and are faced with the reality of adjusting to balance the budget. The Board approved a substantial cut to the budget to be financially sustainable.

Merrell then gave a brief update on the status of the Region 6 Governor election, congratulating Tim Newton PE on re-election and thanking Tiffany Reed-Villarreal PE for her efforts and initiative to run.

## 1.8 Executive Summary

Discussion: President Roth congratulated Operations Specialist Mike Sosa for his three-year anniversary at the Section Office. She also introduced the Texas Section's new Communications Specialist Jenni Peters. Next, she spoke about the recently created Toolkit for Branch Leaders\*. President Roth mentioned that the Section is currently in the process of creating the 2021 Texas Infrastructure Report Card (IRC). This project is being facilitated by 55 volunteers, will be reviewed by stakeholders, and the final report will have information on 12 infrastructure categories. President Roth gave an update on her goal of increasing the level of collaboration between the Section and other agencies – including the comments provided to the Texas Water Development Board by the Flood Mitigation Advisory Task Committee, led by VP Technical Andres Salazar.

**Action:** Merrell requested that the Texas Section keep track of all mentions of the Texas IRC upon its release and suggested adding additional funding to this project in the future. He also requested the allotment of additional IRC Committee funding for a copy editor in the future.

**Action:** President Roth announced the Honors Committee is currently finalizing their review of nominees for 2020 Texas Section Awards and will provide their recommended slate of honorees for Executive Committee approval, via email vote, in the coming weeks.

*\*Thank you to the following members for their help creating the Toolkit for Branch Leaders: Alik McCoy (Houston), Julia Clarke (Houston), Sam Shorter (Austin), Jonathan Brower (Dallas), Phillip Alcorn (Dallas), Chris Nance (El Paso), Amy Stone (San Antonio), Sugandh Rajpal (San Antonio)*

## 2.0 Items for Executive Committee Action

### 2.1 The Executive Committee adopted the agenda.

Discussion: Merrell requested to move item 3.4 (CECON) from a discussion item to an action item (2.3). President Roth and Executive Director O'Leary recommend tabling the call for action during the meeting and allowing discussion. The Executive Committee or Board can reconvene virtually to act, as needed, at a future date. Motion to adopt the agenda without change. Move to approve. Seconded and passed without dissent.

### 2.2 The Executive Committee adopted the consent agenda.

Motion to adopt the consent agenda\*. No discussion. Move to adopt. Seconded and passed without dissent.

*\*The consent agenda included the following item: Receive all Reports marked [I] on the Agenda (including the April 2020 and May 2020 Financial Reports).*

## 3.0 Items for Discussion

### 3.1 Welcome to 2020 Leadership Development Weekend (LDW)

Discussion: Merrell welcomed the group to LDW 2020 and explained the meaning behind the survivor themed logo for the event – it relates to his presidential goals of Adapt, Achieve, Advance. He encouraged all volunteers have FUN during their tenure as ASCE leaders.

### 3.2 Results of 2020-2021 ASCE Texas Section Elections

Discussion: Mendez noted that the election closed on June 9, 2020. There were 161 ballots counted and all nominees were elected by a majority vote. He then listed the elected individuals:

- President Elect – Patrick Beecher PE
- VP for Educational Affairs Elect – Russell Gibson PE
- VP for Professional Affairs Elect – Patricia Frayre PE
- VP for Technical Affairs Elect – Ron Reichert
- First Year Director at Large – Michael Schneider PE
- First Year Director at Large – Yan Linwood PE
- Treasurer (2020-2022) – Chris Nance PE

### 3.3 Section Finances

Discussion: Chris Nance reviewed the 2019-2020 budget status. He noted we are on track for meetings and staff expenses, but behind on publication revenue targets. He also noted that the investment account is down about 2% year to date, as well as the Trust Fund accounts held with Edward Jones. The budgeted investment draw of \$35,000 was completed on July 14, 2020. Next, he explained that the current preliminary draft budget for 2020-2021 results in \$50,000 deficit (about 9% of our overall budget) and there is a need to think of creative solutions to bridge that gap. He noted more efforts on boosting our revenue is preferred, rather than cutting expenses and programs. The preliminary draft budget also includes a \$20,000 investment draw (which is approximately \$15,000 less than prior years).

Dr. Briaud noted ASCE is planning to cut support for Sections and Institutes. The prior year's ASCE budget deficit was 10% and is projected to be around 1% next year. Most savings are related to spending cuts.

Nance noted that the current budget is framed from a conservative standpoint on both revenues and expenses including a 9% decrease in dues revenue to the impacts of the pandemic and potential economic changes. Note a dues increase does not always equate to increasing revenue, as often a dues increase will result in a drop in members.

**Action:** Budgets comments are due to Nance and O'Leary by August 14, 2020. O'Leary to schedule Board teleconference in early September to review the proposed 2020-2021 Operating Budget.

**Action:** O'Leary to add Section dues discussion to September 2020 Board meeting agenda for discussion. Board may be charged with evaluating the need for a dues increase to keep pace with inflation, at a minimum.

BREAK from 3:26 to 3:40 PM

### 3.4 CECON

Discussion: President Roth explained Executive Committee discussion regarding the viability of an in-person conference this year in needed. She thanked members for reading her recent message about safety protocols at CECON 2020. She then reviewed the recent decisions of Austin ISD and noted that the Texas Flood Managers Association (TFMA) and ASCE have recently canceled their in-person conferences. She then requested input from each Executive Committee member about CECON 2020.

The Executive Committee discussed pros and cons of holding CECON in-person this year. Current sponsorship and registration details, as well as other background information regarding other ASCE conferences and organizations' conference schedules were reviewed.

The Executive Committee agreed an in-person conference is not viable because of the pandemic. Hosting an in-person event does not align with the Section's core value of protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Several members noted travel restrictions issued by their employers. Meaningful revenue and attendance at a virtual conference is achievable, as a virtual conference also provides an opportunity to invite ASCE Region 6 members.

Merrell reviewed the status of CECON Planning Manual Revisions and CECON Site Selection. The planning manual is intended to be updated every five years and Merrell provided recommendations for review by President Roth and O'Leary. CECON Site Selection is currently on hold until 2020 plans are finalized and will likely be revisited in the fall or winter.

**Action:** O'Leary to present proposed CECON Planning Manual changes to the Board and CECON Committee, for approval at the September 2020 Board meeting.

### 3.5 2021 ASCE Texas [Student Symposium](#) in Austin

Discussion: Tyler reviewed the status of the venue contracts and noted that Student Activities Committee Chair Heather Guillen has agreed to serve as 2020-2021 Chair, but that may be her last year depending on where the 2022 Symposium is held. The 2021 Symposium estimated to breakeven at \$115,000. The event is set to be held at Palmer Events Center, with the canoe races at Lake Walter E. Long. Each venue contract will include an opt-out or

cancellation clause due to the pandemic. He also noted the planning team may be able to reserve a banquet venue on The University of Texas at Austin campus for no cost.

Next, Tyler a large concern facing the event is student access to on-campus facilities, such as concrete laboratories. There is concern that if students not able to access labs this fall, there won't be enough time for them to sufficiently complete the requirements for the concrete canoe competition.

**Action:** Tyler to contact Texas University ASCE Student Chapter Practitioner Advisors and Faculty Advisors to gauge what schools will be doing in the fall.

### 3.6 2021 ASCE Texas Younger Member Camping Trip

Discussion: Tyler noted the event is on hold due to the pandemic. The Younger Members Committee is working with local members from the San Antonio Branch to plan a trip later this fall.

### 3.7 Monthly Technical Webinars

Discussion: Salazar noted monthly webinar attendance rose in May and June (due to reduced pricing and many working from home). Attendance dropped off in a bit in July but anticipate a well-attended session in August as the topic is "The Challenge of Urban Flooding". He also noted that the goal is to have two sessions per month, with one co-hosted by a Branch. Past VP Technical Rich Patrick PE is also continuing to host monthly conference calls with institute leaders across Texas.

### 3.8 Section Resources

Discussion: President Roth asked Salazar to stay engaged with the Section after his term ends, and suggested he consider leading the development of an Institute Leaders chapter for the Toolkit.

President Roth mentioned that the Texas Section is currently revising our Rules of Operation and will include the policy language from ASCE (as listed below and provided on the meeting agenda).

[Rules of Operations](#) updates planned for Fall 2020:

- Add policy regarding *Pursuit of Nomination, Expectations of Candidates, and Campaigning*, consistent with the Society's [Rules of Policy and Procedure](#). Recommend text: "The Section expects all Candidates for office to review the Section's governing documents, consult with the incumbent office holder, and become familiar with the activities of the Section prior to declaring their intent to pursue office. Candidates and Nominees shall inform their supporters of the Section's policies governing appropriate conduct relative to election campaigns. Candidates and Nominees for elected office may contact members to discuss their candidacy. However, contact with members of the Section Board Nominating Committee or Board of Direction Members regarding nomination shall cease at least ten (10) days prior to the Nominating Committee meeting. Furthermore, Neither Candidates nor Nominees for elected office nor their supporters shall produce or distribute signs, giveaway materials (i.e., key chains, pens, buttons, pins), press kits, or similar items.
- Remove Research Poster Competition at Student Symposium, under VP Educational Elect. Replace with promotion of CECON Poster Competition at CECON.
- Add policy to formally allow Student Members to serve on Section committees, except for in a "Chair" role. "Co-Chair" role is acceptable if paired with an associate member or member.
- *Tentative*: Revise annual awards list to include recognition of students and/or student chapters.
- *Administrative*: Add "monitoring of contract deadlines" to list of Executive Director's responsibilities; update officer travel reimbursement policy to require the purchase of refundable airfare and accommodations; and add policy restricting company or product promotion during technical webinars, conference sessions, and within technical articles.

**Action:** O'Leary and Roth to incorporate proposed changes into the Rules of Operation. Redline/Strikethrough version to be provided to all Board members prior to the September 23, 2020 meeting.

**Action:** Salazar to lead development of Orientation for Institute Chapter Leaders.

### **3.9 J. Walter Porter Memorial Trust Fund Trustee Appointment**

Discussion: President Roth requested nominations for a trustee to serve 6-year term (2020-2026). She noted current Trustees recommend the ASCE Texas Section Board appoint a member from Houston or North Texas. A nominee is needed for recommendation by September 2020.

**Actions:** President Roth to discuss a call for nominations with Branch Presidents and Section Directors. O'Leary to consider Clendenin's recommend of Terry Winn if he has not already served and follow-up with Gonzales regarding a potential nominee, the current Houston Branch T&DI Chair (Natalie Guzman PE).

### **3.10 Strategic Planning**

Discussion: President Roth noted the Section is currently undergoing a strategic planning session to review and update the strategic plan for 2022-2026. This committee is chaired by Kacey Paul PE. President Roth also noted ASCE has renamed their Diversity & Inclusion Committee to Members of Society Advancing an Inclusive Culture (MOSAIC)] and she would like to see the Section form a task committee to discuss ideas to increase our level of inclusion. O'Leary noted MOSAIC is developing a best practices guideline and a "train the trainer" program.

**Actions:** Per Merrell, staff to review the D&I statement on Dallas Branch website and place something similar on the Texas Section website. President Roth to appoint Task Committee in September 2020, or Merrell to appoint at a later date.

### **4.0 Closing Remarks & Final Comments**

Discussion: President Roth reviewed the Calendar of Events listed within the meeting agenda. The next meeting of the Board of Direction is scheduled for September 23, 2020.

Clendenin noted his work with Honors Committee Chair Chad Ballard PE to finalize the slate of award winners for 2020 and noted History & Heritage Committee Chair Melinda Luna PE has been working on history and heritage content that can be repurposed for a webinar. He also mentioned that a recent CECON email blast was about the most well-done piece of CECON marketing that he has ever seen.

### **5.0 President Roth adjourned the meeting at 5:24 PM Central Time.**