



MINUTES – FOR BOARD REVIEW AND APPROVAL

ASCE TEXAS SECTION

FALL 2019-2020 BOARD OF DIRECTION MEETING

September 25, 2020 | 1:00 – 4:00 PM CST | Virtual Meeting via Zoom

1.0 CONVENE

1.1 Call to Order. The meeting was called to order by President Susan K. Roth PE at 1:08 PM Central Time.

1.2 Housekeeping & Zoom “How-to” provided by Executive Director Lindsay A. O’Leary PE, CAE.

1.3 Roll Call, Determination of Quorum. Ops Specialist Mike Sosa 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 Chaney PE	P
VP Professional	Tiffany Reed-Villarreal PE	P
VP Professional Elect	Griselda Gonzales PE	P
VP Technical	Andres Salazar PE	P
VP Technical Elect	Robert “Bob” Stevens PhD, PE	P
Senior Director at Large	Sergio Mendez PE	P
2 nd Year Director at Large	Jonathan Brower PE	P
1 st Year Director at Large	Alik McCoy PE	P
1 st Year Director at Large	LJ Francis PE	P
Treasurer	Christopher Nance PE	P
Executive Director	Lindsay O’Leary PE, CAE	P
Board Secretary	Mike Sosa	P
Section Directors		
Austin	Genest Landry PE	A
Brazos	Robert Lys Jr. PE	P
Caprock	Russell Carter PE	P
Central Texas	Brian Geiger PE <i>sub Ottis Foster PE</i>	P (1:40 PM)
Corpus Christi	John Garcia PE <i>sub Joe Alvarez (1:003:00 PM)</i>	P (1:20 PM)
Dallas	Phillip Alcorn PE <i>sub Jonathan Brower PE</i>	P
El Paso	Chris Nance PE	P
Fort Worth	Kimberly Cornett PE	P
High Plains	Joe Shehan PE	P
Houston	Patrick Beecher PE	P
Northeast Texas	Russell Gibson PE	P
Rio Grande Valley	Jessica Maldonado PE (Branch VP)	P (2:00 PM)
San Antonio	Amy Stone PE <i>sub Chris Van Heerde PE</i>	P
Southeast Texas	Liv Haselbach PhD, PE	P
West Texas	<i>No Delegate</i>	A

P = Present
 A = Absent
 Sub = Substitute

Guest List

1. Kacey Paul PE, TexASCE Strategic Planning Committee Chair
2. Jerry Paz PE, Region 6 Board of Governors Chair
3. K.N. Gunalan PhD, PE, 2019-20 ASCE President
4. Jenni Peters, Communications Specialist

1.4 President Susan Roth Welcomed Visitors

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

1.6 Zoom Screen Capture, in lieu of photograph

1.7 ASCE President K.N. Gunalan PhD, PE Provided Society Officer Comments

Discussion: Dr. Gunalan started by noting that his goals for the upcoming year will be to make ASCE more transparent, diverse, nimble, and sustainable. He believes we can achieve this through engagement at the local level and by adapting to the changes in membership (more students and life members). He noted that he puts himself in the shoes of the individual member when he thinks about strategic planning for ASCE. He would also like to see ASCE consolidate its efforts to help ASCE become a thought-leader for the industry.

1.8 Region 6 Director Jerry Paz PE Provided Region 6 Comments

Discussion: Paz spoke briefly about [ASCE Future World Vision](#) and the [ASCE Virtual Convention](#) coming up later in 2020. He also noted that the current tightening of ASCE's budget is causing pain at all levels and asked us to be patient during this time of change. He mentioned that the Texas Section's reaction to the proposed Student Conference changes was heard loud and clear by ASCE. He hopes that this committee learns a lesson from the process behind the Code of Ethics changes, which was highly transparent and communicated to membership on a regular basis throughout the process.

Region 6 Grant Updates: Governors plan to lower the maximum amount to \$1,000 due to a tightened budget and an overall demand increase. They also discussed additional ways to raise funds to supplement the tightened budget.

1.9 Executive Summary

Discussion: President Roth briefly recapped the current Section activities – thanking the 55 committee members for their effort on the Infrastructure Report Card (IRC) process, thanking Kacey Paul for her efforts on the Strategic Planning process, and thanking the members involved with creating the Branch Resources Toolkit. Lastly, she thanked the staff and all Board Members for their support and efforts over the past year.

Action: Section staff to finalize Past President Art Clendenin's yearbook.

2.0 ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS FOR BOARD OF DIRECTION ACTION

2.1 Board Approved Substitute Section Directors. See attendance list.

Motion to approve substitute Section Directors. No discussion. Move to approve. Seconded and passed without dissent.

2.2 Board amended and approved the agenda.

Merrell made a motion to remove the CECON Planning Manual Revisions (2020) from the Consent Agenda and approve it as a Working Draft after discussion. Motion to accept revised agenda. Move to accept.

Seconded and passed without dissent.

3.0 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3.1 Texas Civil Engineering Conference (CECON)

Discussion: Merrell reviewed recent changes include shifting CECON 2020 to a completely virtual event. The Section evaluated a handful of virtual platforms and provided the research to the committee for approval, eventually LIVE was chosen to provide full-service production and platform development. The new dates are November 4-6 and new registration, sponsorship and exhibitor information is available on www.TexasCECON.org. The student rate is now set at \$30 so please encourage students at your local

chapter to attend. The program has also remained almost the same as it was before the shift to virtual. The Section moved its 2020 financial contract obligations with Embassy Suites San Marcos from 2020 to 2023, with an option to push to 2024 or 2025 should we desire to hold CECON 2023 at another location in Texas (negotiations with Hilton parent company conducted by Roth, O'Leary and Merrell).

ACTION: ALL to personally help promote CECON 2020 registration to their colleagues and branch members.

3.2 2021 ASCE Texas Student Symposium

Discussion: Tyler noted the Symposium Planning Committee originally planned an in-person event, but they have begun to consider alternate options as issues have arisen with access to concrete labs due to the pandemic. Contracts signed to-date allow the Section to change dates with minimal penalties. Sosa provided updates from ASCE's Concrete Canoe Competitions call yesterday – ASCE plans to offer the competition as 100% virtual with an option for an in-person event. A recording of the kickoff call along with other FAQ's are posted on the Concrete Canoe [Competition webpage](#) and [Facebook](#) group.

Clendenin suggested building boats using recycled material as an alternate competition if concrete canoe is not an option for 2021.

Break from 2:21 to 2:30 PM (K.N. Gunalan left the meeting)

3.3 Institute Chapters

Discussion: Salazar noted the VP Technical Team has been successful with scheduling consistent webinars each month and they are hoping to ramp that up to two webinars per month in 2021. The Institute leaders from the section and branch level have also continued their monthly discussions to promote collaborations between chapters; those discussions are being scheduled and facilitated by Past VP Technical for Affairs Rich Patrick PE, although he is seeking a new leader to train and take on the coordinator role. The San Antonio Branch is currently exploring the opportunity to start a Transportation & Development Institute (TDI) Chapter, and the Dallas Branch is considering the viability of creating an Architectural Engineer Institute (AEI) Chapter.

3.4 Government Relations Activities

Discussion: Reed-Villarreal noted she is sad to be moving off the Board and is confident in Gonzales' and Frayre's ability to take the lead for the VP Professional Team next year. They will be planning some form of a Legislative Drive-In as well as the annual Legislative Panel at CECON. Note, there is a record-number of elected officials committed to the legislative panel in 2020 (nine total).

The Section expects the 2021 Texas IRC will be released in January 2021. This is the first report to include detailed chapters for each infrastructure category. Please encourage committee members to join other Section activities after the IRC is completed. Chaney asked if there is a list of the 55 participants on the current IRC Committee. Gonzales noted that certain committee members may not want their names to be publicized in relation to these efforts.

Roth and Merrell thanked Mark Boyd PhD, PE for his efforts as IRC Committee Chair and asked about the 2021 Legislative Drive-In planning process. Reed-Villarreal and Gonzales noted they are currently planning to move forward with the event as usual, with some tweaks given the situation caused by the pandemic.

ACTION: Could the Drive In be held via Virtual Platform/Townhall? What would the cost be? Gonzales to discuss with the Government Affairs Committee. Perhaps we could host different breakout sessions with

various Legislators, per President Roth. Clendenin also suggested a hybrid meeting for those who can't attend in Austin.

ACTION: O'Leary to share IRC Committee members list with Board, not for public distribution.

3.5 **Texas Civil Engineer (TCE)**

Discussion: McCoy reported on behalf of Mendez and noted that the TCE has officially moved to bi-monthly content collection. They have a good list of contacts for articles at the Branch-level and are always open to receiving submissions for any articles related to the civil engineering industry.

ACTION: Submit ideas for article topics and/or your favorite technical/industry writers to share@TexASCE.org.

3.6 **Recommendation to sunset *Excellence in Journalism Award***

Discussion: O'Leary reported on behalf of Mendez and noted that soliciting nominations has been difficult in recent years and certain nominees are not allowed to receive the award because the Section is not a journalism organization. No action was requested, but the Directors at Large solicited feedback from the Board. Merrell noted that when he was a Director at Large, it was their responsibility to research and solicit the nominations for this award. He suggested that we move forward with the award on an annual basis or not at all. Clendenin suggested widening the criteria for the category to cover different types of writing/journalism such as social media to allow for an increase in submissions.

3.7 **Call for ASCE Texas Section Officer Nominations**

Discussion: Clendenin is spreading the word and encouraged all branches to submit a nomination. The deadline is October 31, 2020.

ACTION: Section Directors to connect with their Branch Boards to identify any potential Section Officer Nominees for 2021-2022.

3.8 **Strategic Planning**

Discussion: Paul noted the general timeline of the process and that she is looking forward to - feedback from a wide variety of members and leaders to help improve our strategic planning moving forward.

ACTION: Paul to hold Strategic Planning Committee meeting. Merrell noted that it may be ideal to start this process in mid-November due to the current high level of activity going on at the Section regarding CECON 2020.

3.9 **Review 2020-2021 Operating Budget**

Discussion: O'Leary noted the outgoing board "endorses" the budget as a way to advise/support the incoming board, which "adopts" the budget during their meeting. Nance noted having dues be such a large portion of the Section's revenue makes any projected drop in that category somewhat worrisome. He also noted that the two largest budget items the Board has direct control over are CECON and the Student Symposium. In summation, he noted that anything we can do to help us reduce that savings withdraw would be a big positive for the Section's overall financial health.

3.10 **Strategic Discussion**

Discussion: Opinions were requested on creating a policy/guideline for the use of virtual meetings/events. Ottis Foster noted that the Central Texas Branch has sent out a poll and received feedback that their membership is open to meeting in person over the next few months even though ASCE released guidance to avoid in-person meetings whenever possible. While there may not be an issue with this, we just need to

make sure we cover ourselves from a liability standpoint by using a waiver signed by all in-person attendees.

Roth also noted that establishing a Diversity and Inclusion Committee at the Texas Section level would be a great idea for the upcoming fiscal year. Art noted that we should keep an eye on ASCE's efforts to make sure we don't contradict them. Merrell and Kacey Paul are both in full support of this effort. Tiffany would welcome this committee under the VP Professional umbrella. President Roth noted that a D&I statement has been added to the Section's website.

Future Meeting: Revisit hybrid meeting policy for Board & ExCom meetings.

ACTION: O'Leary to send waiver to Foster.

ACTION: Reach out to Merrell with recommendations for Chair of DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion) Task Committee.

3.11 Branch Strategies for Younger Member Engagement

Discussion: Brower recommends using our virtual environment to your advantage, such as reaching out to ASCE Student Chapters at out-of-state universities. President Roth suggests the Section continue to update the Toolkit as new ideas are generated. This can be a living guidance document. Nance noted the El Paso Branch had an issue figuring out how to monetize the new virtual meetings since there is no venue cost and no food provided to attendees. Brower noted the Dallas Branch asked for a nominal fee to cover the professional development hour (PDH) for their meetings, but they allowed people to view the content for free. They also decided to donate the proceeds towards a local service organization (food bank). Gibson noted the Northeast Texas Board discussed this item and decided to waive any registration fees as long as no cost was incurred to present the meeting. Cornett mentioned the Fort Worth Branch plans to employ some form of nominal fee and donation structure for upcoming virtual meetings. Merrell stressed a nominal fee shouldn't be too much to ask, even if members aren't being provided food because they are still receiving a PDH. Salazar seconded that point and noted that charging a cost is also a way to recover some of the cost of volunteer time and effort.

Brower pointed out Dallas Branch is adjusting their sponsorship program to accommodate the change to virtual meetings and reflect the different and improved benefits that sponsors receive.

3.12 Items to be Reported Back to Branches

- 1. Promote registration, sponsorship, and exhibitor opportunities for [CECON 2020 Virtual](#) – November 4-6 to members and non-members. We need your help to ensure the CECON Planning Committee's investment in a high-quality, engaging virtual platform reaches its full potential.**
- 2. Submit nominations for 2021-2022 Texas Section Officers by October 31, 2020.**
- 3. Support Kacey Paul PE and the Strategic Planning Committee by responding to their requests for member input.**
- 4. Help the Government Affairs Committee increase participation in the Legislative Drive-In next spring.**
- 5. Submit annual reports to ASCE by November 30, 2020.**
- 6. Submit ideas for article topics and/or your favorite technical/industry writers to share@TexASCE.org.**

4.0 OTHER ITEMS FOR BOARD OF DIRECTION ACTION

4.1 The Board adopted the revised consent agenda.

Discussion: Cornett asked for clarification on an item from the July 17, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion to adopt the consent agenda as revised in Item 2.2*. Move to adopt. Seconded and passed without dissent.

*The consent agenda included the following items:

- Approve Minutes of Board Meeting, March 5, 2020 (Arlington)
- Approve Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, July 17, 2020 (Burnet)
- Approve Minutes of Board Teleconference, September 11, 2020
- Approve Texas Section *Rules of Operation's Leadership Handbook* Revisions (2020)
- ~~Approve CECON Planning Manual Revisions (2020)~~
- Appoint Natalie Guzman PE as a J. Walter Porter Memorial Trust Fund Trustee 2020-2026
- ~~Receive 2020 Student Symposium Financial Report~~
- Approve 2021 Student Symposium Preliminary Budget
- Approve Corpus Christi Branch Bylaws (5-28-20)
- Receive all Reports marked [I] on the Agenda (including the July 2020 Financial Report)
- Approve Honors Committee recommendation to bestow a 2020 ASCE Texas Lifetime Service Award to Austin Branch member Garabed Harutunian PE, LS, F.ASCE

ACTION: Directors at Large/Editorial Committee to publish biography of Garabed Harutunian in the TCE once the award is presented to him.

4.2 The Board endorsed [Preliminary 2020-21 Operating Budget](#).

Motion to endorse preliminary 2020-21 Operating Budget. No discussion. Move to endorse. Seconded and passed without dissent.

4.3 The Board Approved CECON Planning Manual Revisions (2020) as a Working Document.

Discussion: The changes include adjustments to the profit-sharing agreement, addition of a third chair, and streamlining of the overall document to reduce duplicate information. Cornett suggested revising the profit-sharing language for clarity.

Motion to approve CECON Planning Manual as a working document. Move to approve. Seconded and passed without dissent.

5.0 CLOSING REMARKS

Discussion: President Roth thanked everyone for their hard work, commitment and support as part of the Board over the past year. She noted that although it has been a wild ride, she had a number of memorable experiences and enjoyed working with so many wonderful people throughout the year. She also plans to send each Board Member a personal thank you in gratitude.

6.0 PRESIDENT ROTH ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 4:25 PM