



THE FIRST WORD

June, 2019

Jim Hemphill Becomes 65th ACEC OKLAHOMA Chairman of the Board

Jim Hemphill, Vice President of Poe and Associates, Tulsa, assumed the leadership of ACEC OKLAHOMA as the 65th Chairman of the Board at the conclusion of the Annual Convention on June 8th.



Jim earned his Bachelors of Science in Civil Engineering from Oklahoma State University in 1981, and received his Masters of Science in Civil Engineering in 1997.

Hemphill has 38 years of experience in engineering, including 24 years with Poe and Associates and 10 years with the City of Tulsa. Prior to his career with the City of Tulsa he spent seven years with Hemphill Corporation conducting geotechnical investigations, foundation inspections and overseeing construction materials testing.

During the past 38 years he has primarily focused on infrastructure rehabilitation and facility management systems for both local roadways and major highways. He has extensive experience with managing and designing municipal infrastructure projects; including streets, sidewalks, storm drainage systems, and water line improvements. He has also been responsible for implementation and updating pavement management systems for both the City of Tulsa and the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority.

Jim enjoys traveling with his wife Janice and spending time with his kids and grandkids. His hobbies include: photography, bicycling, bowling, attending concerts, gardening and home improvement projects.

Joining Hemphill on the 2019-2020 ACEC OKLAHOMA Board of Directors are:

Chairman-Elect: Chad Grinsteiner, White Engineering Associates, Oklahoma City

Vice Chair Membership: Hollis Allen, Walter P Moore, Tulsa

Treasurer: Mike Vahabzadegan, EST, Inc., Oklahoma City

Vice Chair Business Practice: Adam West, Benham Design, LLC, Tulsa

Vice Chair Education/P.R.: David Neuhauser, CP&Y, Inc., Oklahoma City

ACEC National Director (2nd Year of 3-Year Term): Brent Schniers, Garver, Tulsa

Immediate Past Chairman: Keith Angier, MacArthur Associated Consultants, Oklahoma City

During the Annual Meeting, the Budget Committee presented the proposed 2019-2020 ACEC OKLAHOMA Budget., and recommended that there be no increase in ACEC OKLAHOMA dues for the coming year, although there is a slight increase in ACEC national dues (.80%). The Budget was unanimously approved by the Board and Membership.

As his last act as Chairman, Keith Angier appointed John Bowman, Poe and Associates, and Kevin Kreiwall, Craig and Keithline, to the ODOT/ACEC OKLAHOMA Partnering Steering Committee. Bowman and Kreiwall replace Brent Schniers and David Streb, who's terms expired.



Jim Hemphill presents outgoing Chairman Keith Angier (L) his Past Chairman's Plaque

2019 Legislative Session Wrap Up Report

The 2019 Session of the Oklahoma Legislature drew to a close on Thursday, May 23rd, eight days ahead of the Constitutional deadline.

Needless to say, this was a much tamer session than last year when the Legislature dealt with begin in regular and special session for almost 18 months, and faced both a deficit budget and a prolonged teacher walkout.

With increased revenues, a new Governor, super-majorities for the Republicans in both houses, and a minority party which saw new leadership in both the House and Senate, there seemed to be a much needed willingness to work together from both sides of the rotunda and on both sides of the aisles. That's not to say that there wasn't controversy and that everyone sat around and sang "Kumbaya" for the entire session. But, it was very evident that this session was more "hand in hand" than "fist against fist."

As for the new Governor, Mr. Stitt got most of the major issues on which he campaigned last fall. From Government Reform by receiving the authority to appoint agency heads and governing Boards; a teacher and state employee pay raise; enhanced government transparency; and, putting money in a new state "savings" account, the first year Governor had a very good year.

Additionally, he got a taste of governing...remember, he had never held any type of public office prior to becoming Governor...by doing everything constitutionally possible when dealing with bills sent to him.

All in all, of the 2,899 bills and resolutions introduced this session, 535 bills and joint resolutions were sent to the Governor for consideration. Stitt signed 515, issued one line-item veto, vetoed 16 completely, allowed 2 bills to become law without his signature, and signed 2 joint resolutions.

As for ACEC OKLAHOMA and the engineering profession, it was an interesting year, and in the long run, a good year.

We fought a lot of battles early in the session, killing legislation which would have been devastating to the consulting engineering profession, while at the same time helping to protect the ROADS funds, get additional funding into the CIRB program, and assuring that there was no statutory restrictions placed on the use of Drones by engineers and land surveyors.

There were three specific bills we discussed in the last update, so here's how those ended up.

**** Senate Bill 376 - Oklahoma First.** This bill would give a "preference" in the awarding of highway construction contracts under the Competitive Bidding Act to Oklahoma-owned businesses over out-of-state businesses.

While the bill dealt strictly with construction, ACEC OKLAHOMA was concerned that it could eventually be ex-

panded to the QBS engineering selection process based on comments made by the Senate author.

The bill did pass out of a House Committee, but was never considered by the full House prior to a late-April deadline, making the bill "dormant" for the session.

Technically the bill is still "alive" as a "carry-over" for the 2020 session, but it's very rare that carry-over bills are considered during the next session.

That being said, it's not unusual that similar or exact new bills are introduced the following session, and, in many cases, Interim Studies are requested for these carry-over bills. So, we will keep a close eye on the Interim requests being filed in the next couple of weeks to see if this issue is discussed more in-depth sometime later this year.

House Bill 2666 - Construction Management at Risk. For several months, ACEC OKLAHOMA has been working with the AGC Builders Chapter and a variety of other stakeholders as they seek to update the current statutory language regarding Construction Management at Risk (CMAR).

ACEC OKLAHOMA's interest in the bill deals strictly with proposed changes to current statutory language. Due to confusion regarding CMAR, which is a "delivery system," and Construction Management, a "service" provided by design professionals to their clients, new definitions are being proposed which would clearly delineate the difference between the "delivery system" and the "service" and which ACEC OKLAHOMA assisted in writing.

ACEC OKLAHOMA supported the bill, but at the same time, we remained diligent in making sure that any changes did not negatively impact the QBS process or the "services" which engineering firms provide their clients.

All in all, a "clean" bill came out of Conference Committee, passed both the House and Senate, and Governor Stitt signed this bill.

**** House Bill 2676 - Additional Funding to the CIRB Fund.** This bill authorized, in addition to the regular annual appropriation, an additional \$30 Million into the CIRB fund to make up for CIRB funds which have been reduced in the past due to the Budget crisis of recent years. This ACEC OKLAHOMA supported bill passed the two chambers, and was signed by Governor Stitt.

In closing, THANKS! Thanks to all of our ACEC OKLAHOMA members who heeded the calls by contacting their Senators and Representatives when we asked. Your personal relationship with your elected officials is the key to our overall success with our legislative advocacy program.

And, last but not least, thanks to Pat Hall, Jim Dunlap, and Luke Martin, our Lobbying Team at the Capitol, for their hard work and invaluable counsel.

Record Crown for the 18th Annual ODOT/ACEC OKLAHOMA Partnering Conference

May 16th saw a record crowd of 525 ODOT Staff and Consultants gather at the Reed Center in Midwest City for the 18th Annual ODOT/ACEC OKLAHOMA Partnering Conference.



Dan Oblinger presented a program entitled, **“Leadership from the Ledge: Lessons from a Hostage Negotiator.”** This high energy program about mastering the art of persuading people in crisis and cultivating a culture of excellence was a huge hit!

Dan captivated the gather masses, and we’ve heard nothing but high praise for this outstanding program.

Additionally, we were honored to have the newly appointed Secretary of Transportation and Executive Director of both the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and Oklahoma Turnpike Authority, Tim Gatz, address the gathering at lunch.



During the afternoon sessions, ODOT’s Procurement and Civil Rights Division Leaders presented a program on compliance review, solicitations, and the TOPS system.

That was followed by Joe Echelle and David Streb with a “Lessons Learned” program reviewing the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority’s “Driving Forward” initiative.

Our thanks to everyone who attended, and to all of the presenters for making the 18th Annual ODOT/ACEC OKLAHOMA Partnering Conference a huge success!

Secretary Gatz Fills Three Key Positions

Two women are making an impact on the Oklahoma Department of Transportation by being named the first females in two top senior staff positions. Secretary of Transportation Tim Gatz named Dawn Sullivan as Deputy Director, and Terri Angier to the newly created position of Interagency Liaison. Additionally, Trenton January was selected as the Division Four Engineer, which includes the Oklahoma City metro.

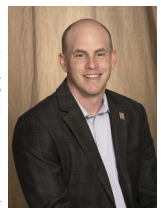


Sullivan made history not once but twice by being the first female to attain the second highest position for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and the first female to fill a senior staff position for the department. She has been working closely with outgoing Deputy Director Russell Hulin and will fully take the responsibilities after his retirement June 30. In this senior staff position, Sullivan will oversee all day-to-day administration and strategic planning for the department. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Oklahoma and has been a Professional Engineer since 1995.



Angier’s new position is the secretary of transportation’s direct report serving as Interagency Liaison for ODOT, Oklahoma Turnpike Authority and the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission. She also will continue her responsibilities as Chief of the Media and Public Relations Division of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. Born in Tehran, Iran, Angier obtained her secondary education in India and England. She earned a bachelor’s degree in Anthropology and a master’s degree in Journalism, both from the University of Oklahoma.

January was selected the Division Four Engineer in June. In this position, he will oversee the highway maintenance and construction activities for the nine counties in north-central Oklahoma, including the Oklahoma City metro. January earned a bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering from Oklahoma State University and currently resides in Stillwater.



Lastly, our **THANKS and CONGRATULATIONS** to retiring **Deputy Director Russell Hulin**, who will be retiring from ODOT at the end of June. It’s been great working with Russell for the past several years, He’s been a huge supporter of the consulting profession and the Partnering relationship between ODOT and ACEC OKLAHOMA. Best Wishes, Russell, for a long and happy retirement!!!



ENGINEERING INFLUENCE FROM ACEC

ACEC National recently launched its new podcast series, “Engineering Influence,” which can be found on [iTunes](#) and on the [Podbean](#) podcasting network.

Hosted by ACEC’s Washington, DC based staff, Engineering Influence features interviews and analysis of current affairs affecting the engineering industry, economic and business trends, as well as interviews with thought leaders and newsmakers.

We invite you to subscribe to the podcast, which is updated regularly with new episodes. If you know someone who would be a good guest for Engineering Influence, please contact Jeff Urbanchuk at ACEC: jurbanchuk@acec.org.



ACEC OKLAHOMA Visits Oklahoma Congressional Delegation

In early May, ACEC OKLAHOMA leaders trekked to Washington, DC for the ACEC Annual Convention, during which the ACEC OKLAHOMA delegation met with the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation to discuss issue important to the consulting engineering profession.

ACEC OKLAHOMA met personally with 1st District Congressman Kevin Hern, Senator James Lankford, 2nd District Congressman Markwayne Mullin, and newly elected 5th District Congresswoman Kendra Horn. We also met with key staff members for Congressmen Tom Cole and Frank Lucas, and Senator Jim Inhofe.

Infrastructure funding (Highway Trust Fund, Airports, Water/Wastewater, Rural High-Speed Internet, Schools, and more) were the key topic of discussion, along with Sustainable Energy Development and Growing the Engineering Workforce.

Also, during the ACEC Board of Directors Meeting, the Board approved the 3-Year (2019-2022) Budget, and heard a presentation on a new strategic plan for ACEC which is under development.



(L-R) ACEC National Director Brent Schniers, Congresswoman Kendra Horn (D-OK 5th), Chairman-Elect Jim Hemphill, President/CEO Jim Sullins

