

ASCE – 2017 Southeastern Regional Competition

Business Meeting Minutes

Florida Atlantic University, Student Union Building 31, Room 103/104, Grand Palm Room

March 17, 2017 7:00 pm

- I. **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Rick Joseph, President of the Florida Atlantic University Student Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers and 2017 Southeast Regional Student Conference Chair. He welcomed everyone to FAU.

Meeting Chair – Rick Joseph

Meeting Secretary – Fred Bloetscher

Parliamentarian – Will Labobs

- II. **Roll Call** – Rick Joseph conducted the roll call. The following schools were present:

- Florida Atlantic University
- Savannah State University
- Georgia Southern University
- Embry Riddle Aeronautical University
- University of North Florida
- Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico
- University of Florida
- University of Tennessee at Knoxville
- University of Central Florida
- Florida Institute of Technology
- Vanderbilt University
- University of Alabama at Huntsville
- Alabama A&M University
- Florida Gulf Coast University
- Tennessee Technological University
- Auburn University
- University of South Alabama
- Florida A&M University – Florida State University
- Kennesaw State/Southern Polytechnic State University
- Florida International University
- University of Miami
- University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
- University of Alabama
- University of Puerto Rico
- Lipscomb University

The following schools were absent:

- University of Alabama at Birmingham

III. **Guest Speakers** - Zana Rayborn, Executive Director for the Florida Board of Professional Engineers was the first speaker. She presented about the importance of licensure for engineers, especially those who may want to own their own business.

Next to speak were Regional CSMs: Christina L. Ammens (Past President of the Virginia Section and current Region 4 At-Large Governor and PA for Old Dominion University, currently working for Pennoni Associates as a Roadway/Transportation engineer) and Lori Troxel (Vanderbilt University).

IV. **Rules of Order, Quorum, and Approval of 2016 Conference Minutes** - Rick Joseph asked for an approval of the minutes from last year. The minutes were approved.

V. **Identification of the Next Two Conference Hosts, Locations, and Dates** - Rick Joseph asked about the 2018 student conference host. Previously, Savannah State University has declined. Georgia Southern University informed FAU that they would decline. Embry Riddle Aeronautical University and University of North Florida declined. Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico is next in line. They had tentatively accepted but said that they cannot host for 2018, but instead expressed interest in hosting 2019. Next in line is the University of Florida. **The University of Florida agreed to host the 2018 ASCE Southeast Regional Student Conference.** The University of Tennessee at Knoxville tentatively accepted for 2019. They stated that they would not be able to host 2018 if the University of Florida had refused. The University of Central Florida said they would host 2019 or 2020, if something came up.

Some discussion ensued regarding Puerto Rican schools and the cost to travel to Puerto Rico. Rick Joseph noted that FAU had priced the shipping costs at \$37,000 to go, plus any additional competition costs, and he stated that level of fund raising would be difficult, and schools farther away might be closer to \$60,000. Some discussion ensued about going to Puerto Rico. A suggestion was made to do a roll call of schools that would or might go.

A roll call was made of who could go to Puerto Rico:

1. University of Florida
2. University of Tennessee at Knoxville
3. Vanderbilt University
4. Auburn University
5. Florida A&M University – Florida State University
6. University of Miami
7. Kennesaw State/Southern Polytechnic State University

8. Florida International University
9. University of Alabama

The following schools were not certain of being able to attend:

1. University of Central Florida
2. University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
3. Lipscomb University

All other schools indicated that would like to go, but probably could not raise the funds.

Dr. Hiram Gonzalez (UPRM) said his school does a lot of fundraising by individuals to raise money to come to the student conference on the mainland United States. However if only few schools would travel to Puerto Rico, then it makes no sense to do this. (Note UPRM students charge about \$600/ person of their own funds to attend the Regional Student Conference based on a post-meeting discussion with Dr. Gonzalez)

A question was asked about schools that would then drop out if the conference was held in Puerto Rico. The Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico faculty advisor said Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico said that 2018 would not work, and that PUPR would love to host the 2019 conference with everyone attending, but if only half of the schools attending that would be very difficult. If schools will not go, then they would not want to make it an issue.

The University of Florida said the real issue is the regional schools letting Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico down because they would not be able to go.

University of South Alabama said they would apply to another region if the student conference was held in Puerto Rico. Dr. Gonzalez said that the University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez declined because of the costs. He thought that the costs would be more than \$1000 per **person** given the resort fees.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to ask Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico to accept or decline, and not be swayed by the fact that half the schools would likely not go. Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico agreed to decline based in the comments.

University of Central Florida agreed to tentatively accept in 2019 or 2020 depending on The University of Tennessee-Knoxville's final decision. A motion was made and seconded and passed, to set a deadline for University of Tennessee at Knoxville of April 30 to advise the region. The University of Tennessee at Knoxville said they would advise by 4/30/2017 deadline. Motion and second made. All agreed.

- VI. **New Business** - Ms. Ammens asked for a word version of the constitution. The University of South Alabama asked about the measuring devices used for the steel bridge competition. He requests more precise equipment for lateral loads. Tim Davis, chief steel judge, was asked to

continue judging. He would like to do the measuring and have the equipment. A motion was made for Tim Davis to be the permanent judge. Agreed

The University of Florida suggested that at some point in the future, we try to have the student conference hosted in Puerto Rico. All agreed. The University of Alabama said Hawaii is in the rotation in their region, so why not Puerto Rico? We need to plan ahead. We have drops consistently in the region. The University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez said we should always have in mind that at some point, Puerto Rico will host. It will be difficult, but if we plan ahead, we can do it. Some discussion went on for some time. A motion was made for a clear acceptance of decline by Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico. The motion was approved, and Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico said they confirmed their withdrawal for 2019. They do not want to be divisive. A motion was made to ask Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, if they can host in 2020. The motion was seconded and approved. FAU noted that the real issue here is big schools versus little schools. Only the big schools host the conference because they can raise the necessary funds. The 2017 Student Conference at FAU required fund raising on the order of \$130,000. No prior regional competition has raised more than \$50,000, so the issue with Puerto Rico is that most schools cannot raise this kind of funding, and most university budgets will not include it. Hence instead of a Puerto Rico issue, this is really a big versus small school issue. If the region really wants to have hosting at all schools, the region will need to create a mechanism to subsidize the smaller schools. That will substantially impact the big schools. Some discussion continued with no resolution to the issue with costs, small schools or going to Puerto Rico.

- VII. **Announcement for the Good of the Order and Adjournment** – Rick Joseph Adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM