Council on Water Transportation Acting Steering Committee Call
Tuesday, August 6, 2019

Attendees:
- Deidre Smith, Arkansas Waterways Commission – Vice Chair
- Chris Collins, Louisiana – Region 2 Representative
- Dan Harmon, Texas – Region 4 Representative
- Ron Pate, Washington – Deepwater Representative
- Dan Fitzpatrick, Florida
- Trey Daniell, Georgia
- Derek Chow, Hawaii
- BJ Murray, Illinois
- Larry Karnes, Michigan
- Cassandra Caldwell, Oklahoma
- Rick Johnson, Oklahoma
- Dan Pallme, Tennessee
- Avital Barnea, AASHTO

Welcome and roll call
- Deidre welcomed attendees
- Avital read the names of those on the line

Status of amended council charter
- The amended charter is still under consideration by the AASHTO Strategic Management Committee (SMC), which will need to approve by a 2/3 majority in order for the changes to be final
  - Avital will try to get an update from the SMC on when they will vote on the charter amendments
- Until the revised charter is approved by the SMC, the steering committee will meet on an acting basis and all meetings will be open to the full council membership; after the charter is approved by the SMC, the steering committee may meet on its own

Update on steering committee vacancies
- There are still two vacancies on the steering committee:
  - Chair – to be announced soon; an offer was extended to a state DOT CEO to serve as the Council on Water Transportation Chair, but has not been accepted/finalized yet
    - Deidre asked if the Chair would be in place by the in-person meeting in October; Avital replied that she believes so
  - Region 1 Representative – may be any one person from the following states: Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, or Maine
Connecticut and Pennsylvania had both previously expressed interest, but neither has followed up.

WIFIA request from USACE
- The US Army Corps of Engineers is seeking input from potential project sponsors in order to determine if there is sufficient demand for WIFIA loans
  - The National Waterways Conference held an informational conference call on this topic on July 22, which Council on Water Transportation members were invited to attend
- Deidre stated that the Arkansas Waterways Commission sent a letter to Assistant Secretary of the Army R.D. James in support of WIFIA financing for a project in Arkansas and Oklahoma
  - Deidre asked if anyone else’s agencies had sent letters of support; no one said they had
- Avital sent an email to the council on August 1 verifying a list of seven projects that were submitted by the states last year as potential candidates for WIFIA financing
  - Avital asked for responses by August 9; she will then provide the updated list to the Army Corps along with a letter of support from AASHTO
  - Texas and Kentucky confirmed by email that the projects they put forward last year should remain on the list; other states have not responded yet

2021 NCHRP research problem solicitation, due November 1
- The AASHTO Special Committee on Research and Innovation is soliciting candidate research problems for the fiscal year 2021 National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) funding
  - Research problems must have a highway nexus
- Only state DOTs, the Federal Highway Administration, and AASHTO committees and councils may submit research problem statements
  - Ron asked how research needs statements are submitted
    - Problem submittals are due at 4:00 PM Eastern on November 1, 2019—this is a firm deadline
    - Please direct any questions to Lori Sundstrom, NCHRP Manager – LSundstrom@nas.edu
- Deidre stated that she had sent the form to a professor at Vanderbilt who is looking to conduct research on inland waterway education for children; Deidre asked her to expand the scope of her research to include coastal waterways as well
  - The council may submit this problem statement if we support it
  - Deidre and Ron stated that they are in support of this research topic
- AASHTO staff will be part of the problem statement ranking process and can advocate for proposals submitted by the council
- Discussion on NCHRP problem statements the council may submit can continue at the in-person meeting in St. Louis

In-person meeting in St. Louis, October 6
- Avital emailed a draft agenda on July 31 for the in-person meeting
- The council will meet on Sunday, October 6 from 1:00-5:00 PM to hold a business meeting
- Agenda topics so far include:
State Updates – roundtable from states on waterway topics; this may be refined as the meeting date draws closer

Waterway Funding Mechanisms by State – an overview and follow-up of waterway funding write-ups submitted by the states in spring 2019

Water Resources Development Act Reauthorization, Harbor Maintenance Tax Amendments, and Other Key Legislation

Recommendations to the Transportation Policy Forum – any items the council wishes to elevate within AASHTO

Best Practices in Emergency Management: Working with FEMA

Council-Sponsored NCHRP/Research Ideas

Partnerships with Other Industry Groups

- Participants agreed that this sounds like a good agenda, did not have other items to add
- Cheryl Ball from Missouri is also leading planning for a water freight facility tour on Monday, October 7 from 7:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Other business/open discussion

- Avital told the group that she will be leaving her position at AASHTO in a few weeks to join the California State Transportation Agency
  - She stated that it has been a pleasure working with everyone and hopes that we will continue to cross paths in the state transportation industry

The call adjourned at 2:28 PM EDT.