



Bridge Technical Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 26, 2023

Time: 1:00pm-3:00pm

Location: HF S149

Introductions

5 min

Online attendees: Gary Courneya, Brian Rowekamp, Bill Ryan, Brad Diener, Julie Brooks, Christine Hamil, Josh Dietsche, Mark Finnell, Habib Tabatabai, Chad Hayes, Leslie Hidde, Dave Pantzlaff, Pat Cashin, Cami Peterson, Carla Principe, Dave Staab, Tadd Owens, Ann Thielmann, Krissy VanHout, Craig Webster

In-Person attendees: Laura Shadewald, Dominique Bechle, Kyle Busch, Aaron Bonk, Ruth Coisman, David Stanke, Jake Gregerson, Bill Dreher, Joe Balice, Mark Mutziger, Matt Grove, Scott Stroud, Greg Brecka, Mike Delemont, Tim Borowski, James Luebke, John Rublein, Isaac Groshek, Kevin Weber, Craig Pringle, Leah Rhodes, Luke Hahn

Subcommittee Report(s)

10 min

5 min	Design & Construction Subcommittee Update No specific requests came in from the contracting community since this last BTC meeting. Subcommittee will remain in place on an as-needed basis. No current plan in place for a meeting of this group.	Aaron Bonk
5 min	Overlay Equipment Working Group No updates of note to report on overlay equipment.	James Luebke

Standing Topics

15 min

5 min	Wisconsin Highway Research Program Bridge Items http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/about-wisdot/research/whrp.aspx James discussed active projects including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vertical and overhead patches (identify materials and update specifications for product acceptance) - Bridge Thermography Policy (using IR technology) - Underwater Concrete Pours (targeting pile encased pier concrete pours and drilled shaft specification improvements) – project extended 6 months and will wrap up in mid-2024 James also covered upcoming research projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concrete Overlays (trying to improve on early age cracking with this overlay type) - Repairs for MSE Walls (project RFP just went out yesterday and will kick off next year) 	James Luebke
5 min	Bridge Manual Updates James discussed the BOS process for releasing updates to the Bridge	James Luebke



Manual every 6 months, including webinars highlighting the updates that were recently made. These webinars are relatively new and are intended to provide additional insights into the background for why changes are being made. A link to the slides that were presented for the last WBM updates is here:

<https://wisconsindot.gov/dtsdManuals/strct/manuals/bridge/webinar-23-07.pdf>

5 min

Specification Changes/Updates

Mark Finnell/
Aaron Bonk

Multiple people weighed in with an overview of the changes to the standard spec that go into effect with the November 2023 letting (2024 standard spec). A highlight of some of the more pertinent updates are as follows:

- SS501: Change in allowable aggregate gradation for concrete masonry seals, as well as ancillary structure foundations. Aggregate gradation updates based on completed research also have been included in the spec.
- SS502: Clarified and made consistent the usage of different terminology throughout chapter for “floors”, “decks”, and “slabs”.
- SS503: Added strand initial loading clarifications for different strand diameters (0.5 inch vs. 0.6 inch). Mark also mentioned an ASP-6 for concrete gradations that has gone into effect with the November 2023 letting as well, and it will be included in the 2025 standard spec updates.
- SS505: Added reinforcing grade requirements for use in prestressed concrete girders specifically as opposed to lumping it in with all other reinforcing steel (allows ASTM A706 Grade 60 in addition to the AASHTO M31).
- SS509: Added language clarifying when loads could be applied to staged overlays and what the submittal requirements are for doing so.
- SS526: Updated temporary bridge requirements that had been previously included in SPV’s, including material restrictions for use.
- SS710: Added language related to increased cement content with high early strength concrete that is allowed for contractor convenience by contract. Clarified guidance for Corrective Actions in 710.5.7 for optimized gradations occurred as well.
- SS715: Trial batches have been reduced (from 5 to 3) for cast-in-place barriers to align with structural concrete. Verification testing requirements were also updated for Class II concrete in this section of the spec, which are commonly used in overlays and repairs.

Previous Meeting Carryover Topics/Action Item(s) Review

30 min

5 min

Initiative to Reduce Overruns in Concrete Masonry Overlays

Aaron Bonk

Aaron indicated that he has held multiple conversations with



other WisDOT staff since the last Bridge Technical Committee meeting but no clear direction has been set on how to move this forward. Aaron Bonk and Laura Shadewald provided insights into different things that are being done to try to narrow in on the design end of overlay projects (better thermography program statewide, etc.). Discussions were held related to the pilot project that switched the bid item units from CY to SY, but there are downsides to that shift as well.

Over the winter, BOS plans to hold more internal discussions with specific staff from the Regions to gather data and feedback on what continues to be seen, if anything at all.

Action Item(s): Aaron Bonk will continue to facilitate discussions with other WisDOT staff to try to pull together some type of proposal prior to the spring 2024 Bridge Technical Committee meeting or simply close out this item and leave the current process in place.

5 min

Migratory Bird Netting & Structures Scope of Work

Aaron Bonk

Aaron Bonk discussed the different bird netting issues that were discussed at the last Bridge Tech Committee meeting with WisDOT and WDNR staff. It is still the contention that this area has been improving over the last 5+/- years and that there is no intention of including netting on projects as a deterrent, nor is it included in most/all projects. There were discussions about past projects that did include netting when it should not have been, and continued messaging to design teams to consider the need before including the item in the contract will take place. Additionally, the issue of contracts not having time to install the netting early in the spring has been taken care of (WisDOT and WDNR have been working with certain counties to install netting before contract execution). Aaron Bonk has another discussion with WDNR and this topic will be broached again for consideration of updates, but at this time WisDOT would encourage contractors to submit questions during advertisement in the event that they see issues with migratory bird netting within contracts.

5 min

Seal Concrete Mix Design

Aaron Bonk

On a project this construction season, discussions between the contractor and the project team about requirements for seal concrete were brought forward to BOS for involvement. The specific issue at hand was the nature of a given seal for a project – “non-structural” vs. “structural” – and whether modifications to the mix design could be made. BOS and BTS approved the request to change the aggregate size for this particular project given that the seals were “non-structural” in nature given that piles were driven through the seal to bearing,



and that the seals were there to be able to dewater and pour the footings and piers above. Multiple contractors expressed concerns related to being able to pump and pour No. 2 fractured stone for seal pours and a modification to standard spec 501 in the 2024 standard spec (goes into effect with November 2023 letting) explicitly allows the change in aggregate gradation that had historically been accepted by BTS/BOS on a project request basis.

Another aspect of this particular issue that needs further research and clarification is QMP for seal concrete. Currently, QMP applies to all seal concrete and no distinction is made between “non-structural” and “structural” seals. Given that QMP is involved in all seal concrete, there could be some significant cost savings by not requiring it for the “non-structural” seal situations.

Multiple contractors indicated that they’d like to see multiple different items for seal concrete and/or clarifications made to remove the QMP requirements in the case of the “non-structural” seal concrete.

Action Item(s): Laura Shadewald and Aaron Bonk will take this item back and review the specifications for potential updates. These updates would come as a part of the 2025 standard spec given that the 2024 standard spec is just going into effect in the next month.

5 min

In-Stream Barge Spud Pile Restrictions

Aaron Bonk

A meeting has been scheduled for the end of October to discuss clarifying the intent of in-stream disturbances including for barge spud piles. On at least one project this construction season there were disputes over the spec, intent of the spec, implementation consistency from project to project, etc. Discussions during the meeting were brief as no significant progress had been made on this item since the previous meeting.

Action Item(s): BOS will provide an update at the next Bridge Tech Committee meeting related to the outcome of the discussion, and follow-up actions, between WDNR, BOS, BPD, and BTS.

New Topics

40 min

5 min

Prestressed Girder Aggregate Size

Mark Finnell/Tirupan
Mandal

The changes to the standard specifications related to acceptable aggregate sizes for use in prestressed girder concrete were covered in the Specification Changes/Updates



part of this meeting.

5 min

False Decking

Aaron Bonk

This issue was brought forward earlier this summer on a project in the SER where a contractor was planning on doing a deck pour over live traffic during the day. The project staff asked that false decking be installed to mitigate risk on that particular project and the contractor indicated that there was no requirement in the contract to do so. This became a contract administration dispute in the field. Prior to the Bridge Tech Meeting, Aaron Bonk had inquired with the different Regions to see if this dispute was commonplace on projects or not. From what was received, it sounds like there are numerous different issues involved with this topic that should be considered for clarification.

Contractors indicated that if WisDOT wants/requires false decking to be installed with projects, then a bid item should be included in the plans indicating as such (which would also provide a clear conduit for payment of this item). Craig Pringle weighed in and stated that it would behoove everybody to get WisDOT to better define situations where false decking is necessary and should design accordingly. This would be based on WisDOT's assessment of risk management and risk tolerance on a project by project basis.

Kevin Weber indicated that SPS feels that this is a risk management issue and the contractors should have the ability to determine what they are willing to take on. David Stanke indicated that the OCIP program that historically was used in SER changes how risk is viewed and how expectations are set for projects. One example of this shift would be for bridge removals where no road closures are to be taken when OCIP isn't involved in the contract, but if OCIP is involved then the contractors are required to take a road closure. Similarly with this false decking issue, OCIP confuses what is/is not required to be done.

Action Item(s): BOS will discuss this issue further with BPD and the Regions, and will likely pull together a smaller working group (including industry) to try to determine how to clarify this issue for future projects.

5 min

Piling Overages with and without Preboring Measurement

Jake Gregerson/David
Stanke

Jake Gregerson brought up the issue that was seen on one project this construction season. The issue centered on a dispute between the contractor and the project staff in terms of what items would/would not be paid for where a field modification was required to the depth of preboring compared



to what was shown on the plans. In this instance, the depth of preboring was minimal and was asked to be increased in the field due to unsuitable rock quality, which then triggered the need for pile splices and additional preboring in rock.

There are two issues at hand for this specific situation. The payment for additional pile splices (which weren't needed per the original design layout) and the payment for additional preboring. The preboring bid item in the plans is a blended item as the preboring through unconsolidated materials is easier to accomplish than preboring in the rock.

James Luebke indicated that there are currently some ongoing discussions to clarify preboring design guidance in the Bridge Manual, not related to this topic that was brought forward.

Action Item(s): Laura Shadewald will follow-up on this item with Jake Gregerson and make considerations for shifts in how this type of issue is designed and how it should be handled in construction contract administration.

5 min

Concrete Quantity Busts

Kevin Weber

Kevin Weber indicated that they had multiple projects this past year where significant concrete quantity overruns were present. Kevin asked what the expectation was from WisDOT in terms of contractors running quantity calculations during the advertisement and bidding window.

Aaron Bonk indicated that there is some expectation on contractor that they are doing quantity takeoffs during the bidding process. That being said, Aaron also indicated that over the last couple of years there has been a significant emphasis placed on tightening up concrete masonry quantities within structure plans to eliminate rounding differences, etc.

Other contractors in the meeting did not indicate that they had seen similar quantity busts on projects over the course of the last year. There was one box culvert project referenced with smaller quantities that did have a relatively high percentage-wise quantity discrepancy, but overall this doesn't appear to be a common issue being found by industry.

5 min

Removing Structure Over Waterway Bid Items

Kevin Weber

Kevin Weber indicated that they continue to have issues with these bid items in terms of administration in the field, common understanding of what expectations are, etc. Discussions by multiple people in the meeting were held indicating similar frustrations with implementation of these items on projects, which have been well documented in the past.



Cami Peterson and Aaron Bonk both indicated that if contractors have ideas for how to improve the way these bid items are configured, we'd be open to those suggestions for improvements. David Stanke stated that it may be worthwhile to create some type of visual metrics for the different bid items so that a common understanding by all parties involved – designers, construction inspectors, WDNR liaisons, and contractors – is able to be had.

Action Item(s): Contractors to consider sending in example photos and/or videos of removal operations that align with the different bid items for use in compiling a clarification document. Contractors to consider adjustments to the bid items as they are configured right now to improve biddability and reduce the likelihood of disputes.



Bridge Technical Committee Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Date: Thursday, October 26, 2023

Time: 1:00pm-3:30pm

Location: HF S149

Name	Company	Email
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