MINUTES OF AGC-DOT JOINT BRIDGE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
(Approved June 10, 2026)

The AGC-DOT Joint Bridge Subcommittee met on December 10, 2025. Those in attendance were:

Victor Barbour	Carolinas AGC – Highway Division Director (Co-Chairman)
Emily McGraw	Director of Highway Operations
Aaron Earwood	State Bridge Construction Engineer
Liam Shannon	Assistant State Construction Engineer – Eastern
Aaron Griffith	Construction Unit – Bridge Construction Engineer – Western
Tyler Rogers*	Construction Unit – Bridge Construction Engineer – Western
Patrick Cheeves	Construction Unit – Bridge Construction Engineer – Eastern
Randy Hall	Construction Unit – Bridge Construction Engineer – Eastern
Todd Whittington	State Materials Engineer
Nichole Fletcher	M&T Unit Manufactured Products Staff Engineer
Tom Santee*	Assistant State Geotechnical Engineer – Eastern Region
Scott Hidden	Geotechnical Unit – Support Services Supervisor
Trey Carroll	Assistant State Structures Engineer
James Bolden, Jr.	Structures Management Unit – Project Engineer
Tim Sherrill	Structures Management Unit – Staff Engineer
Doug Cantrell	Structures Management Unit – PRR Team Leader
Asa Godfrey	Structures Management Unit – EDS Team Leader
Nathan Hart*	Structures Management Unit – Engineer
James Hawk	Structures Management Unit - Engineer
Mark Newman*	NHM Constructors, LLC
Erick Frazier	S. T. Wooten Corporation
Adam Holcomb*	Dane Construction, Inc.
Justin Carter	Sanford Contractors
Adrian Price*	Flatiron Corporation
Nathan Thomas	Smith-Rowe, LLC
Kyle Wiley	Crowder Construction, Inc.
Peter Distefano	Balfor Beatty
Philip Crissman	Buckeye Bridge, LLC
Jerrad Steward	Conti Civil
Dan Paulsen	Blythe Construction
Brad Satterwhite	Fred Smith Company
Caleb Ellis	Fred Smith Company

* Joined Via Microsoft Teams

During the review of the June 11th, 2025, meeting minutes, the following items were discussed:

1. *RR Flagger*
   The Construction Unit has been working on contract updates for railroad flagging operations. A trial project in Division 9 with the contract updates worked well where the railroad flagger payments pass through the Contractor and NCDOT directly pays for the flagger operations.

This removes the need for the Contractor to bid on a railroad flagger pay item to reduce the Contractors' risk.

Mr. Earwood suggested adding the new provision into railroad bridge contracts moving forward. Mr. Barbour agreed with this suggestion.

2. *Hurricane Helene Relief Update*

Mr. Earwood asked the committee if there are any issues with the express design-build projects in Divisions 13 and 14. There was agreement amongst the Contractors that the utility relocation by others is an issue that is affecting project schedules. Mr. Frazier noted that it's typically the utility relocation and right-of-way acquisition that are delaying projects. When projects require property condemnation, ROW acquisition can be delayed by 3 or 4 months. Contractors noted that permitting and cored slab production lead times have not typically been an issue with project schedules.

The Construction Unit suggested that hiring sub-contractors to perform simple utility relocation work could help with project schedules.

Action item:
Construction will continue to investigate a solution to utility relocation and ROW acquisition delays.

3. *Pedestrian Culverts*

Mr. Earwood stated there are no updates at this time but wanted to remind the committee that NCDOT does expect the pedestrian culverts to have an ordinary surface finish in accordance with the *Standard Specifications* Article 420-17(B). This requirement is generally waived on hydraulic box culverts with the exception of the wingwalls and 10' +/- from the ends of the culvert.

Action Item:
None

4. *Buy America Changes*

Mr. Whittington reminded the committee that the requirements/specifications set forth by the *Buy American Act* hasn't changed. The *Build America Buy America Act* (BABA) applies to projects that utilize federal funding, whereas the *Buy American Act* is for all projects (federal and State funded).

Materials and Tests Unit and the Construction Units confirmed that the responsibility of BABA compliance is with the product manufacturer. Contractors must request BABA certifications from the product manufacturer on construction materials and on manufactured products. Mr. Hidden asked how to discern between a manufactured product and a construction material. Mr. Whittington stated the individual States are responsible for determining the difference between what is a manufactured product and what is a construction material and suggested that it may take an investigation of the FHWA before we start to see standardization across the states.

The minutes of the June 11, 2025, meeting were approved.

The following items of new business were discussed:

1. *Projected Bridge Lettings*
   Mr. Barbour asked if there are plans to advertise additional projects in the remainder of the fiscal year. He noted there hasn't been as much bridge work available in the eastern part of the state in comparison to the western part of the state due to Hurricane Helene response projects.

   Mr. Carroll noted that the 12 Month Let List that is published on the SMU NCDOT website and pointed out that there are currently 9 projects on the Central Bridge Program remaining to be let this fiscal year with a total construction estimate of approximately $120M. He added that in the next fiscal year we are expecting the Central Bridge Program to be allocated $200M and the Divisions will be allocated approximately $130M. In addition to bridge replacement funds, bridge preservation funds are typically $50M per fiscal year.

   Mrs. McGraw provided a Hurricane Helene relief funding update. She noted that in addition to the funds that Mr. Carroll described above, the only other funding source currently being considered for Hurricane Helene response at this time is General Maintenance Reserve (GMR). NCDOT has begun modelling Hurricane Helene expenditures and reimbursements and hope to have updated models available in January. NCDOT is currently receiving federal reimbursement for Hurricane Helene related expenditures. She pointed out that some recovery work will not be eligible for reimbursement, but larger corridor projects (such as I-40) could be up to 90% reimbursable. NCDOT continues to work closely with our federal partners in the reimbursement process.

   Action Item:
   None.

2. *Joint Conference Topics*
   Mr. Barbour asked members of the committee if there were any pertinent topics that they would like to see added to the list of topics discussed at the 2026 CAGC/NCDOT Joint Conference. Mr. Barbour asked Mr. Shannon if the railroad provision would be completed before the Joint Conference. Mr. Shannon responded that it will depend largely on how the railroads respond.

   A contractor asked if digital delivery will be discussed at the Joint Conference. Mr. Shannon stated that it will be discussed at the conference but there is still internal discussion how to best present this topic (general session or breakout session). Mr. Earwood reminded everyone that the joint conference is a great time to disseminate any topics/information that has been discussed at the AGC meetings.

A contractor brought up issues with the wingwall cracking in cases where the wing is not supported by a pile. Mr. Earwood noted they have tried using a wing wall pile with an integral abutment in the past and there were no perceived cracking issues. He suggests revising the Structures Design Manual to permit the use of plumb wing wall piles oriented about the weak axis. Additionally, Mr. Earwood is in support of adding the wing piles as a supplemental agreement on upcoming projects while updating the Design Manual.

Action Item:
SMU to work on updating guidance to include a vertical wing pile used with integral end bents.

3. *Estimated Quantities (quantities that routinely over/under run)*

Mr. Barbour notified the group that each AGC subcommittee was instructed to investigate if there are any pay item quantities that routinely come in under or over the specified amount on contract plans. He asked the group if there are any pay items that fall under this category.

Mr. Frazier noted that erosion control on bridge projects is typically underrunning the quantities on the contract plans as well as quantities for undercut and select material. He suggested there may be a standard token amount being used for these pay items and if so that token amount is consistently over what they are experiencing in the field. The Contractors suggested reducing the token amount currently being used for these contingency items.

Mr. Earwood pulled up the most recent Underrun Report and verified that all the discussed pay items are showing up as significant underrun. A contractor noted that they are typically experiencing a 7-10% underrun for those items, on bridge replacement projects.

The group came to a consensus that typical items that underrun on a bridge replacement project include erosion control, shallow undercut excavation, subdrain and class IV subgrade stabilization.

Action Item:
Mr. Earwood asked the group to report any other pay items that show up as underrun/overrun. The Construction Unit to investigate if token amounts for specific pay items can be adjusted.

4. *P Joint Forming*

Mr. Earwood showed the committee a photo of a typical strip seal P Joint formwork that had a joint spacing device welded to the strip seal rails. He reminded the committee that this practice isn't allowed per the special provision. Welding the formwork to the P Joint rail removes the protective coating of the rail which is undesirable. Contractors are instructed to develop new methods to support the joint rails during the deck pour. Mr. Earwood suggested supporting the formwork from the backside of the joint.

Action Item:
None

5. *Skidmore Calibration*

Skidmore calibration is a process to measure the tension in bolted assemblies. Mr. Earwood wanted to remind the committee that skidmore calibration has historically been required every 6 months. The 2024 NCDOT Standard Specifications increased the calibration interval to 12 months. He stated NCDOT is okay with moving to the 12-month calibration requirement for active projects that were let under the 2018 Standard Specifications. The Construction Unit noted that they maintain a list of vendors across the State that can perform this calibration.

Action Item:
None

6. *Cored Slab Tensioning*

Mr. Earwood notified the group that since the previous meeting a special provision that updates the Standard Specifications regarding the cored slab tensioning procedure was released and will be included in the contracts effective with the December 2025 letting. The special provision adds the requirement of an extra pipe sleeve which will be inserted into the post-tensioning duct prior to threading the transverse post-tensioning strand. A Contractor requested to increase the transverse post-tensioning strand hole diameter. The additional pipe sleeve as well as increasing the post-tensioning strand hole will help facilitate the replacement of broken strands for future maintenance.

Mr. Earwood reminded the group that the jacks used for cored slab post-tensioning are required to be calibrated, with their respective gauges, every 12 months.

Action Item:
SMU to investigate the feasibility of increasing the post-tensioning strand standard hole diameter.

7. *Steel Price Adjustment*

Mr. Earwood reminded the committee that it's the contractor's responsibility to submit the SPA2 and SPA3 forms when seeking a steel price adjustment. When applying for a steel price adjustment, the contractor must download the new SPA3 form every month. This form is updated each month and each request must be combined with the SPA3 form for the respective month. For example, if there is a price adjustment in December, the contractor must wait until the updated SPA3 form is published in January of the following month to apply for the adjustment.

There was general discussion on the difficulty of pinpointing the steel delivery date. Fabricators use different methods of transportation, and this is making it difficult to track the age of the rebar. Mr. Frazier asked for clarification of the date on the rebar. Mr. Earwood stated the date on the rebar is the date in which the rebar leaves the mill. It was noted that using the date the steel arrives on site isn't a great solution for tracking because the price could have changed during transit. Mr. Earwood reminded the group that if the contractor opts in to the steel price adjustment, then the suppliers/fabricators must also opt in the program to complete the price adjustment.

Action Item:
AGC and NCDOT Committee on Steel Price Adjustment should reconvene and discuss potential improvements to the program.

8. *Reinforcing Steel on Plans*

Mr. Godfrey notified the group that the current steel reinforcing bar types and naming conventions will have to be updated/standardized to move forward in developing Digital Delivery using the Bentley drafting software. The goal is to standardize both the bar type and bar names globally about the bridge/model. He shared a draft Bar Bending Detail sheet with the group. He proceeded to show the group different proposed naming conventions for steel reinforcement in attempt to get feedback to which convention is preferred. The two proposed conventions include:

- Keeping the bar names as they currently are but adding an element identifier to indicate where a bar is being used (e.g. D-deck, B-bent, etc.)
- Not adding the element identifier to the name but change some of the existing bar names to ensure that no bar names are being used twice across the entire structure. For example, a B1 bar would be only used in the deck and not in the bent cap, as is current practice.

Members of the committee voiced their preference to the element identifier naming convention. Mr. Godfrey noted that SMU is in the preliminary development steps of making these changes and it would take some time before these changes are implemented.

Action Item:
SMU to continue to develop the Bar Bending Detail sheet as well as an updated bar naming convention.

9. *Other*

A. *M&T Updates*

Mr. Whittington notified the committee of staff updates at the Materials and Tests Unit. Jason Civils has assumed Cabel Garbee's position as the Manufactured Products Engineer, Natalie Bravo has assumed the position of Concrete Products Engineer, and Nicole Fletcher has assumed the role of Manufactured Products Staff Engineer.

B. *Cored Slab Hold-Downs*

Mr. Earwood brought up to the group that it is unclear if hold-down anchors need to be placed only at the end cored slabs or at each interior slab as well. He also noted that we have standardized the hold-down details to utilize swedge anchors in lieu of an embedded plate welded to the bottom of the anchor.

Mr. Godfrey clarified that if hold downs are required based on the hydraulic design data, the cored slab exterior units must be held down at a minimum, but it is the responsibility of the Engineer of Record to determine if hold downs are required at all slabs due to the uplift forces from a flooding event.

Mr. Thomas noted that his preference was to see all units anchored down instead of just the ends. He also noted that using an all-threaded rod as opposed to the swedge anchor is easier for construction to set up formwork on the cap. There was a consensus amongst the contractors to prefer the use of a threaded rod over a swedge anchor for easier constructability as well as availability of the threaded rod.

A contractor brought up a potential issue with the anchor rods not lining up with the anchor rod holes in the cored slabs. The Construction Unit noted that it is best practice to set the cored slab units starting from the center of the bridge and work towards the exterior units. Placing cored slab units starting from one end of the bridge to the other end can lead to anchor rods not aligning with their respective holes in the cored slab units. It was asked if it is acceptable to place the cored slabs then drill into the cap and use epoxy to secure the anchor rods to the cap. Mr. Earwood stated that he doesn't agree with that approach when anchor rods are required because a secure bond is needed between the cap and the anchor when the additional hold down strength is necessary. On projects with dowel bars, he is open to the drilling and epoxy method, if necessary.

Action Item:
SMU to investigate updating the cored slab hold down details to include threaded rods over swedge anchors.

C. *Sonic Calibration Testing*

A Contractor brought up sonic caliper testing to inquire about when this testing is required. Mr. Earwood stated that this is a test used to determine the shape of the drilled shaft after being poured and stated the test should only be done if Geotech sees a need for this testing, typically on larger diameter drilled shafts. Mr. Hidden stated that this test is not something that is typical on centrally let projects.

**** Upcoming 2025 Meeting Dates:**
February 11th (Canceled)
April 8th (Canceled)
June 10th
August 12th
October 14th