



Ohio Construction Coalition

“News Blast”

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www.ohioconstructioncoalition.org

FIRST O.C.C. ANNUAL MEETING & DISCUSSION A SUCCESS

Gov. Ted Strickland’s Executive Assistant for Economic Development Wendy Patton joined several other government officials and 40 O.C.C. members last week for the O.C.C.’s first State Construction Industry Reception and Discussion. The event, held April 26 at the Electrical Trades Center in Columbus, featured discussions on the state’s construction industry, the labor-management business model, responsible contracting and school construction.

Also joining Ms. Patton were Jim Kaster of Attorney General Marc Dann’s Office and John Levitt of Auditor of State Mary Taylor’s Office. Legislators in attendance were State Reps. Matt Szollosi (D-49th District), Ted Celeste (D-24), Ross McGregor (R-72) and Armond Budish (D-8).

Prior to hosting government officials, the O.C.C. annual meeting included a presentation on the O.C.C.’s mission and accomplishments, an endorsement from the Ohio State Building & Construction Trades Council, roll-out of the Responsible Contracting Rules presentation and a discussion on the future of the O.C.C.

“I felt the membership showed strong support for the direction the OCC is heading,” O.C.C. Co-Chair Bill Brennan said after the event. “The Ohio State Building Trades Council affirmed their commitment to the O.C.C., and the legislators who were present were attentive to the issues of concern to the industry.”

Following lunch, the state officials and O.C.C. members took a guided tour of the training facility and held informal discussions around the facility’s conference room.

“We were pleased to see how the O.C.C. event was able to embrace officials from both political parties and appreciate the involvement of such emerging Statehouse leaders such as Rep. Ross McGregor of Springfield,” O.C.C. Board Member Valerie Dahlberg of the Mechanical Contractors Association of Greater Dayton, said afterwards. “We were also pleased to see the great diversity of regions represented as well as a great diversity of industry sectors.”

O.C.C. PRESENTATION FOR NEW O.S.F.C. BID RULES READY

The O.C.C.’s presentation to explain the new O.S.F.C. Responsible Contractor guidelines and their benefits to local school districts is ready to be put in front of school district officials! O.C.C. representatives will make the presentations to individual school districts around the state as they come up for O.S.F.C. funding eligibility.

The PowerPoint presentation includes video and media documentation of poor work at schools around the state, including the Frontier Local district, and thorough explanations about how Responsible Bidder language can help districts avoid such problems. Presentations can take 15 to 20 minutes.

To have the O.C.C. make a presentation to a school board in your area, please contact Calvin Jefferson at 1-888-445-8255 or cjefferson@bmamedia.com, or Bob Verhoff at 440-366-4003 or rverhoff@lorainccc.edu.

The O.S.F.C. unanimously passed a resolution in February that puts in place a set of 17 “contractor qualifications” criteria that school districts can now use to help choose “lowest responsible bidders” for their state-funded school construction projects. Later this month, the state will “fine-tune” the criteria with guidance from the O.C.C. and the State Building Trades Council.

MORE PROGRESS SEEN ON FRONTIER SCHOOLS SITUATION

While the O.C.C. continues to offer legal support to embattled Frontier School District and monitor its campaign to have the state and its contractors answer for construction deficiencies on the district’s new

schools, the state last week approved releasing \$1.7 million in O.S.F.C. funds for roof repairs for Frontier's schools.

Frontier board members said they feel they've achieved the impossible. "Even three or four weeks ago, five or six weeks ago, people still said this was impossible," board member Dean Booth told the local newspaper, The Marietta Times. "Sometimes you've got to be a little stubborn, I guess."

District officials and board members have also been talking with those at Waterford-based Lang Masonry, who filed a lawsuit against the board of education and the O.C.C. in March, claiming false statements had been made about the quality of their work on the project.

The district had two new elementary schools built and Frontier High School renovated, but before the doors even opened on the \$24.7 million buildings major construction flaws were discovered and the board has been trying to get repairs since. Lawsuits against the contractors and the O.S.F.C. have been discussed and board members have refused any deals where the district had to pay for the repairs, which they felt was unfair and financially impossible.

In March, the O.C.C. arranged a meeting with representatives for Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann and Frontier Local Schools District officials to further discuss the problems at Frontier.

The O.C.C. continues to pledge to offer Frontier Schools legal support. Over the past year, the O.C.C. has assisted the district, located in southeast Ohio, with planning legal action over the faulty construction, which includes leaking roofs and failing masonry work among many other problems on all three of its new buildings. The O.C.C. also has been collecting funds for Frontier and was formulating a law suit for the school district.

The repairs should begin soon, according to Frontier Superintendent Troy Thacker.

"We waited for four years and now it seems like everything will be done this summer," he told The Marietta Times. "We had a meeting and were trying to get timelines together."

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