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A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Chuck Parker, *President* | Dave Efaw, *Secretary-Treasurer* | Steve White, *Director*

DEP Stormwater Permits Plague Highway Projects

What should be a very busy construction season building roads and bridges is turning out to be a bust for many construction workers.

The problem is not a lack of projects, it appears to be slow moving environmental permits.

Major projects such as Corridor H in Randolph and Tucker County, the St. Albans-Nitro Bridge on Route 64 in Putnam County and the Jefferson Road project in Kanawha County all have pending stormwater permits.

"We've already had layoffs at Corridor-H and are being told to expect more," said Chuck Parker, Business Manager of Operating Engineers Local 132. "Many other projects can't get started all because of stormwater permit delays."

"It's very frustrating for people who want and need to work."

According to Parker the hold up is with the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection (DEP).

"We are being told by contractors, and confirmed by DOH, there have been significant hold ups with DEP permits," said Parker.

One example is a \$22 million project in Marshall County called

"Upgrade Kent - Franklin Rd." The stormwater permit, submitted in May of 2019, is still not completed.

"It's been more than a year and still counting for a permit that should take less than 100 days," said Parker.

Another example is the Berkeley Springs Bypass. The stormwater permit application went in on October 3, 2019 and it still not complete some

ten months later.

"We have heard DEP is understaffed and frankly some of the problems are self-inflicted by engineers hired by contractors," said Parker. "But pointing fingers doesn't help the person who is unemployed and looking at a bleak winter if they don't get to work soon."

Parker along with Laborers Dis-

trict Council Business Manager Craig Harvey, have met with DOH to look for solutions. ACT's Steve White has contacted DEP as well.

"We're told by DOH and DEP there is a problem and they are working on it," said Harvey. "But we need to see results, and fast, construction workers and their families are already suffering the consequences." ■



The night crew on this Corridor-H project was recently laid-off and more layoffs are expected due to permit delays. Kokosing is the general contractor on the Design-Build project.

Ohio PTT Ethane Cracker Investor Pulls Out

Daelim Chemical, a major investor in the proposed Belmont County, Ohio ethane cracker plant called PTT has pulled out of the \$10 billion deal.

The announcement came July 14.

The project was first announced in 2015 by PTT Global Chemical, a Thailand-based corporation as a \$5

billion investment. Like the Shell cracker in nearby Pennsylvania, the plant would take advantage of plentiful and inexpensive ethane that is a byproduct of natural gas production.

The Marcellus and Utica Shale formations have been rich in wet gas, the wet meaning liquids like ethane.

In 2018 South Korea based Daelim Chemical announced they were partnering with PTT on the project and increased the scope to \$10 billion.

PTTGC reportedly has spent roughly \$200 million on site preparation and engineering studies, with

site preparation basically completed this February.

Bechtel Corporation has been selected as the contractor for the project and a project labor agreement is in place with Bechtel and the Upper Ohio Valley Building Trades.

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Dealing with Covid-19 in Construction

Keeping worksites safe from Covid-19 is a challenge the construction industry is trying hard to meet.

One local health professional, Dr. Ayne Amjed from Beckley, has developed a Mobile Covid-19 Unit which can deploy to any construction job site when needed. Dr. Amjed provided a demonstration package of her decontamination kit to Charleston based general contractor BBL Carlton to review.

“We appreciate Dr. Amjed reaching out to the construction industry,” said Todd Corey, Vice President with BBL Carlton. “Let’s face it, we’re all trying to get ahead of the curve and forward thinkers like Dr. Amjed bring much needed expertise.”

Corey along with Tom Aurelia, BBL’s Corporate Risk Manager, went through four boxes making up the decontamination unit and found the material to be very useful and of high quality.

“I was impressed with how much thought obviously went into the material,” said Aurelia. “This is definitely more than a few boxes of supplies.”

One box had supplies for daily decontamination and if needed a deep cleaning of site equipment, bathrooms and office trailers. It included 70 percent alcohol-based sanitation wipes, spray units to clean porta-potties, portable hand washing kits, air purifiers for office trailer units, UV handheld devices, and other UV devices for electrical components.

If an employee has Covid-19 symptoms, or suspects exposure, another box in the decontamination unit is available. The purpose is to provide an employee with self-quarantining instructions and materials while they await test results.

The box includes instructions for the employee and their family, gloves, masks, and other tools to self-quarantine.

Aurelia particularly liked the box for employees. “Sending the employee home with the right materials while waiting for test results makes a lot of sense.”

Dr. Amjed also developed a manual to help contractors work through instances where an employee has

symptoms or comes into contact with a person who has tested positive.

Dr. Amjed provided the samples to Carpenters representative Luke Begovich who in turn brought them to BBL. “We want everyone to stay safe while earning a good living,” said Begovich. “It’s important we work with contractors to find tools needed to keep safe and keep working.”

Begovich also notes that Virginia became the first state to issue mandatory Covid-19 workplace safety rules on July 15.

The Virginia emergency temporary standard will be the first to go beyond OSHA’s non-mandatory guidance and establish minimum protection requirements.

OSHA has said they do not intend to propose a nationwide rule regulating Covid-19 measures and protec-

tions in the workplace.

The rule divides workplaces into four categories called Low, Medium, High and Very High exposure risks.

Medium exposure risk includes “indoor and outdoor construction settings” and is defined as places of employment that require more than minimal occupational contact inside six feet with other employees.

High exposure risk includes most healthcare and assisted living locations. Very high risks are where direct contact with Covid-19 patients is taking place such as a hospital.

Begovich welcomes the Virginia regulations and hopes West Virginia does the same. “Having a standard of protection is good for both workers and contractors, recommendations alone are hard if not impossible to enforce,” said Begovich. ■

Congressman McKinley Tours Training Facility



Members of Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 83, Wheeling (from left) Nick O’Donnell, L.A. Hampton, Jameson Murray, Andy Hanasky, Eric O’Donnell (back), and Adam Robinson talk with Congressman David McKinley in mid-July as he tours their training facility.



Michael Ball, BBL Carlton’s Safety Coordinator, going through the Mobile Covid-19 information provided by Dr. Ayne Amjed.

OH Cracker Investor

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Matt Szollosi, Executive Director of ACT Ohio, has been involved with the project from the start.

“We had great meetings with the PTT development team, JobsOhio and the Governor from the very beginning,” said Szollosi. “I am still optimistic about the project and there continues to be a strong commitment to the building trades. We are appreciative of the opportunity to build

this world-class project.”

PTT Global is still actively involved in the project and, according to news reports, is looking for a new investor.

“Obviously we are disappointed to see Daelim leave,” said Eran Molz, President of the Upper Ohio Valley Building Trades. “But we still believe in the project and hope the PTT folks can find a way to make it happen.” ■

'20 Endorsements

Bold = Building Trades member

1st Congressional District

David McKinley (R)

Governor

Ben Salango (D)

State Treasurer

John Perdue (D)

Attorney General

Sam Petsonk (D)

Secretary of State

Natalie Tennant (D)

State Auditor

Mary Ann Claytor (D)

Agriculture Commissioner

Bob Beach (D)

State Senate

- 1st Randy Swartzmiller (D)
- 2nd Josh Gary (D)
- 3rd Robin Wilson (D)
- 4th No Action
- 5th Bob Plymale (D)
- 7th No Action

- 8th **Glenn Jeffries (D)**
- 9th David 'Bugs' Stover (R)
- 10th Bill Laird (D)
- 11th Denise Campbell (D)
- 12th Doug Facemire (D)
- 13th Mike Caputo (D)
- 14th David Childers (D)
- 16th Pete Dougherty (D)
- 17th Andrew Robinson (D)

House of Delegates

- 1st Pat McGeehan (R)
- Jack Wood (D)
- 2nd **Phillip Diserio (D)**
- 3rd Shawn Fluharty (D)
- Erikka Storch (R)
- 4th Christian Turak (D)
- Lisa Zukoff (D)
- 5th Dave Pethtel (D)
- 8th Andrew Alvarez (D)
- 10th Vernon Criss (R)
- Trish Pritchard (D)
- Luke Winters (D)
- 11th Mark Pauley (D)

- 13th **Scott Brewer (D)**
- 14th Chris Yeager (D)
- 15th Tess Jackson (D)
- 16th Mark Bates (R)
- Sean Hornbuckle (D)
- 17th Chad Lovejoy (D)
- Matthew Rohrbach (R)
- 18th No Action
- 19th Ric Griffith (D)
- David Thompson (D)
- 20th Nathan Brown (D)
- 21st Mark Dean (R)
- 22nd Joe Jeffries (R)
- Zack Maynard (R)
- 23rd Rodney Miller (D)
- 24th Susan Perry (D)
- Timothy Tomblin (D)
- 25th Tony Paynter (R)
- 26th Ed Evans (D)
- 27th Tina Russell (D)
- 28th Ryne Nahodi (D)
- 30th Mick Bates (D)
- 31st Chris Toney (R)
- 32nd Mark Hurt (D)
- Margaret Staggers (D)
- 34th Brent Boggs (D)
- 35th Kathy Ferguson (D)
- Doug Skaff Jr. (D)
- Rusty Williams (D)
- Kayla Young (D)
- 36th Jim Barach (D)
- Amanda Estep-Burton (D)
- Larry Rowe (D)
- 37th Mike Pushkin (D)
- 38th Nikki Ardman (D)
- 39th No Action
- 41st Duane Bragg (D)
- 42nd Cindy Lavender-Bowe (D)
- Jeff Campbell (D)
- 43rd Bill Hartman (D)
- Cody Thompson (D)
- 44th Robin Cutlip (D)
- 46th Bob Stultz (D)
- 47th Ed Larry (D)
- 48th Ryan Deems (D)
- Robert Garcia (D)
- Richard Iaquina (D)
- Josh Maxwell (D)
- 49th Mike Mannypenny (D)
- 50th Michael Angelucci (D)
- Joey Garcia (D)
- No Action between Ron Straight (D) & Guy Ward (R)
- 51st Barbara Fleischauer (D)
- Evan Hansen (D)
- Rodney Pyles (D)
- Danielle Walker (D)
- John Williams (D)
- 52nd Junior "JR" Wolfe (D)
- 53rd Cory Chase (D)
- 55th Jarod Shockey (D)
- 58th George Miller (R)
- 60th Brad Noll (D)
- 61st Jason Barrett (D)
- 62nd Debi Carroll (D)
- 63rd Daniel Bennett (D)
- 65th Sammi Brown (D)
- 66th Storme Frame (D)
- 67th John Doyle (D)

Explanation of the term 'No Action'

The WV State Building Trades Council could not reach the two-thirds majority needed to endorse candidates in five races. This means both candidates have support and should get consideration for endorsement. The term 'No Action' is shorthand for 'two good candidates.' Candidates are encouraged to seek endorsements from individual Locals and Councils.

The Building Trades participates in the WV AFL-CIO COPE endorsement process of candidate questionnaires and interviews.

The endorsement process is based on work related issues like restoring prevailing wage, workplace safety, enforcing and strengthening licensing laws, opposing so-called Right-to-Work, etc.

General Election Underway Early

Expanded access to absentee ballots means voting in the 2020 General election is already underway.

Starting on August 11 those who want to receive an absentee ballot can request an application from their County Clerk.

Typically, only a handful of voters opt for the absentee ballot but in the 2020 Primary about half of all votes cast were absentee.

Of course, that was because of Covid-19 restrictions and concerns which continue.

In the Primary election County Clerks mailed all registered voters the absentee application. That will not happen for the General election. Voter must request the application in order to receive one.

However, as was in the Primary, any voter who wants to get an absentee ballot can get one.

Having concerns about Covid-19 has been added as a valid reason for requesting the absentee ballot.

Voters can also request an absen-

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Senator Glenn Jeffries puts up a sign for the 2020 General election. He is running for reelection to the 8th Senate District which includes parts of Putnam and Kanawha Counties. Jeffries owns Cornerstone Interiors and is a member of the Carpenters Union.

Shepherdstown Library Project Questioned on Bidding Law & Prequalification Process

A new public construction project in Shepherdstown is possibly violating state bidding laws by blocking bidders.

The 10,000 square foot Shepherdstown library project in Jefferson County used a prequalification process that may not be allowed under state law.

In order to bid as a general contractor a short one-week advertisement let contractors know about the prequalification. One ad only had two email addresses for contacts and contained a typo in one address.

If a contractor missed the ad, or sent their request to the incorrect email, they did not get the prequalification application and were not allowed to bid the project.

While several contractors did prequalify not one was a contractor which hires local union workers.

ACT requested a copy of the prequalification form and process but only got a simple AIA (Architect

Institute of America) form.

ACT tried but was unsuccessful proposing the prequalification be extended as was permitted by the advertisement to allow additional contractors to bid.

When asked how the library was to evaluate the responses and decide who was qualified there was no meaningful response.

The lack of response prompted an official Freedom of Information Act letter requesting the prequalification judging criteria -- and the bid documents used.

The bid date was to be August 6, but when calling for bid results the following day, ACT learned the bid date was postponed until August 17.

"It's a shame contractors who employ qualified local union workers were denied the opportunity to even bid the project as a general contractor," said Rob Reckart, a representative of the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters.

State law requires all public projects valued at more than \$25,000 be competitively bid. There are no provisions for prequalification.

"Open competitive bidding protects the public," said Reckart. "Every elected official has a friend or relative

who would love to be handed a job."

ACT is considering legal action and plans to monitor the project to see if it complies with other state laws such as the WV Jobs Act, the Alcohol and Drug Free Act, OSHA 10 requirements, and others. ■

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Carpenters Help Build K9 Course

Members of the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters volunteered to help build a K9 Training Obstacle Course in Roanoke, Virginia.

With local law enforcement and citizen volunteers the obstacle course was completed Saturday, August 1.

The effort was a project of "Spikes K9 Fund" a non profit organization founded by James Hatch, a retired Special Warfare Operator.

As a K9 handler on several deployments, Hatch's life was regularly spared by the work of K9s.

On his final deployment, the night he was critically wounded, a K9 named Spike saved Hatch's life while losing his own.

According to Josh Nappi, Carpenters Representative for Local 205, the K9 obstacle course will serve Roanoke and surrounding K9 Agencies.

"We're happy to be part of the

project," said Nappi. "Spike's made it easy and the community really pulled together to get it done."

The Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters also donated \$4,800 for materials. ■



(From left) Randall May, Carpenters Local 439; Jeremy Jeffers, WV Training Director; Josh Nappi, Local 205; and Luke Begovich, Team Lead for the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenter, Charleston-Roanoke area, volunteer to build a K9 Obstacle Course in Roanoke, VA.

General

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tee ballot application online at the Secretary of State website sos.wv.gov

Starting on September 18 County Clerks will begin mailing absentee ballots to those who have completed the application.

Voters can request the absentee ballot until October 28.

October 13 is the final day to register to vote or to make changes to your voter registration like a change of address.

Early voting begins on October 21 and will continue until October 31.

"Normally ads and postcards start to pick up when early voting starts," said Dave Efaw, Secretary Treasure of the WV State Building Trades Council. "With so many using the absentee ballot candidates have to rethink when to start communicating with voters."

Tuesday, November 3 is election day. ■