

Ghana Transportation Professionals Forum (GTPF)

Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting

DATE: January 15, 2019

VENUE: Marriot Marquis, Washington, D.C.

ATTENDANCE: 42 members (Attendance sheet appended)

In attendance were professionals from companies and institutions including, Ghana Institution of Engineering, Ghana Highway Authority, Virginia Department of Transportation, E-ternational Research Consulting, University of Missouri, University of Louisiana, WSP, Penonni, IML Consult, DELIN Consult Limited, Catholic University of America, Fehr and Peers, Florida Department of Transportation, University of Wisconsin and Ford Motor Company. The proceedings of the meeting are summarized below:

INTRODUCTION

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Dr. Dan Seedah, president of GTPF. Participants at the meeting were asked to introduce themselves. The president welcomed all members and thanked everyone for their immense contribution to the group during the past year. He presented briefly the demographics of GTPF. The president also noted that some of our members are not in our database and so it necessitates that we update our membership database this year. He emphasized that cooperation from members would be greatly needed in this regard.

RECAP OF 2018 ACTIVITIES

- **Newsletters**

Dr. Margaret-Avis Akofio- Sowah, the vice president of GTPF, reported that two newsletters were prepared in 2018. One was mailed out in March, the other was scheduled for July but was not distributed because all our efforts were diverted to the planning of the Ghana Infrastructure Conference (GIC) at that time. She commented that the organization transitioned to the use of MailChimp in distributing newsletters electronically.

- **Webinar**

Three webinars were organized in 2018 with presentations from Julius Codjoe, Joojo France Mensah, and Ama Wakefield. Representatives from Ghana were encouraged to participate in the webinars and also share the information with other interested parties. Dr. Dan Seedah reported that the webinars recorded about 25 participants as its highest and 10 as its lowest. He indicated that the different time zones was a challenge for some of the members to participate in the webinar series.

- **Web & Social Media**

At the meeting, members were encouraged to join our primary social media platform which is WhatsApp. The organization seeks to increase its social media presence to include other platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

- **Finance Report**

The budget for the past year 2018 was presented at the meeting. It was noted that our revenue exceeded the expenditure due to excess funds that were raised for the conference. The main expenditure for the past year was for the Ghana Infrastructure Conference. Due to the profit made, the organization had to file taxes and therefore hired the services of an accountant. Ing Bempong pointed out that the revenue and expenditure did not balance in the budget. The Vice President noted the error and promised to fix it. Ing Bempong then moved for the approval of the budget. Members were also reminded to pay their dues by March 31st, 2019 in order to remain active members for the year.

- **Ghana Infrastructure Conference (GIC-1)**

A recap of the GIC-1 activities was presented by Dr. Akofio-Sowah and Ms. Yolanda Oliver-Commey. In the presentation, it was mentioned that Dr Adzo Amekudzi-Kennedy was the keynote speaker and the Senior Minister; Dr. Yaw Osafo – Maafo, was the guest of honor. Ms. Oliver-Commey commented that all the presentations at the conference have been uploaded on our website. She also mentioned that the Ghana Infrastructure Report Card was launched during the conference. In concluding, she indicated that two technical tours were embarked on including field visit to the Tema Port expansion project site and a tour to Terminal 3 at the Kotoka International Airport.

Mr. Olaoluwa Dairo asked if the organization had considered partnering with other countries. The response was that the organization is still learning to grow its roots deep and that collaborations with other countries was not a priority for now. Mr. Prince Annoh also asked if the organization has considered including other disciplines in the civil engineering field. The president stated that the topic was on the agenda for discussion later that night. Ms. Marian Ankomah suggested that in order not to generalize the group, it is important that we well defined what GTPF is. She further explained that rather than generalizing the group to include other civil engineering disciplines, the organization should focus on the different aspects of transportation.

- **Partnership and Collaboration with Other Entities**

GTPF in the past year signed two Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Ghana Institution of Engineering (GhIE) and Transportation Research Centre, Kumasi (TReCK) KNUST, respectively. The GhIE MOU is awaiting signatures from their council.

NETWORKING BREAK

There was a break at 8:30 pm for members to socialize and network. The meeting reconvened at 8:45 pm.

GHANA INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERING

Ing. Kwabena Bempong, a representative from Ghana Institution of Engineering, gave a presentation on how Ghanaian professionals working abroad can become members of GhIE. He stated that the requirements in becoming a member included submitting a CV, certifications and

taking a test. He noted that the examination is in three categories; written, oral and a technical review. Ing Bempong also mentioned that professionals with PE are not required to go through the full examination, however, the technical review section is compulsory. The review section comprises of a power point presentation to a panel explaining a project the engineer has undertaken. He stated that arrangements can be made for exam scripts to be sent to examination centers across the United States for U.S. residents to take the exams. Mr. Kwasi Donkor asked about the benefits of licensing in Ghana as a working engineer in the US. Ing. Bempong replied that it is a requirement to be eligible to work on projects that may require expertise outside of Ghana.

GUEST SPEAKER

The guest presentation was given by Ing Magnus Quarshie. He gave a brief presentation on the current state of affairs in Ghana and encouraged members to consider relocating home for the several opportunities that await them. Ing. Quarshie mentioned that the nation has seen road infrastructure developments, but the progress has been slow. He stated that it would take a collective effort from professionals both in Ghana and the diaspora to make a difference in the country. Some attendees expressed concerned about the disconnection between politicians and the engineers or practitioners. Others raised concerns of lack of accountability, a critical element for development in the country

RECOGNITION AWARDS

Members who were actively involved in the affairs of GTPF during the past year were recognized and awarded during the meeting. The list included Prof. Samuel Owusu Ababio; Prof. Samuel Labi; Patrick Bekoe, PhD; Bismark Agbelie, PhD; Alexander Appea, PhD; Senanu Ashiabor, PhD; Julius Codjoe, PhD; Mary Kissi; Samuel Essien, PhD; Yaa Amanua Osafo; Ms. Yolanda Oliver-Commey; Ing. Magnus Lincoln Quarshie, and Prof. Cornelius Nuworsoo.

CONSTITUTION UPDATE

The president explained to members that the constitution of GTPF needed revisions for clarity of officers' responsibilities and their term of office. Upon discussions, a vote was taken for the following updates to be made:

- The term of office for executives would be biennial
- There is a two (2) term limit for each executive position

ELECTIONS

Prior to the annual meeting, nominations had been submitted for election of new executive officers. However, due to the recommended updates to the constitution, a motion was made to retain the current executives and conduct elections next year. Members holding executive positions are:

President – Dr. Dan Seedah

Vice President – Dr. Margaret-Avis Akofio-Sowah

Secretary - Dr. Kwaku Boakye

Treasurer - Dr. Stephanie Amoaning-Yankson

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH CENTRE, KUMASI (TReCK) PARTNERSHIP

Dr. Akofio-Sowah delivered a presentation on behalf of Rev. Dr. Charles Adams (KNUST) who was unable to join the meeting. The presentation provided an overview of TReCK highlighting the following:

- TReCK has several internal and external partners including other engineering and non - engineering departments at KNUST;
- The main activities of the center will be education (MSc and PhD), applied research, and short courses
- There are three main research themes for the center:
 - Intelligent transport systems in sustainable cities
 - Resilient, inclusive and sustainable infrastructure
 - Sustainable public transport
 - Sustainable and integrated logistics
- There are several opportunities for collaboration with GTPF including
 - Volunteers as resource persons for short courses
 - Research supervision of graduate students
 - Organizing conferences
 - Joint development of transportation manuals
 - Guest lectures
 - Joint publications

2019/2020 AGENDA

The president of GTPF summarized the activities that are planned for 2019 with executives and members leading each task in various capacities:

- Joint activities with KNUST TReCK to include short courses/seminars, graduate student mentoring/advising, and research and publication opportunities as primary areas of collaboration;
- Developing white papers on the current state of practice in the various transportation subject areas in Ghana;
- Continuation of our quarterly webinars and newsletter updates;
- Providing a platform to assist our students with internship and full-time job opportunities;
- Registering as a tax-exempt non-profit at the federal level (501c3); and
- 2020 GIC Planning.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm

ATTENDANCE LIST

Name	Company/Organization
Akua Sakyibea Vander-Pallen	Department of Urban Roads
Alex Adu-Osei	E2CR, Inc.
Alexander Appea	VDOT
Bismark Agbelie	CUA
Bortiorakor Naa Alabi	Purdue University
Collins Donkor	Ghana Highway Authority
Dan Seedah	Texas Transportation Institute
Edem Dzakwasi	Economic Decisions Group Inc.
Edward Offei	Applied Research Associates
Eric Frempong	MDOT State Highway Admin.
Eric Odosu	Ghana Highway Authority
Eugene A. Amarah	Virginia Tech
Felix Ammah-Tagoe	E-Ternational
Grace Ashley	University of Delaware
James Amoo-Gottfried	Department of Urban Roads
Janis Asare	Global Geotechnical
Julius Codjoe	LTRC
Kofi Acheampong	KCI Technologies Inc.
Kofi Adanu	University of Alabama
Kofi Nti Appiagyei	Department of Urban Roads
Kwabena Bempong	ACON
Kwasi Donkor	Fehr & Peers DC
Magnus Lincoln Quarshie	Delin Consult
Margaret-Avis Akofio-Sowah	WSP USA
Marian Ankomah	University of Florida
Mary Kissi	TRB
Milhan Moomen	University of Wyoming
Mussah Abdul Rashid	University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Ola Dairo	RKK
Owusu Ababio	University of Wisconsin
Patience Ammah-Tagoe	E-Ternational
Patience Onny	Department of Urban Roads
Paul Gyan Kornyoh	LaDOTD
Prince Annor	Virginia DOT
Richard Atta Boateng	University of Virginia
Richard Boadi	Wood E&IS
Richard Twumasi-Boakye	Ford Motor Company
Sam-Mark Ansah	University of Louisiana
Senanu Ashiabor	IML Consulting
Stuart Crooks	HNTB
Yaa Amanua Osafo	University of Louisiana
Yaw Adu-Gyamfi	University of Missouri
Yolanda Oliver-Commey	Pennoni

Minutes was taken by Yaa Amanua Osafo and prepared by Dr. Kwaku Boakye