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Subject: Emerging Public Works Leaders Program: 2022 APWA PWX Charlotte, NC

Dear Members of the Executive Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the American Public Works Association National conference in Charlotte, North Carolina. Having only attended state conferences, I was unsure of what to expect at PWX- the experience did not disappoint. It was enlightening to be surrounded by so many Public Works professionals that face similar challenges and share ideas with them. The positive experience at PWX excited me to share these opportunities with my team at Stevens Point.

Social Events

The “get acquainted party” at the NASCAR Hall of Fame was a fun way to start conversations and engage with others in the public works field. Though admittedly, I don’t regularly follow NASCAR it was a neat opportunity to immerse in the culture and learn something new. Throughout the night I was able to connect with people from all over the country and discuss public works challenges in different climates. It was a high energy party with a great local band, and food.

Monday nights young professionals’ reception at Ink N Ivy, was great way to meet professionals with similar backgrounds and stages of life as myself. This also gave me the opportunity to get to know the other emerging leader from Wisconsin, as well as meet members of the our neighboring Chicago chapter. The International Guests also attended the reception, I thoroughly enjoyed discussing Public Works issues and solutions with professionals working across the globe.

The Wisconsin Chapter dinner was a great way share an experience with familiar faces in an unfamiliar place. Angeline's Charlotte was a pleasant venue with great food and drinks. I enjoyed meeting other chapter members and catching up with the ones I know.

Exhibit Hall

The exhibit Hall was massive and far exceeded my expectations. Initially I thought I would only need a couple of hours to walk through the hall. I ended up breaking up time and kept returning to the exhibit hall throughout the conference. The vast variety of vendors was intriguing. From equipment, to consultants, to materials and all sorts of new technology it was easy to converse and learn from multiple vendors. The vendors offered lots of resources that I was able to share with my team.

I also enjoyed the exhibitor solutions presentations. On Sunday I attended "Bringing Data to life- Top 10 ways to harness the Power of GIS for Asset Management". I found this session especially beneficial as the city is looking for ways to improve our asset management through GIS technologies. We currently have a system where our GPS and GIS systems are not linked. This session provided many examples on how integrated systems can benefit not only our asset management program but as a way to provide an interactive information center with our residents.

I also attended a couple of new product showcases such as "Volvo L20 Electric: Why Electric Off-Road Equipment is a Smart Investment", as I see a large push to moving to a more electric fleet. It was nice to get better insight on the future of electric heavy vehicles and equipment and help us prepare for it. The "Deep Walk: Automated Sidewalk ADA Compliance Scanning" was a short session but informative and a technology that I can see the city transitioning too in the near future.

Equipment Rodeo

PWX was my first ever equipment rodeo. The event was exciting and fun to watch as operators from across the country competed by performing intricate tasks with skid steers and mini excavators. By far the most impressive was the mini excavator miniature golf event. After attending this event, I would like to host a similar event with our city crew to generate excitement and a little friendly competition with our operators. I see this as a potential recruiting tool.

Educational sessions

On Monday I attended "Is My Fleet Cost-Effective? A Guide to Calculating Fleet Ownership and Operating Costs". This session was particularly informational as part of my role with the city is to oversee the city fleet. We have been working enhancing our fleet replacement schedule to be more cost effective while "getting more". This session touched on calculating resale values at different lifecycles of equipment. Overall, there was useful information that I was able to pass to our fleet manager as we look to incorporate changes in our fleet.

Another session that stood out was “How the Cloud and IoT are Enabling Smart Waste Management in Our Cities” I also over see garbage and trash collection in the city, this session showcased some innovations of “smart cities” and how even something as simple as a trash receptacle has smart technology. This is something the city is considering integrating with our downtown trash collection.

I also attended, “What Can We Do Today to Improve Recruitment and Retention in Public Works?”

Closing General Session Keynote Speaker Julia Landauer

The closing session was bittersweet, sad as it marked the end of the conference but was a great motivational session. Unlike some motivational speakers, Julia Landauer, offered hands on experience about persevering and working hard to achieve her dream of becoming a woman in NASCAR. Her focus was taking ownership of one’s self-actions. She discussed key components of this, and they were self-awareness, effective teamwork, fear management, and being your own cheerleader. It was a motivating way to end the conference and return work some enthusiasm and energy from closing session.

Overall Experience

Overall, I enjoyed the conference and Charlotte. During my own personal exploration of the city, I met fellow conference attendees from California that I remain in contact with. Whether it was walking the exhibit hall, attending educational sessions, or socializing with fellow public works professionals, I had a great time. I found the experience both educational and rewarding. The experience makes me proud to be a member of APWA, and support APWA’s vision of “advancing quality of life for all.”

Sincerely,



Streets Superintendent
City of Stevens Point