

## **SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

### **Meeting Minutes for January 22, 2015, Full-Committee Meeting**

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterways Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on January 22, 2015, at the Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Port Arthur, TX. The current SETWAC Charter is dated July 21, 2011. Printed materials presented at the meeting are available for copying at the office of the U.S. Coast Guard, Marine Safety Unit at 2901 Turtle Creek Drive, Port Arthur, TX 77642. The meeting information and power point presentations are also available electronically through the SETWAC website [www.setwac.org](http://www.setwac.org).

#### **1. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Kelley at 10:05am.

#### **Remarks by the Chairman:**

- Chairman Larry Kelley welcomed guests and members
- He asked all SETWAC members and guests to introduce themselves in turn. Approximately 54 people were present (22 members and 33 guests).
- Mr. Kelley called on Captain Randal Ogrydziak, COTP, for his remarks.

#### **2. Remarks by the Captain of the Port:**

- Captain Ogrydziak welcomed all to the first SETWAC meeting of 2015.
- He highlighted upcoming presentations later in the program and thanked the SETWAC Committee for their service.
- Captain Ogrydziak called Captain Mark Taylor, out-going president of the Sabine Pilots Association to the front and presented a handsomely bound, U. S. Coast Guard Certificate of Merit Award to Captain Taylor for his two years outstanding service as President of the Sabine Pilots Association. Captain Ogrydziak highlighted the fact that, during Captain Taylor's tenure, he was instrumental in planning and preparing for the unprecedented \$100 billion growth for the phenomena referred to locally as the "Energy Renaissance". A copy of the written citation is included in the meeting presentations.

#### **3. Approval of the October 23, 2014 minutes:**

A motion was made and seconded and the committee approved the previous meetings minutes.

#### **4. Committee Reports:**

##### **Navigation Sub-Committee Report**

- Captain Ellen Warner was recognized as the new, incoming President of the Sabine Pilots association and the new chairman of the Navigation Sub-Committee. She introduced the other new officers of the Pilot Association. Captain Michael Egan is the new Vice President. Captain Brian Thibodeaux is the new Secretary/Treasurer. Captain Joseph Craig Arnaud is the new Boat Superintendent.
- Captain Warner reported no new, significant waterway navigation issues.

##### **Port Welfare Sub-Committee Report**

- Ms. Terri Looney spoke about Small Vessel General permits.

The Small Vessel General Permit (SVGP) applies to discharges incidental to the normal operation of all non-recreational, non-military vessels of less than 79 feet or commercial fishing vessels of any size. It would have become mandatory on December 19, 2014.

In preparation for the implementation of the requirement, the Port Arthur Area Shrimpers' Association held a meeting on November 19, 2014, to inform its members and the local fishing community of the imminent implementation of the SVGP. Presenters from the Apostleship of the Sea and AgriLife Extension Sea Grant stressed to the fishermen outlined the requirements of the SVGP, and stressed the financial consequences for being out of compliance. In addition, the MARPOL Training Institute's computer-based training was introduced to the attendees, and the new Port Arthur Shrimpers' Association's Fisherman's Learning Center was described.

The 2014 US Coast Guard Authorization act was passed by the Senate on December 10, and was signed by President Obama on December 18, one day before the SVGP requirements were to go into effect. In section 602, entitled "Extension of Moratorium," a simple amendment is made 33 U.S.C. 110-299 by striking "2014" and inserting "2017." This means that all fishing vessels and non-recreational vessels of less than 79 feet will not have to carry a SVGP until December 19, 2017.

The SVGP is not required to be carried on board these vessels, nor is the quarterly examination of one's vessel is not required until December 19, 2017. However, everything that is supposed to be regulated by the permit is already supposed to be done by the mariner or the fisherman. He or she still must control and/or contain on the vessel:

- Ballast water discharges
- Deck Runoff and Washdown
- Graywater Discharges
- Bilgewater Discharges
- Oily bilges and vessel generated garbage

Even though the SVGP has been delayed, the shrimpers' association has strongly participated in the training. As of this writing, 47 people have taken the training, and 45 people have received certificates. This training not only explains what is SVGP, but also trains our local fishermen in good seamanship practices.

This computer-based training has proven to be very helpful, and the Port Arthur Area Shrimpers' Association would be very happy to share this training with other members of the maritime community who have vessels 79 feet or less.

### **Waterway Maintenance and Improvement Sub-Committee Report**

- Mr. Clayton Henderson gave the following report for the Sabine-Neches Deepening project:
- (1) The Navigation District continues to work with USACE on the Deepening Project. Currently, we are updating the Benefits-to-Cost Ratio analysis. This analysis is what will ultimately decide if we get to "start" constructing the new channel. Currently our project has a poor (0.9:1) ratio and would not gain us permission and funds from the federal government, to begin digging the channel. The Navigation District is working with hired economic consultants to gather new, updated data to put into the USACE BCR model. That will generate higher benefits for our channel, and thereby gain us the approval to start digging. We request that industry stakeholders, especially non-refinery waterway users, come talk to the Navigation District to discuss your future plans for using a deeper channel.
- (2) Also, the Navigation District is working with USACE planners on the agreement that will determine the federal and non-federal roles for the ship channel, for the next 50 years. This agreement is known as the Project Partnership Agreement (PPA). In an effort to ensure we reflect the "Locally Preferred Plan", the Navigation District asks that industry stakeholders make known to us, any channel "tweaks" they would like to see in the deeper channel. The tweaks cannot change the currently proposed plan by more than 25%, but the Navigation District would like to try and work as many locally preferred things into our discussion. Again, we request that industry stakeholders come talk to the Navigation District to discuss your future plans for using a deeper channel.

- **USACE Waterway Maintenance Report**

Mr. Ed Morgan, on behalf of Paul Wise with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, gave an operations and maintenance update on projects and planned bid solicitations scheduled for 2015 and beyond. His presentation and a listing of projects is provided and is posted on the SETWAC web site.

**Dredging Operations Sub-Committee Report - Ed Morgan**

- Mr. Ed Morgan reported on the recent activities of the newly formed Dredging Operations Sub-Committee. Copies of Mr. Morgan's presentation are posted on the SETWAC web site.

***Waterway Security Sub-Committee Report***

- Mr. Jeremy Hansen reported on the following topics:
- AMSC Executive Steering Group has directed formation of the "Marine Firefighting, Salvage, & Recovery subcommittee", which will work in close partnership with the Area Committee and Sabine-Neches Chiefs Association.
- The Grants subcommittee will hold the Consolidated Port Security - State Homeland Security Grant Program assistance meeting on Feb 12th, 0930, MSU Port Arthur.
- The Maritime Domain Awareness subcommittee will have their 1st meeting on Feb 17th, 0900, MSU Port Arthur. (Target: Communications Centers, Intelligence Officers, and LE/FIRE/EMS/EMA senior supervisors).
- Port partners and stakeholders are asked to verify and update their Homeport accounts. To establish a Homeport account, visit <https://homeport.uscg.mil> and click "register". This information is used to populate mass notification systems, and an active account is required to receive HP notifications. You must log in every 90 days to maintain your account

***ATON Status/Projects Report***

- BMC Craig Hayes reported on the status of ATON for the Sabine-Neches Waterway.
- He reported on the status of and delays associated with the re-construction of Rear Range "K" on the Sabine-Neches Canal. The re-construction was currently delayed by prolonged negotiations for a land lease for construction of the new aid. After much discussion, it was agreed that several SETWAC members, including the Port of Port Arthur and the Captain of the Port would follow up with the City of Port Arthur get the process expedited.
- A copy of BMC Hayes presentation is included with the SETWAC presentations.

**5. Old Business:**

- There was no Old Business on the agenda.

**6. New Business:**

- Clean Diesel Requirement: Lt Ben Aaronson, USCG gave a short power-point presentation on the new Clean Diesel Requirements along with recommendations to Industry. A copy of his presentation is included on the SETWAC website.
- Small Vessel General Permits: Mr. Mark Jones reported on the delayed implementation date for Small Vessel General Permits.
- State of the Waterway Report: Mr. Scott Whalen, Operations Manager for the Vessel Traffic Service, presented the annual State of the Waterway power point presentation. The power point presentation is included with the meeting presentation on the SETWAC website. The highlights of the presentation was that vessel transits were up 5.8% overall for the year.

**7. Next Meetings:**

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District offices on Thursday, April 9, 2015, at 10:00 am.
- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur on Tuesday, May 5, 2015, at 10:00 am.

**8. Adjourn**

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:20 am.