

SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for October 22, 2015, Full-Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterways Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on October 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.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by SETWAC Chairman Larry Kelley at 10:00 a.m.

2. Remarks by the Chairman:

- Chairman Larry Kelley welcomed guests and members.
- Mr. Kelly recognized Ms. Nancy Young, ACOE Galveston representative who had been assigned to temporarily replace Ms. Paula Wise who had recently retired.
- He asked all SETWAC members and guests to introduce themselves in turn. Approximately 60 people were present (25 members and 35 guests).
- Mr. Kelley called on Commander John Lovejoy, Acting COTP, for his remarks.

3. Remarks by the Acting Captain of the Port:

- Commander Lovejoy introduced himself to the group and stated that he was glad to be back in Southeast Texas.
- He mentioned the newly created Lamar University Port Management degree and talked about USCG personnel who had or would serve as guest lecturers.
- He briefed on recent security operations and drills – offshore boarding’s in particular.
- He highlighted upcoming presentations later in the program.

4. Approval of the July 23, 2015 Minutes:

A motion was made by Wayne Turner and seconded by Gene Bullion, and the committee approved the previous meetings minutes.

5. Committee Reports:

Navigation Sub-Committee Report

- Captain Ellen Warner, President of the Sabine Pilots Association reported on their newly established relationship with San Jacinto Community College. She informed the Committee that San Jacinto had agreed to develop a full model of the Sabine-Neches Waterway for their simulator and that the Sabine Pilots would have access to realistic waterway and sea state conditions for training.

- She also reported that they would have increased access to man-model training with the Louisiana Pilots Association.
- Captain Warner informed the SETWAC committee and area facilities that the Sabine Pilots would be contacting many of them and requesting surveys, and taking photographs as part of the waterway modeling project.
- Captain Warner reported no other waterway navigation issues.

Port Welfare Sub-Committee Report:

- Fr. Sinclair Oubre reported on the recent memorial service for the lost crew of the ship EL FARO that disappeared in the Atlantic during the recent east coast Hurricane.
- Fr. Oubre also briefed the group on recent changes to the USCG licensing regimen as it pertained to former military members and USCG personnel. The new rules will allow veterans with sea time to more liberally apply that sea time to commercial mariner licenses.
- Mr. Trey Pearson reported on the status of the progress and implementation of the new AIS carriage requirement for fishing vessels to take effect in March, 2016.
- Mr. Pearson also provided an update on the economics of shrimp catches and reported that off-the-boat shrimp prices were currently down nearly 75% from their highs in recent years.
- Fr. Oubre explained the difference between “wild caught gulf shrimp” and the farm raised shrimp from foreign suppliers. He encouraged the membership and the audience to always request “wild caught gulf shrimp” – the product of our local shrimpers working in the Gulf of Mexico waters.

Waterway Maintenance and Improvement Sub-Committee Report

- USACE Waterway Maintenance Report
- Mr. Paul Beard gave an update on the Deepening Project - still waiting funding.
- Mr. Ed Morgan reported on on-going private projects on the Sabine-Neches Waterway. There were no ACOE dredging projects currently in progress.
- Mr. Ed Morgan gave an operations and maintenance update on projects and planned bid solicitations scheduled for 2015 and 2016.
- His presentation is posted on the SETWAC web site.

Dredging Operations Sub-Committee Report - Ed Morgan

- Mr. Ed Morgan reported that there were no on-going ACOE dredging activities on the Sabine-Neches.
- He reported on two private dredging projects that he was aware of.
- Mr. Ed Morgan reported again on the issue of surveying and verifying the location of existing pipeline crossings on the Sabine-Neches Waterway. He reported that dredging operations had been hampered uncertainty of the location of pipelines.
- He reported that ACOE calls to pipeline owners to request surveys had begun.
- Mr. Morgan mentioned that work was on-going to compile a list of discrepant facilities with ACOE permits. He offered to report at a later meeting on this project.
- Details of Mr. Morgan’s presentation are posted on the SETWAC Web site.

Waterway Security Sub-Committee Report

- Mr. Jeremy Hansen reported on the following AMSC initiatives:
 - o Port Security Grant Results from the most recent round of awards:
 - 25 local projects submitted.
 - 7-8 projects funded.
 - \$2.8 million awarded in Port Security Grants.
 - o Port Wide Risk Mitigation Plan
 - o AMSC/SNCA Joint Marine Firefighting and Salvage and Recovery Sub-Cmte
 - o New National Preparedness Goal and the five mission areas.

ATON Status/Projects Report

- BMC Craig Hayes, USCG ANT Sabine, reported on the status of ATON on the Sabine – Neches Waterway.
- He emphasized the importance of prompt and accurate reporting of ATON knockdown or outage and provided a 24-hour contact number.
- A copy of his presentation is posted on the SETWAC web site.

6. Old Business:

- There was no Old Business on the agenda.

7. New Business:

- SETWAC Chairman Larry Kelley reported that the SETWAC Board nominating committee, headed by Morris Albright, had recommend that Chris Fisher, Port of Beaumont, as the replacement to fill the recent vacancy of the SETWAC Vice-Chairman. Mr. Fisher's name was placed in nomination and seconded. There were no other nominations from the floor. The full SETWAC committee voted unanimously to elect Chris Fisher as the new SETWAC Vice-Chairman. His term will begin immediately
- Fr. Sinclair Oubre reported on behalf of Lamar State College Orange that, using a recently received \$1 million grant from the State of Texas, Lamar State College was in the process of implementing an entry level maritime course with the intention to promote maritime occupations for local citizens.

8. Next Meetings:

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District office on Thursday, January 7, 2016 at 10:00 am.
- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur on Thursday, January 21, 2016 at 10:00 am.

9. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:25 am.