

# **SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

## **Meeting Minutes for January 26, 2017, Full-Committee Meeting**

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterways Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on January 26, 2017 at Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Port Arthur, TX. The current SETWAC Charter is dated January 23, 2014. 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. 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 at 10:04 by SETWAC Chairman Larry Kelly.

### **2. Remarks by the Chairman:**

- Vice Chairman Chris Fisher welcomed guests and members.
- Mr. Kelly recognized Sheriff Mitch Woods. Commander Loan O'Brien presented Sheriff Woods with a U. S. Coast Guard Certificate of Merit recognizing his contributions to SETWAC and the establishment of the Jefferson County Marine Unit.
- Sheriff Woods gave remarks reflecting on his time working with SETWAC.
- SETWAC members and guests were asked to introduce themselves in turn. Approximately 54 people were present (22 members and 32 guests).

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

- Commander Loan O'Brien, USCG, gave remarks on recent activities within the Captain of the Port Zone. She thanked stakeholders for their commitment to partnerships

### **4. Approval of the April 28, 2016 Minutes:**

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the previous meeting's minutes. A unanimous vote to accept the minutes was passed.

### **5. Committee Reports:**

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

- Sabine Pilot Vice President, Captain Charles Lahaye, reported no updates to the Stanolind Anchorage fouling hazards issue. A survey of the area is needed.
- Captain LaHaye reported that use of the Sabine Pilots simulator is up and running and they are now working on port modeling.

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

- Fr. Sinclair Oubre reported on three recent seafarer welfare incidents.
- He reported on the plans to observe the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Operation Drumbeat wherein merchant shipping was targeted by U-boats during World War II. Recognition event scheduled for February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 5:00 p.m, at the Port Arthur Seafarer's Center.
- He also reported on difficulties recouping the costs of supporting seafarers. Less than 25% response. Plans are to shift from voluntary tariffs to invoicing. He requested support from all stakeholders.
- Participation was solicited for the next sub-committee meeting.

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

- Mr. Paul Beard, Sabine-Neches Navigation District, provided an update on WRRDA progress. An update to the BCR was provided to OMB. A letter was sent to the new Director of OMB soliciting support of our ports and the deepening project.
- Mr. Ed Morgan, USACE, reported on anticipated dredging projects and efforts to fix erosion on Pleasure Island.
- He reported on the status of Mooring Buoy replacement on the Intracoastal Waterway.

### ***USACE Waterway Maintenance Report***

- Mr. Ed Morgan gave an operations and maintenance update on projects and planned bid solicitations scheduled for 2017.
- He reported that the only project currently planned for 2017 is for the Neches River. Project should be advertised in February 2017.
- Mr. Morgan reported that the contract to place the new mooring buoys in the ICW will be issued soon.

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

- Ed Morgan reported on on-going dredging projects on the Sabine-Neches Waterway including Dredge MIKE HOOKS in Port Arthur and Dredge NEWPORT offshore. He provided updates on private projects including Valero (Pleasure Island), Golden Pass, Total and Kinder Morgan projects.
- Mr. Morgan reviewed issues surrounding submerged pipelines under the Sabine-Neches Waterway. He reported that USACE issued letters to two companies. Others pipelines still pend.
- Details of Mr. Morgan's presentation are posted on the SETWAC Web site.

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

- Mr. Jeremy Hansen reported on port security activities occurring with local stakeholders. He reported on vessel and facility security activities including meetings, reporting suspicious activity and the final rule on TWIC Readers.
- He then reported on the status of port security grants – 25 projects / 11 applicants totaling \$4.8M in requests.
- Mr. Hansen presented efforts to improve Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), address increasing Cyber-Security concerns and local efforts at improving marine firefighting capabilities including fire boats and a task force.
- Mr. Hansen discussed the establishment of Waterway Security Sub-Committees and the coordination of security assets at all MARSEC levels.
- Chief Clay Woodward addressed the committee as the new representative of the Jefferson County Sheriff. He noted that escort efforts are projected to double.

### ***ATON Status/Projects Report***

- Chief Hayes, Officer in Charge, Aids to Navigation Team Sabine, presented information on construction of a new tower where Sabine Neches Canal Range “N” Rear sits will be replaced. Construction to begin in May 2017.
- He reported on 16 ATON knockdowns and efforts to recoup funds to reimburse the Coast Guard.
- Chief Hayes provided an update on efforts to change aids to navigation to the new LED standard and expectations to be 100% converted by 2020.

### **6. Approval of the October 27, 2016 Minutes:**

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the previous meeting’s minutes. The motion was seconded and a unanimous vote to accept the minutes was passed.

### **7. New Business:**

- Ms. Mollie Powell reported on Texas General Land Office (TGLO) activities to lease submerged state lands in an oxbow locally referred to as FINA anchorage to Savage Marine. An additional lease is being considered in another oxbow locally referred to as SUN anchorage to Strategic Towing.
- Mr. Scott Whalen, Director, 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.

**8. Next Meetings:**

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District offices on Thursday, April 13, 2017, 10:00 a.m..
- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

**9. Adjourn**

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.