

SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for April 26, 2018, Full-Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterways Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on April 26, 2018 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.

1. Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 10:05 by SETWAC Vice Chairman Chris Fisher. Mr. Fisher welcomed all participants and observers. All SETWAC members, and other's in attendance, introduced themselves, and then Mr. Fisher turned the floor over to the Captain of the Port.

2. Remarks by the Captain of the Port:

- Captain Jacqueline Twomey gave welcoming remarks. She advised the audience of the recent visit of the new Coast Guard District Eight Commander, Admiral Thomas. In addition to meeting with the Sabine-Neches Navigation District, Admiral Thomas visited Lamar University with MARAD to speak on "Resilient Ports." Captain Twomey informed the audience that Admiral Thomas was very impressed with the complexity and operations of the waterway, and that he intended to return to the area for a follow-on visit.
- Regarding the TWIC Reader Rule, Captain Twomey advised the audience that she had no new updates on the requirement; however, she expected guidance to be issued in the near future. She asked that industry remain engaged on the upcoming process, and that info would be passed as it becomes available.
- Captain Twomey advised the Committee of the pending Hurricane Season while asking for direct industry input toward planning and preparations.
- Finally, Captain Twomey informed the Committee of the recently instituted VTS measure regarding the KCS railroad Bridge as a result of fender damage. There were no questions.

3. Approval of the January 25, 2018 Minutes:

- A motion was made, and seconded, to approve the January 25, 2018 minutes. A unanimous vote was passed.

4. Committee Reports:

Navigation Sub-Committee Report:

- Captain Wesley Moore, Sabine Pilots, reported the Sabine Pilot's simulator is up and running for computer bridge simulations and command model simulations. Captain Moore

was asked if the simulator is/can be used to fulfill licensing requirements. He replied in the affirmative that is used to satisfy any number of training/licensing requirements.

- Mr. Scott Whalen, on behalf of Captain LaHaye, commented on delivery of the WSA for Sabine Pass LNG to the Coast Guard. He appealed to the Navigation Sub-Committee for participation in the WSA.
- Mr. Scott Whalen, again on behalf of Captain LaHaye, spoke to the Navigation Sub-Committee's availability to pre-screen construction and development permits before they are forwarded to the USACE. The objective is to maintain transparency while facilitating the permit process by working out any concerns before the permits are sent to the USACE for approval.

Port Welfare Subcommittee Report:

- Ms. Dourine Badeaux presented on behalf of Fr. Sinclair Oubre. Ms. Badeaux spoke to seafarer mental health, most notably a marked increase in suicide rates among mariners worldwide. She informed the audience that the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance network (ISWAN) has products available to assist with stress, suicide awareness, and seafarer mental health - available on ISWAN website at <http://seafarerswelfare.org/>
- Ms. Badeaux acknowledged that current restructuring at the Port Arthur International Seafarers' Center (change in Directors, loss of two drivers) may cause some short-term issues with phone calls, driving arrangements etc.
- Ms. Badeaux notified the audience of the upcoming National Maritime Day (May 22) and the Texas National Maritime Day (24 May).

USACE Waterway Maintenance Report/Dredge Operations Sub-Committee:

- Mr. Matthew Kaufman, on behalf of Mr. Randy Reese, reported that the Sabine-Neches Navigation District met with OMB and DOE. The party's visited several facilities and participated in a fly-over of the waterway. Visiting parties came to see "energy dominance" and left impressed. It is hoped that their highly positive outlook will help ignite future funding. Mr. Chris Fischer acknowledged that the conduct of the meeting with OMB and DOE was "very well done."
- Mr. Sherrill, USACE, provided an update on the progress of the pipeline crossing project; the Taylor Bayou restriction; levee improvements at Placement Area 8, and FY-2018 maintenance dredging of the Sabine-Neches Waterway, Outer Bar, and Outer Bank Channels.
- Mr. Sherrill commented on emergency procedures for regulatory permits, i.e. if you have an "emergency," you should have a plan in place to "fix" the emergency at the time you apply for a permit. If it's going to take months to plan/fund a repair, this is not considered an "emergency" per the Regulatory Program.

- Mr. Sherrill advised the committee that the USACE has buoys “on site,” however, USACE M/V SNELL will not be available until October/December 2018 to set the buoy in the waterway.

Waterway Security Sub-Committee Report:

- Mr. Jeremy Hanson, USCG, updated the committee on the Private Sector Grant Program; the AMSTEP workshop to be held 22 May 2018 at the ISTC in Nederland, TX; the availability of currently open positions at NMSAC, and the outcome of the Regional Port Security & Resiliency Assessment (results to be presented at next SETWAC FCM).

ATON Status/Projects Report:

- No ATON report presented.

5. New Business:

- AIS Enforcement: Mr. Scott Whalen spoke to the USCG HQ prototyping of AIS data to ensure accuracy. There will be pending enforcement action taken against those vessels broadcasting incorrect AIS, probably within the next 3-4 months.
- LTJG Grady conducted an in-depth recap of the 2017 Hurricane Season, combining it with a presentation of the upcoming 2018 Hurricane Season.
- With the closure of the Port of Beaumont as a “safe harbor,” where will the Shrimp Fleet go during heavy weather? Mr. Whalen intends to attend the next Port Arthur Area Shrimper’s Association meeting (27 June) to directly address the topic with industry partners and those present from the local fishing industry.
- Mr. Alan Bunn, NOAA, commented on the new permanent berthing of a National Response Team boat in Galveston, TX. The boat will be used for post-storm surveys throughout the AOR. Mr. Bunn also intends to bring NOAA weather forecasters to the next SETWAC meeting for direct participation during the 2018 Hurricane season.
- Mr. Erik Stromberg, Executive Director, Center for Advances in Port Management, Lamar University, commented on the Hurricane Workshop held at Lamar University. The workshop hosted more than 50 port stakeholders and generated many “best practices.” Mr. Stromberg indicated the video of the workshop will be made available on Lamar’s website.

6. Next Meetings:

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District offices on Thursday, July 12, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.
- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur on Thursday, July 26, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

7. Adjourn:

- The meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

