

# Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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March 2018

[www.wapgh.org](http://www.wapgh.org)

## March Highlights

A total of (35) thirty-five members and guests were registered for the March 14, 2018 luncheon meeting at the Chartiers Country Club.

## Navigation Committee Report

David Podurgiel provided the following report:

- The Port continues to experience high-water challenges and it is likely to continue for some time.
- River Salvage has confirmed that the sunken barge thought to be at mile marker 95.7 has not been located.
- There will be major concurrent lock outages between Emsworth/Dashiels starting March 5<sup>th</sup>. Dashiels large chamber will be de-watered, Emsworth large chamber will only open every 2 weekends. This will last for 45 days. Emsworth will be down for a total of 83 days. The Corp will make every effort to lessen the time of the outage and if possible will try to open on other weekends if ahead of schedule. Expect Major Delays.
- Geotechnical Boring at Montgomery is scheduled to begin March 26<sup>th</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>. Notification by the Navigation Committee will be sent to all members.

## Legislative Report

Dean Marlin was unable to attend the meeting and he provided the following report:

1. Congress passed HR 1892 - the "Bi Partisan Budget Act of 2018" ... this 5 AM vote ceased another temporary government shutdown, raised the Federal spending cap for 2 years, and added \$296 billion in new money to the national debt. It also provided \$17.4 billion to the USACE of which \$15 billion (as opposed to a normal annual \$2 billion) is earmarked for new construction (primarily disaster-relief), \$608 million in operations and maintenance.
2. The Administration simultaneously released their long-anticipated Infrastructure proposal as well as the 2019 budget proposal which, from fifty thousand feet looks like ...
  - a. Approximately \$1.3 Trillion to be primarily sourced from non-federal funding sources (like state and local investments, 3<sup>rd</sup> party, private sector investments, and tolling for use of roads, locks, etc.
  - b. \$200 billion is to be committed by the Federal Government as "seed money" for matching some of the above. This will not be

new money but rather harvested from existing federal programs and perhaps a 26 cents/gallon gasoline tax.

- c. Streamlining the permitting process for major works from all Government agencies - so as to fall within a 1-year (approximate) time limit.

The WCI Reaction and and Messaging on the Administrations Infrastructure and Budget Proposals: Immediately followed (as we arrived in DC) as:

1. Total opposition to additional taxation, tolls, lockage fees and adverse charges as we are already (and the only industry of 7 potential sources) who is already self-taxing. Further, only 400 companies are voluntarily bearing this burden.
2. Adjust the cost share (match) for construction and rehabilitation of the Inland Waterways Trust Fund projects from 50% IWTF/ 50% General revenue - to 25% IWTF/75% general revenues.
3. Allocate 10% of Hydro-electric revenues generated on the inland waterways to waterway rehabilitation versus a current 100% allocation to the general fund. This alone will generate approximately \$500 million.

February 13 and 14 - Capital Hill Lobbying Trip.

Along with other WCI delegation, our group had appointed meets with Senators Pat Toomey, Joe Manchin, Bob Casey, Shelley Moore Capito and Congressmen Keith Rothfus, Mike Kelley, Mike Doyle, Lou Barletta, Bill Shuster and Evan Jenkins. These meetings each lasted approximately 30-minutes and where laser-focused on advocating the Industry's position regarding the newly revealed administration proposal. Even though the individual offices had not had time to fully absorb the Administration's proposals - our message was positively received along with interest and appreciation regarding our offers to provide additional information and assistance.

Post trip - to date:

There is wide-ranging advocacy and opposition as the infrastructure bill works its way through various committees' including the financial and legal viability of private/public partnership (3P's), the proposed privatization ("devolution") of federal assets (including airports, highways, etc.), cutting of existing federal programs, wide resistance to a 26 cent/gallon gasoline tax (Paul Ryan is against it) and the viability of generating \$1.3 Trillion in funding (from whatever source) from a \$200 billion stimulus. There reportedly is wide-spread doubt that even with an early summer markup necessary to clear the House before the August recess and then a subsequent Senate version - that the infrastructure bill can be done this year. No lawmakers or committees are generating proposals, no hearings are currently scheduled on the infrastructure finding before House Ways and Means committee - and on.

## **Port of Pittsburgh Commission**

Mary Ann Bucci presented the following:

- It appears that Conor Lamb has won the special election held to replace Tim Murphy who had resigned. Both candidates voiced great support for the local waterways industry and its challenges.
- Senator Toomey will be scheduled a roundtable sometime in May to discuss WRDA 2018. More details will follow.
- The proposed promotional event highlighting Safe Boating Week held in conjunction with the Pittsburgh Pirates is now back on the table for May 18<sup>th</sup> due to a revised proposal submitted by the Pirates. The event will be highlighted by a Fireworks Night following the Pirates game. Industry support is being sought to assist in funding this special evening.
- Even though Congress passed the budget it did not actually fund the said budget. This must be addressed by March 23<sup>rd</sup> or another continuing resolution will be put in place.
- Our region is losing some influential committee positions within Congress that will prove challenging to industry. It will be a tough year to accomplish our regional projects.
- Information regarding items discussed at the recent annual Washington DC Hill visits was also included and these items are contained in the Legislative Report.

## **Coast Guard News**

LT Shawn Simeral presented the **attached** report.

## **Army Corp of Engineers**

Mark Ivanisin covered the **attached** lock closure report.

## **National Weather Service**

Lee Hendricks covered the **attached** report.

**NOTE:** Alicia Miller is now on maternity leave and last week gave birth to a baby boy! Best wishes to the new family!

## **Education Committee Report**

Michael Graham has identified the date for the first "Who Works the Rivers" as Thursday, April 19, 2018 with 60 to 100 students expected. Any company interested in participating in this program should contact Mike directly.

Man Overboard Seminar	July 19, 2018	Clarion Inn/Belle Vernon
Barge Breakaway Seminar	October 18, 2018	Floeffe Fire Hall
"Who Works the Rivers"	October 4, 2018	Gateway Clipper

## **April Membership Meeting**

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 11, 2018 at Bella Sera (414 Morganza Road, Canonsburg, PA). Cost of the luncheon will be **\$30**. Registration will begin at 11:45 a.m. and lunch served promptly at noon. Please call, email or fax the response form below by Thursday, April 5, 2018 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

**Waterways Association of Pittsburgh  
Meeting Response Form**

Bella Sera  
April 11, 2018 @ Noon

**Menu:**

Spring Mix Salad - w/blue cheese, candied pecans, dried cranberries and balsamic vinaigrette  
Lemon Chicken Romano w/fresh herbs, pecorino and lemon  
Artisan Au Gratin Potatoes/Chef's Choice of Vegetable  
Chocolate Chip Brownies & mini Cannoli  
Coffee, tea and ice tea

**Cost:**        *\$30/per member*

\_\_\_\_\_        YES, I will be attending

\_\_\_\_\_        No, I will not be attending

**\*\*Special Dietary Requirements:** \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond **by Thursday, April 5, 2018** to:

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Fax:            (724) 285-4999  
Email:        [cheryll.cranmer@wapgh.org](mailto:cheryll.cranmer@wapgh.org)