

# Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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February 2018

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

## February Highlights

A total of (29) twenty-nine members and guests were registered for the February 14, 2018 luncheon meeting at the Chartiers Country Club. First-time attendee Vivian Lee of RiverLife was introduced.

## Navigation Committee Report

David Podurgiel provided the following report:

- The Port experienced a high-water event this past weekend and it looks like we will have another this weekend.
- There were simultaneous Barge Breakaways on 1/13/18. 27 Barges from Jacks Run, Mile 2 Ohio and 38 from Bellaire Harbor.
- As of today, 6 of the 7 barges that sank between 95 and 110 Ohio River on 1/13/18. River Salvage needs to wait for the water to drop before attempting to raise last barge at 95.7.
  - 3 barges are still sunk above Emsworth Lock
- 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.
- David wished Happy Valentine's Day

## Legislative Report

Dean Marlin was unable to attend the meeting as he is in Washington, DC for the annual congressional visits. The following report was submitted:

- Today (Monday 12/12) is the first week of what is being called "Infrastructure Week" as the Administrations Infrastructure Package as well as the 2019 budget proposal is being finally released today - followed shortly by your WAP representatives joining in with the WCI annual Hill visits to 10 offices including Senators Pat Toomey, Joe Manchin, Bob Casey, Shelley Moore Capito and Congressmen Keith Rothfus, Mike Kelly, Mike Doyle, Lou Barletta, Bill Shuster and Evan Jenkins.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSAL**

Although the final Package is not out at this moment - there are enough indications of what will likely be contained therein. As follows:

- The Administration is supposedly proposing \$1.2 trillion in new spending for all infrastructure.
- The plan proposes that \$200 billion in federal money be used to seed/entice the remaining (approximate) \$1.3 Trillion through non-federal funding methods.
- Concurrently, the recent Tax reform bill which was passed December 19, 2017 is estimated to add approximately \$1 trillion to the federal deficit. Additionally, the "Bi-Partisan Act of 2018" which extended which passed February 8, 2018 added an additional \$300 Billion of new money to the debt.
- At this point, the Administrations infrastructure proposal offers no "new money" to fund infrastructure - but rather seeks to stimulate 3<sup>rd</sup> party investment (public/private partnerships, local and state funding, tolling, tax favored bonds and investing - and a significant hike in the Federal Tax on Gasoline (reportedly 26 cents per gallon).
- Likewise, a center piece to this proposal is a significant streamlining of permitting and project approval processes.

There is obviously going to be significant congressional discussions - even under the banner of "bi-partisan support - and much of the above will likely change during the bill creation process.

Of note - WCI's position during the hill visits will be that the inland waterways industry already has been paying their fair share (paid our dues) through voluntary contributions - all while other transport venues have not. WCI will also attempt to change the cost share of the Fund from 50%-50% to 75%-25%.

On the positive side of the equation - The "Bi-Partisan Act which eliminated the threat of government shutdown for several years - includes \$20 billion (or 10%) towards the \$200 billion in seed money for the government infrastructure - as well as \$17.4 billion for the USACE - which will give them \$608 million in O&M, \$770 million toward the Mississippi river Basin and \$15 billion for Construction (including disaster relief - all this as compared to \$2Billion in annual construction funding normally available.

For the first time the State of the Union Address included a mention of the waterways industry. Meanwhile the FY2019 budget is a mystery at this writing.

We will bring you updates to this report as they occur as we may need everyone's help in overcoming a potential barrier toward inland waterways commerce and usage.

### **Port of Pittsburgh Commission**

Matt Pavlosky presented the following:

- Mary Ann Bucci is in Washington DC attending the annual WCI Conference and congressional visits.
- The proposed promotional event highlighting Safe Boating Week held in conjunction with the Pittsburgh Pirates has been tabled. However, other promotional opportunities are being reviewed for a

tentative date of May 18<sup>th</sup> which would be highlighted by a Fireworks Night following the Pirates game.

- A round-table discussion with Representative Conor Lamb (Democratic Party's nominee) has been scheduled for Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> at the Port of Pittsburgh offices starting at 11:30 a.m. An invitation has been forwarded to all Waterways Association members. It is extremely important that every effort is made to educate the new representatives on the infrastructure deficiencies within our region.

### **Coast Guard News**

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

Following discussion regarding the recent barge breakaway incident, it was suggested that a meeting be held to review all actions taken during the high-water incident. It will also serve as a great table-top exercise at this year's Barge Breakaway Seminar.

CDR Leon McClain announced that his replacement has been identified. CDR Aaron Demo is currently serving with the Traveling Inspection Staff. The Change of Command Ceremony is tentatively set for late June. CDR McClain is headed to the US Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island for Senior Service School.

### **Army Corp of Engineers**

John Dilla covered the **attached** lock closure report.

### **National Weather Service**

Alicia Miller covered the **attached** report. With the upcoming weather system approaching, it was stressed that another high-water possibility is extremely high.

### **Education Committee Report**

Michael Graham has identified the date for the first "Who Works the Rivers" as Thursday, April 19, 2018 with the "Future is Mine" group that yields between 40 to 60 students. Any company interested in participating in this program should contact Mike directly.

Dates and locations for the annual seminars, Man Overboard and Barge Breakaway, will be finalized within the next several months.

### **March Membership Meeting**

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 14, 2018 at the Chartiers Country Club. 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, March 8, 2018 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

**Waterways Association of Pittsburgh  
Meeting Response Form**

Chartiers Country Club  
March 14, 2018 @ Noon

**Menu:**

Mixed Field Greens with Chartiers Crouton and Balsamic Dressing  
Chicken Picatta sautéed w/fresh mushrooms, capers and lemon  
Rice Pilaf  
Blueberry pie w/vanilla ice cream  
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, March 8, 2018** to:

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Email:        [cheryll.cranmer@wapgh.org](mailto:cheryll.cranmer@wapgh.org)