

Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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www.wapgh.org

PITTSBURGH MARITIME ASSOCIATION

IS NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

FOUR \$2,000 SCHOLARSHIPS WILL BE GRANTED IN 2021

EMPLOYEES OF WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF PITTSBURGH MEMBERS MAY APPLY

APPLICATIONS MUST BE POST-MARKED BY MARCH 31, 2021 TO BE CONSIDERED

APPLICATION AND CRITERIA ATTACHED

February Highlights

Twenty members registered for our membership luncheon on February 10. An additional twenty members registered to attend virtually via Zoom. This was the first meeting at which we offered a choice of face-to-face or virtual attendance. It was well attended and the comments regarding virtual attendance were positive. We will be offering the same option for the March meeting.

The USCG had four members in attendance; CDR Demo, LCDR Stephen Miros, LT James Dunbar and LTJG William Russell. Current USCG Covid protocol does not allow them to participate in the luncheon but time was provided before the luncheon for their important announcement.

CDR Demo advised he will be moving to Washington DC effective July 1, 2021. His replacement will be CDR Eric Valez who will be coming from Hawaii. Members of WAP sincerely thank CDR Demo for his work here in Pittsburgh and wish him the very best in his new assignment.

LTJG William Russell was also recognized and congratulated on his promotion from Ensign to Lieutenant Junior Grade.

William Porter, an Honorary Member and past President of the WAP was invited to attend the luncheon as a guest. Michael Graham, President, thanked William for heading up the efforts in the merger of WAP and PMC. William had also reviewed and revised the Bylaws of the WAP now that the merger is completed. It has been determined that two seats shall be added to the Board of Directors.

A vote of the membership was held, and the two nominees, Brian Loring and Ryan Newton have been voted in to hold another term as Directors on the WAP board.

A reminder: 2021 Pittsburgh Maritime Association Scholarship
application and criteria are in an attachment to the February newsletter. In 2021 four \$2,000.00 scholarships will be awarded.

Navigation Committee Report

Dave Podurgiel, Vice President provided the following report:

- Operating conditions are near normal. Ice is not a factor on Area Rivers. NWS predicts possible high water events in late February due to La Nina, their report should confirm that.
- Emsworth Lock finished its second outage on January 22nd as planned, delays varied; communication from the USACE was timely and helpful.
- Below are upcoming USACE projects that will affect river commerce in 2021
 - Pike Island L/D OR 84.3: Primary Chamber Intermittent Closures for river wall crack repair. A date to start has not been set, this was confirmed by USACE today, 19JAN2.
 - Willow Island L/D OR 161.7: Primary Chamber intermittent closures for hydraulic system replacement. Awaiting design completion, June 1-September 30.
 - Montgomery L/D OR 31.8: Primary Chamber dewatering, July 26-August 27 Major Delays.
 - Braddock L/D Mon 11.2: Primary Chamber sector gear repairs, there could be intermittennd closures as they position equipment. Sept. 13 - Oct 15.
 - Hannibal L/D OR 126.4: Primary Chamber intermittent closures for culvert valve replacement, October 25- December 10.

Coast Guard News

The **attached** report was provided for the newsletter.

National Weather Service

Alicia Miller of NOAA Federal provided the **attached** report for the newsletter.

Port of Pittsburgh Commission

Michael Graham, President WAP reported the following for the newsletter.

- Department of Transportation will be issuing Small Shipyard Grants.
 - Deadline for applications is Feb 25.
 - 15 - 30 Grants will be issued.
 - Average Grant amount is \$1,000,000.

Legislative Report

Dean Marlin, Legislative Committee chair, provided the following report for the newsletter.

2021 APPROPRIATIONS

- On January 19 The US Army Corps of Engineers released its FY21 Work plan allocation following the passage of the FY21 Energy and Water

Development appropriations bill of December 27, 2020. Of particular note:

- o USACE Pittsburgh District received an additional \$57.4 million for civil works in FY 2021 which in our immediate area includes.
 - Of which \$22 million to initiate upgrades construction on the Upper Ohio Navigation Project (Emsworth, Dashields and Montgomery Locks).
 - \$3.3 million in O & M FUNDING TO ENSURE SAFE AND RELIABLE NAVIGATION ON the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers.
 - Monies for ongoing maintenance work at Emsworth and to initiated design activities at Montgomery.
 - \$750k to for preconstruction activities address Allegheny Lock and Dam 4 sinkholes caused by stormwater drainage pipes

WCI WASHINGTON MEETINGS ("FLY-IN") WILL BE VIRTUAL

- And may not occur until late February. (25th) or March - once congress gets organized. ... A registration link will be sent to all interested and we will report more as soon as the information becomes available.

USACE NEWS

- Gen Lloyd Austin was confirmed as the New Secretary of Defense
- The Inland Waterway User Board Meeting of February 9 was canceled. This, IWUB along with 41 other advisory committees and boards to the pentagon were terminated on 1/30/21 by General Austin in order to reverse and reconstitute following President Donald Trump's numerous appointments during his final months in office.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION - POTENTIAL EFFECT ON THE INLAND WATERWAYS

- Biden's Team states that it wants to start pushing a \$2 trillion infrastructure bill in February 2021. Two priorities that effect our industry are 1) a further development of domestic marine highway corridors on our coasts and inland waterways (due to a lower emitting mode of transport) and taking a closer look at how infrastructure development effects ports and neighborhoods with a focus on how federally funded programs can be better dispersed to influence job creation, training and retention
- Pete Buttigieg replaces Elaine Chao as Secretary of the Department of Transportation.
- The Maritime Industry "applauds" the appointment due to his support of the Jones Act and support of major infrastructure improvements for the safety and efficiency of the maritime industry.

Some HIGHLIGHTS: STATE OF THE INDUSTRY: (1/15/21 WATERWAYS JOURNAL)

Despite a year of covid, politics and commercial upheaval - the barge industry has held its own - and is optimistic as markets are ready to rebound, the new administration is faced with pressure to act on infrastructure after years of inaction, and a series of major waterway funding bills have secured efficient funding for years of progress.

- WRDA not only provided funding to the corp but also to the dredging industry. Extreme silting on Major Rivers such as the Missouri and Arkansas (which, similar to our Allegheny and Mon Rivers are considered Low Use Rivers) are being provided much needed funding for dredging and engineering structures in order to restore proper depth for commercial barging) through modifications to the Harbor Maintenance Tax fund. Private/Public partnering.
- Steel - US lost 20 million tons of capacity due to Covid and only 10 million have returned. Supply/demand has driving up the price and now American steel is expanding - particularly in view of Infrastructure. 20% of American steel market is served by foreign specialty steel products.
- Barge movements and grain, coal, petroleum and chemicals aggregated down 13% - with fertilizer reflecting an upsurge due to farmer incomes and home gardening due to covid lockdowns. Grain barge movements up 13% due to strong harvests and export demand from China.
- Construction - cement and lumber have done relatively well.
- Coal - American Coal council outlook for US thermal coal used in power will depend on the economic recovery from pandemic ... A decline in natural gas output has set stage for power plants to switch from gas back to coal. Likewise metallurgical coal may be boosted by an increased demand in construction and vehicles in 2021. Export of high quality American met coal will also increase as the world recovers or adjusts to the global recovery. The coal industry is anticipating a non-hostile move by the Biden administration - particularly as an electricity shortage in California have proved the heavy reliance on natural generation sources
- The Infrastructure Bill again comes down to cash (\$2 trillion) - but again there is a positive view toward killing 2 birds with one stone by putting people to work and addressing climate issues and showing bipartanship
- The Waterways Counsel Inc. is waiting to see who gets appointed to key committee positions and there is a good change that ports and waterways can benefit from grants from the Transportation Department as it broadens vision to multimodal projects
- Oil and Gas: Covid provided a glut in both industries. There was a wave of bankruptcies and consolidations in both natural gas and oil industries. As supply drops to demand it is hard to address the future although there is a move by major oil and gas companies (example: BP, Shell) to address an energy transition and repositions themselves as energy providers rather than extractors.

Army Corp of Engineers

The **attached** report was provided for the newsletter.

Education Committee Report

Michael Graham, Education Committee Chair, provided the following report:

- **Man Overboard Seminar** is tentatively scheduled for July 22, details to follow.
- **Barge Breakaway Seminar** is tentatively scheduled for October 21. Additionally, with the cancellation of the 2020 seminar, WAP is hopeful to hold a second Barge Breakaway Seminar early in 2021, perhaps March or April. This training is extraordinarily important and holding the event twice within the year would be a win-win. Details of both events will follow.
- **Who Works the Rivers** will have 2 events this year, but both will be held virtually. As those dates approach, details will be announced.

Details for each of the above events will be announced as available.

March Membership Meeting

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 10 at Chartiers Country Club.

Please email the response form below, or you may call or text your response by Thursday, March 4, 2021 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.



Member Luncheon Meeting Response Form

Chartiers Country Club

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Check in 11:30 until Noon

Lunch Begins Promptly at Noon!

Menu

Breadbasket

Wedding Soup

Chicken Crepes with Asparagus and Chicken Supreme Sauce

Strawberry Shortcake

Please note any Special Dietary Requirements: _____

Cost: \$30 per member

_____ Yes, I will attend

_____ ***I cannot attend the luncheon, but could attend a virtual meeting***

Name

Company

Please respond to Carole Ann Krelow, Executive Director - by Thursday, March 4

ckrelow@wapgh.org OR Call, Leave Message or Text at 724-991-0136

Cash, Checks or Master Card or Visa Accepted

For Credit Card charges, please fill out attached form and return with response.

A 10% convenience fee will be added to all credit card payments (\$3.00)



Credit Card Authorization

Name on Card: _____

Credit Card Mailing Address: _____

Phone # Associated with Credit Card: _____

Your Mobile Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Credit Card Type: VISA Mastercard Discover

Credit Card Number: _____

Credit Card Expiration: _____

Credit Card Security Code: _____

Amount to be Charged: _____

(\$33.00 per person for luncheon includes 10% convenience fee)

Authorized Signature: _____