

Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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January 8, 2020

www.wapgh.org

January Highlights

A total of (31) thirty-one members and guests were registered for the January 8, 2020 luncheon meeting at Bella Sera.

Navigation Committee Report

David Podurciel provided the following report:

- Allegheny Lock 2 is finally open completely for all types of locking. Contractor was holding up the process of installing railing. I had multiple conversations with USACE personnel, and their hands were tied due to a contract oversight; also, the days that the Christmas holiday fell on they took the final 2 weeks off. As we move forward on future project, I feel it's imperative that the Navigation Committee continues to stay involved so maybe we can help avoid these "loop holes" in the contracts.
- The Hydro Committee has had multiple conference calls as we had a significant High-Water event the week of 12/16. We reached Action and Flood Stage at multiple locks on the Monongahela and Ohio Rivers, the One Call system was activated twice due to rapidly changing forecast.
- December 12th was the ORS Stakeholder Engagement meeting in Cincinnati where we will discuss the 2020/21 lock outage schedule. Many of the projects fell in the 'Funding at Risk' category due to impasse on budget at time of meeting. Since then a budget has been approved with significant increases (Dean will cover that), of major concern to Pittsburgh District is Emsworth Primary Chamber 75-day outage from 8/31-11/14. Braddock might need up to two weeks closure of the Primary Chamber between 11/16-12/18. Rich Krieder and I represented the Pittsburgh District and asked that the 2 weeks they need to close Primary Chamber at Lock 2 Mon start 2 weeks after Emsworth opens to help move as much cargo without delay in that period. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for either the week of February 17 or 24 to discuss FY20 work plan.
- There have been 5 groundings below Lock 2 Monongahela River and there is a need for dredging at Lock 4 Allegheny, the Waterways Association of Pittsburgh would like for this to be our formal request to have these locations addressed as soon as possible. It has come at a significant cost to industry due to delays while tows

are worked free, on all occasions multiple companies have 'volunteered' their vessels to help.

Port of Pittsburgh Commission

Mary Ann Bucci provided the following report:

- A Meet & Greet breakfast will be scheduled the morning of March 19th (prior to the Traffic Club dinner) at the Duquesne Club. Additional details will be provided prior to this event.
- Joe Kirk's sailing permit was approved despite the objections from industry partners. All mariners are encouraged to stay vigilante around the Point area for this training area.
- An economic study will be conducted on rivers considered by the US Army Corp of Engineers as "Low Use Rivers". This status impacts funding for maintenance and the operation of locks and dams. Industry believes that this greatly restricts regional growth and the movement of materials.
- The U.S. Department of Transportation has issued a request for information to help craft a National Freight Strategic Plan. Utilize the following link to review: [DOT Seeks Input on National Freight Strategic Plan.](#)

Legislative Report

Dean Marlin presented the following report:

- **FY 20 APPROPRIATIONS: A FULL TANK:**
 - o December 19 Congress passed FH30 Energy and Water Development Appropriations and President signed into law on 12/20 bill. Some highlights:

BUDGET ITEM	FY20 APPROVED	AS OPPOSED TO	
		FY99 ACT	PRESIDENT'S FY20 REQUEST
USACE Construction Account	\$2.68 Billion	+ \$498 Million	+ \$1.37 Million
USACE Operations and Maintenance Account	\$3.79 Billion		+\$1.86 Billion
Harbor and Maintenance Trust Fund	\$1.63 Billion		+\$665 Million
Investigations Account	\$151 Million	+ \$26 Million	+ 74 Million
USACE CIVIL WORKS MISSION	\$7.65 billion	+ \$625 million	+ \$2.69 billion

OTHER:

- The US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) (as opposed to NAFTA) was passed by the House prior to the December 19 adjournment - but will be on hold until after the Senate impeachment trial. It is expected to pass

INFRASTRUCTURE:

- House Transportation Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR) is supposedly going to release a proposal early this year - but the general perception it's an election year. Although many will talk about a "New Infrastructure Plan" - nothing is meaningful is predicted to happen until 2021.

DC CONGRESSIONAL VISIT: Feb 12 - 14:

- We are joining the WCI in the annual advocacy walk of the hill.
- 9 folks have signed on.
- We will be sending out more specifics

COMMITTEE FOR SAVING AND REVIVING LOW USE RIVERS

Now that the holidays are behind us, we are commencing efforts toward changing the USACE's Level of Service Regulation as follows:

- Locally we have are now actively partnering with the Allegheny River Development Corporation in an effort to facilitate continued operations for recreational boaters and commercial interests on AR Locks 6,7,8 and 9; and are actively meeting or pursuing meetings with State Senator Pittman, State Representatives Oberlander and Pyle and Congressman G T Thompson in that effort.
- With the USACE we are working with the USACE (District, Division and HQ levels) regarding the LoS Regulation status and potential changes to that regulation.
- On a national basis we are identifying and contacting industry and advocacy groups on 15 other USACE-named "Low Use Rivers" in order to educate and aggregate efforts. Some, but not all this outreach includes the Waterways Council Inc., The American Waterways Operators, the US DOT Maritime Administration, the Gulf Coast Intercostal Canal Association - and more.

Coast Guard News

The **attached** report was reviewed. The RNA (restricted navigation area) has been put into place. The RNA would primarily remove recreational boaters from the commercial traffic navigation areas. A press release will be scheduled for early March to educate all mariners of this new restriction.

Army Corp of Engineers

Vincent DeCarlo announced that an initiative has begun to put together a regional team to review policy changes that would yield positive results in funding river infrastructure on "Low Use Rivers". He introduced Captain Thomas Risi who will be heading this regional team. Patrick Kelly requested that this group include either a representative from the Waterways Association or the Port of Pittsburgh can provide valuable insight on this team. The **attached** report was also reviewed.

National Weather Service

The **attached** report was reviewed.

Education Committee Report

Michael Graham announced the following tentative dates:

April 23, 2020 Who Works the Rivers
July 23, 2020 Man Overboard Seminar/Clarion Inn
October 15, 2020 Who Works the Rivers
October 22, 2020 Barge Breakaway Seminar/Floreffe Fire Hall

*The Who Works the Rivers program designed by Riverworks Discovery will be celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

February Membership Meeting

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at Chartiers Country Club. Registration will begin at 11:45 a.m. with lunch served promptly at noon. Cost of the luncheon will be **\$30**. Please call, email or fax the response form below by Friday, February 7, 2020 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

**Waterways Association of Pittsburgh
Meeting Response Form**

Chartiers Country Club
February 12, 2020

Menu:

Broccoli Cheddar Soup
Chicken Piccata/romano battered chicken breast w/lemon-caper sauce
Rice Pilaf
Deep Dish Cherry Pie w/vanilla ice cream
Lemonade, Iced Tea & Coffee Station

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 Friday, February 7, 2020** to:

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