

# Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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

## June Highlights

The June Membership Luncheon was held at the Chartiers Country Club with eighteen (18) members participating. Several reports have been submitted electronically and are included in this newsletter.

## Navigation Committee Report

David Podurgiel provided the following report:

- ⌚ WAP COVID-19 Tasks Force update: Captain Graham, Mary Ann Bucci, and I along with John Dilla have been conducting bi-weekly calls discussing any impacts that COVID-19 has had on lock operations, Port, and industry. We have seen a slight increase in tonnage as the market starts to exit from the COVID 19 restrictions and as end users are building up stockpiles in anticipation of the 75-day outage of the Primary Chamber approaches on August 31. No issues with COVID 19 have arisen.
- ⌚ We are experiencing better operating conditions as local rivers are in pool stage. Some docks are experiencing shoaling which could be attributed to the extended high-water conditions we experienced in the past.
- ⌚ A planned outage for Maxwell Lock which also included underwater screen replacement and floating pin replacement has been completed, delays were minimal, and the work finished ahead of schedule.
- ⌚ Emsworth Back Channel has 3 out of 4 gates out of service, this is forcing all the water down the front channel which has increased to flow velocity above and below the lock. The USACE representative will address this in their report today.
- ⌚ Montgomery Lock is currently working in the Primary Chamber through June 12, they are closing from 0700-1900. The repair party will return July 6 thru August 22 to retrofit the downstream concrete sills in the Auxiliary Chamber. The project manager is requesting a total closure of both chambers on August 13/14. I met with Beth Schneller to discuss, this would be unacceptable since it was not on the schedule and we can ill afford a total river closure especially with Emsworth going down 2 weeks later. She explained the scope of work, the PM was concerned wheel wash from down bound vessels would affect the concrete, I assured her that industry vessels will reduce wheel wash to a minimum as they depart the Primary Chamber and there is no need to shut down.
- ⌚ The Coast Guard RNA that was developed with the Congested Waterways Committee last year became law and went into effect on February 14, 2020. The RNA (Regulated Navigation Area) that does not allow for Recreational Boaters to Moor, Anchor, Loiter, etc. outside of 100' from the shoreline, to allow for clear passage of commercial

traffic. This information along with a link from the USCG home page and contact information for commercial vessels to report discrepancies was shared with industry on 6 June 2020.

### **Port of Pittsburgh Commission**

No official report was submitted for inclusion in the newsletter.

### **Legislative Report**

Dean Marlin provided the following report:

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE:**

- ⌚ Last week the House unveiled a \$495 billion surface transportation bill with a focus on climate mitigation. This bill provides twice as much money to highways versus public transportation and rail. It is predicted to fail in markup with the Senate.
- ⌚ President Trump signed an executive order to waive environmental laws and speed up the permitting process in order to pace the way for anticipated pandemic-fueled infrastructure projects.
- ⌚ There is still no proposed funding solution.

#### **THE COMMITTEE FOR SAVING AND REVIVING LOW USE RIVERS**

- ⌚ The Inland Rivers, Ports and Terminal Association is proposing a new infrastructure grant program to ensure that smaller inland ports and terminals (handling under 8 million tons) receive matching funds as part of the "Ports Act". They are asking our Congressman Connor Lamb (representing 43 ports and terminals in his district) to co-sponsor the bill with Congressman Michael Best - Illinois 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. We have written a letter of support to Congressman Lamb.

#### **OF INTEREST**

- ⌚ Major General Butch Graham (former Commander of the Pittsburgh District), will become the Commanding General of the US Army Corp of Engineer's - Civil and Emergency Operations which is currently commanded by Major General Scott Spellman who is replacing Lt. General Todd Semonite as Chief of Engineers.
- ⌚ The containerized cargo business in the US is off 25% year to date. Much of this resulting from trade losses with China. The American Association of Port Authorities is seeking governmental relief.

### **Coast Guard News**

The **attached** report was provided.

### **Army Corp of Engineers**

The **attached** report was provided. Kathy Griffin also commented on two strategic initiatives:

- ⌚ A charter for low use waterways initiative expected to be signed in next few weeks. Two objectives of initiative:
  - o Recommend changes to USACE budget metrics pertaining to prioritization of maintenance funding. Current budget metrics focus investments on high use waterways. Initiative would benefit Allegheny and Monongahela River maintenance.

o Recommend language that could be used by members of Congress to establish designated funding for low use waterways. Intent is to rollout initiative at regionally and expand to national level. Navigation stakeholders can communicate value of initiative to congressional representatives. Port of Pittsburgh to work the action with the Corps.

- ① USACE Institute for Water Resources (IWR) is funding Penn State doctorate student to identify ideas for long term reliability and resiliency of upper Ohio River navigation infrastructure. Corps seeking participation by Port of Pittsburgh, Waterways Council Inc, and possibly one other entity that has broad, multi-use interest. Mike Graham suggested Inland Rivers Ports and Terminals.

### **National Weather Service**

The **attached** report was provided.

### **Education Committee Report**

**DATE CHANGE:** The Man Overboard Seminar has been rescheduled for Friday, July 24, 2020 at the Clarion Inn/Belle Vernon. Please mark your calendars accordingly.

### **July Membership Meeting**

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 8, 2020 aboard the Gateway Clipper Fleet. During this luncheon, the 2020 Pittsburgh Maritime Association Scholarship recipients will be formally recognized.

***The Pittsburgh Maritime Association is seeking scholarship donations to maintain this vital industry opportunity for the members. Anyone with questions can contact Cheryl Cranmer directly.***

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 Thursday, July 2, 2020 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

Gateway Clipper Fleet  
July 8, 2020 @ Noon

**Picnic Menu:**

Kansas City BBQ Ribs  
Grilled Chicken Breast Sandwich  
Corn on the Cobb w/lime and cilantro  
Quarter Cut Potato Wedges w/melted cheddar and smoky bacon  
Hannah's Famous Macaroni Salad  
Broccoli & Cauliflower Salad  
Pound Cake with Fresh Strawberries and Whipped Topping

**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, July 2, 2020** to:

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