

Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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March 11, 2020

www.wapgh.org

March Highlights

A total of (27) twenty-seven members and guests were registered for the March 11, 2020 luncheon meeting at Chartiers Country Club presided over by President Michael Graham. Austin Edmonson of Crouse Corporation was reintroduced to the membership.

Navigation Committee Report

David Podurgiel provided the following report:

- Braddock Lock 2 Monongahela River started its Auxiliary Chamber outage on Monday, 3/9 through May 8th. Use of the Primary Chamber for moving equipment, supplies and to assist with repair work will occur up to 12 times with 4 to 8-hour closures. The USACE reached out the Navigation Committee to discuss this change since it wasn't on the LRD schedule, there isn't an issue with this as the delays will be minor. We agreed to a 24-hour notice when these full river closures will occur.
- Dashields required Slope Stabilization the week of 3/2, the Repair Party was able to finish the work a day ahead of schedule and delays were minimal. Thank You for the quick work and timely communication.
- Area rivers have been relatively calm this past month, we did reach Action Stage at twice 2/4 and 2/15.
- Currently the most significant lock outage we will have this year will be Emsworth Lock from 8/31 thru 11/14. This 75-day outage will severely affect commercial traffic. There is a meeting with the LRD/Ohio River Division on 3/10 in Nashville, we will be requesting that steps be taken to shorten this outage by using every available means. During this same meeting we will be discussing FY 21/22 schedule. I do want to mention that there is a proposed duo outage of Emsworth/Dashield in March/April of FY22, both Primary Chambers.
- During the week of 3/23 at the request of the USACE, members of the Navigation Committee will meet to discuss a few smaller projects that are not on the current FY20 Work Plan. I will inform all ASAP once this meeting is completed.

Port of Pittsburgh Commission

Mary Ann Bucci reported the following:

- There were two (2) teams that visited with Senate and House representatives. The visits were successful in generating support from Representative Conor Lamb and Representative Guy Reschenthaler for the 75/25 Waterways Trust Fund split instead of 50/50.

- The new tonnage report has been received. The region experienced a tonnage reduction from \$26M to \$21M. It is extremely important to identify additional commodities that may be able to utilize river transportation. The Port Waterborne Traffic and Port Ranking reports are **attached**.
- A tentative meeting with the Maritime Administration has been set for April 29th. The Port is seeking to have the Administration designate the Mon and Allegheny Rivers as Marine Highways. This would make it possible to obtain maritime funding that could assist with current projects.
- The annual Traffic Club Dinner has been postponed due the Coronavirus. Once a new date has been identified, the Port will work to reschedule the breakfast that is held prior to the dinner.
- A meeting will also be scheduled with the Department of Energy, Agriculture Transportation and the Army Corp of Engineers to review additional commodities that could be considered for river usage. If new commodities are identified, it will be extremely important to have a successful implementation (infrastructure, facilities, etc.).

Legislative Report

Dean Marlin provided the following report:

INFRASTRUCTURE:

- The Administration's new FY2021 budget offers a \$1 Trillion infrastructure proposal spread out over the next decade - plus an \$810 billion surface reauthorization. As with all infrastructure proposals from all directions - it does not address how to realistically fund the proposal.
- Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin has reportedly mentioned that, if the White House decides to stimulate the economy in response to the coronavirus outbreak - it may start prioritizing infrastructure solutions.

REPORT: DC CONGRESSIONAL VISIT: Feb 12 - 14:

- Over 100 WCI members from around the country spent the day visiting members of congress. Your Waterways Association of Pittsburgh team of 7 met directly with Senator Bob Casey, Senator Shelly Moore Capito, Congressman Mike Kelly, and Congressman Conor Lamb and met with the staffs of Joe Manchin, Pat Toomey, Alex Mooney, Lloyd Smucker, Scott Perry, Mike Doyle, Guy Reschenthaler.
- We advocated for: 1) a 75%/25% (versus the current 50/50) Federal/Waterways Trust fund split to be incorporated in the renewing Water Resources Development Act; 2) an increase in the USACE Civil Works Program O & M funding from the current \$3.79 billion; 3) opposition to any additional lock or tolling fees for users on the IMTS and; 4) to secure additional funding for inland navigation within the next infrastructure bill.

WRDA 2020:

- The Water Resources and Development Act is in the process for its bi-annual redo. The USACE is currently recommending 17 flood control, dredging, river locks and ecosystem restoration projects totally \$9 billion - but the list could be longer. The WCI is asking that the Inland Waterways Trust Fund contribution mix be

changed from the historic 50% government/50% IWTF mix - to 75%/25% mix in 2020.

- The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has been holding stakeholder meetings with advocacy groups and will be conducting formal hearings on March 7.
- The Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee is preparing to mark up its WRDA bill with several Senators signaling a need for the cost share change for the Inland Waterways Trust fund as a top priority.

ADMINISTRATION'S FY21 BUDGET PROPOSAL - Was published February 10 - among other things, it proposes:

- Cutting the USACE Engineer's Civil Works budget by 22% (1.7 Billion) below FY20- to \$5.967 Billion.
- \$0 appropriation for the federal contribution to the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (versus \$335 million for FY20) - If accepted this would stop the Lower Mon project (\$111 million of which \$55.5 million comes from the Inland Waterways Trust fund.

THE COMMITTEE FOR SAVING AND REVIVING LOW USE RIVERS

- **USACE EFFORTS.** In January the USACE Pittsburgh District authored a recommendation ("Low-Use Systems-Budgeting, Maintaining and Reliability") to have the USACE assemble a national level "Project Delivery Team" to re-evaluate the viability of the LoS metric system and to ultimately engage the Assistant Secretary of the Army and the OMB in a possible change the Corps policy. The recommendation ("Fact Sheet") has presently received concurrence from the Division and is starting up the ladder. Thanks to Colonel Short, Kathy Griffin, Vince DeCarlo and any other Corps personnel for pioneering and forwarding this important national effort.
 - Early this week Kathy Griffin emailed that the initiative is being routed to the Great Lakes Division Commander (Maj. Gen. Robert F. Whittle) for signature. The goal is to have a kick-off meeting in early April.
- **GRASS ROOTS EFFORTS.** Your Association has initiated a "grass-roots" effort to challenge the effects of the Level of Service regulation - nationwide.
 - In January, our flyer "Help Stop the Slow Strangulation of Commerce on the IMTS!" (a piece co-sponsored by us and the Port of Pittsburgh Commission) - "caught fire" in a Missouri stakeholder meeting. Since then that time McClellan-Kerr Arkansas Association, Tennessee Tombigbee Association, Red River Valley Association, and key stakeholders on the Missouri and Kentucky/Green waterways have expressed a strong desire to join our effort.
 - We and the Port of Pittsburgh have been invited to speak at the April meeting of the Inland Rivers, Ports and Terminals Association meeting in April.
 - On or before March 12 we are launching a Linked-In Group "Inland Marine Transportation System Advocates (Guardians)"
 - The Group's objective is to focus national attention on the condition of the IMTS, promote the integration of the IMTS with other modes of transportation - and make

recommendations to elected officials regarding policies that impact all users on the IMTS.

□ ALLEGHENY RIVER DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION NEWS

- o The ARDC is regrouping their efforts following last year setback. Their immediate objective is to raise funds through donations and grants - to enable them to continue recreational lockages on specific days through AR locks 6,7,8,9.
- o In January the ARDC met with the USACE in order to submit and gain approval for their 2020 seasonal lock schedule. Due to the reduced LoS enacted on Lock 4 - necessary staffing has been re-allocated and the USACE in not able to fulfill the ARDC request - regardless of tolling amount.

Coast Guard News

Due to the Coronavirus protocol, no Coast Guard representative was able to attend the meeting. The **attached** report was provided.

Army Corp of Engineers

Ian McKelvey presented the **attached** report.

National Weather Service

Lee Hendricks reviewed the **attached** report. He also introduced Shannon Hefferan who works with him in the National Weather Service Office.

Education Committee Report

Mike Graham announced that Eileen Provins of Campbell Transportation will be taking the lead on the Education Committee. The following dates are confirmed:

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/Florefe Fire Hall

The Pittsburgh Maritime Association awards up to four (4) \$1,500 scholarships. The Association is currently seeking donations to continue to fund that scholarship effort. Further details can be obtained through Cheryl Cranmer directly.

April Membership Meeting

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 8, 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, April 3, 2020 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

**Waterways Association of Pittsburgh
Meeting Response Form**

Chartiers Country Club
April 8, 2020

Menu:

Tossed Baby Greens Salad w/balsamic Vinaigrette dressing
House Made Lasagna w/Ricotta Cheese and fresh basil
Fresh Green Beans sautéed with fresh herbs
Chocolate Parfait
Coffee, Decaf Coffee, Tea and Iced 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 Friday, April 3, 2020** to:

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