

Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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November 2018

www.wapgh.org

November Highlights

A total of (28) twenty-eight members and guests were registered for the November 14, 2018 luncheon meeting at the Chartiers Country Club. David Podurgiel introduced first-time attendees: Scott Harshman of the Port of Pittsburgh and Raymond Roberts of First Energy/Bruce Mansfield.

Navigation Committee Report

David Podurgiel provided the following report:

- Allegheny River Lock 2 will have an outage in August 2019 that will be a full river closure, Nav Committee requested a weekend opening during the 35-day full river closure and a formal request is pending. Navigation Committee, Terminal Operators, Rec boat representatives and local business leaders met with the COE on 11/8 to discuss Levels of Service at Allegheny Lock 4. COE is requesting LoS to be reduced from Level 2 (2 shifts per day) to level 3 (one 10-hour shift). Industry can ill afford this reduction; we are submitting a formal request to the COE Chief (?) of Operations to keep at Level 2.
- Navigation Committee also submitted a formal request to have 24/7 Double Lockages at AR Locks 2/3. They are listed at LoS 1 but double lockings were only available from 0800-2230. This request was granted by the COE starting Jan. 1, 2019.
- Montgomery Lock will have 84-day outage from 3/11-6/14, 2019 with intermittent openings, we are working with COE to minimize delays as best as possible. COE is working with the contractor to see if they can work in tandem with the repair party so as not to add days to the outage. All parties are doing the best they can on this project.
- New Cumberland Lock's installation of new hydraulic system to operate the locks has been moved up from September to late March. Originally it was expected to have five 48-hour closures but contractor has assured all they won't need these delays. There will be some as system gets tested, COE has been very open with Nav Committee in discussing this project.
- Communication between WAP Navigation Committee/local shareholders with the COE Pittsburgh District has greatly improved and we hope that this partnership continues.

Port of Pittsburgh Commission

Scott Harshman introduced himself and is looking forward to getting to know everyone better. The following information was provided:

- The Pennsylvania State Council representing the Central Pennsylvania, Lehigh Valley, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Sections of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) presented the 2018 Report Card for Pennsylvania's Infrastructure. Civil engineers hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public. To help serve the public, the Pennsylvania Council has created this report card to help educate Pennsylvanians of the status of the state's infrastructure so that the public, in conjunction with elected officials, can make educated decisions on how to prioritize funding to meet current and future needs of the Commonwealth. This report card also makes recommendations to infrastructure owners and civil engineers on how improve our state's infrastructure.
- The 2018 Report Card for Pennsylvania's Infrastructure gives the Commonwealth an overall grade of C-, which reflects that Pennsylvania has some of the oldest infrastructure in the country, and improvements continue to be needed. Unfortunately, the 2018 overall grade of a C- reflects the same letter grade as the 2014 Report Card for Pennsylvania's Infrastructure, indicating that while some aspects of our state's infrastructure have improved, others have degraded. The full report is available at www.pareportcard.org.

Legislative Report

Dean Marlin provided the following report:

- **CONGRESS WAS RECESSED FOR THE MID TERM ELECTION CAMPAIGNING UNTIL NOVEMBER 13. THEY ARE NOW IN A LAME DUCK SESSION UNTIL DECEMBER 14 ... ON THEIR AGENDA WILL BE:**
 - Choosing House and Senate leadership for the next congress.
 - Unfinished FY 2019 spending bills in order to keep the Government operating after December 7. (Which is the expiration of the Continuing Resolutions contained in the 2nd minibus appropriations bill passed at the September.)
 - A bi-partition infrastructure bill will be a high priority to at least start moving November 13.
- **THE WCI (WATERWAYS COUNCIL) STATES THAT IT HAS BEEN A VERY GOOD YEAR FOR THE INLAND WATERWAYS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.**
 - **FY 19 APPROPRIATIONS**
 - On Sept 13 Senate passed a 2019 Minibus appropriations conference report that combines appropriations bills for the Legislative Branch, Military Construction, Veteran Affairs and the Energy and Water Development that funds the USACE.
 - This is 4th consecutive year that the USACE Civil Works programs have attained a record-setting \$6.99 billion
 - O & M Appropriations was a 5th consecutive record level of \$3.74 billion

- Inland Waterways Trust Fund is between \$326.5 million to \$396 million wants the USACE releases its FY19 work plan. (locks and dams)
 - These all substantially exceed levels requested by the administration
 - The actual plan is to be released 11/20
- **WRDA 2018 IS LAW AS OF OCTOBER 23**
 - It includes no authorization of lockage fees or tolls in the inland waterway system.
 - \$3 billion in funding over 10 years and 12 major USACE projects
 - Directs the Secretary of the Army to have the National Academy of Sciences evaluate the organizational structure of the Civil Works function of the USACE to identify impediments to efficient project delivery - and report same to congress
- **THE UPCOMING INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE. \$1.5 TRILLION**
 - As you know the Administration failed in its \$200 billion seeding fund suggestion. Trump says it is now the Democrat's turn to offer up a solution.
 - Leadership of House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is changing.
 - Bill Shuster (House) Retiring - Will be replaced by Pete DeFazio (d-Oregon 4th Congressional District.
 - Defazio is bullish on infrastructure and optimistic regarding working out real investment versus "pretend stuff".
 - Potential House Speaker Pelosi and Senate Majority leader McConnell have already talked and agreed to attempt bipartisan agreement.
 - The White House has leaned on spending cuts versus tax increase - but the money must come from somewhere.
 - Politico says Trump and lawmakers likely will end up empty handed in this next congress despite talk of cooperation. The fundamental problem is that a combination of tax increases, budget cuts or borrowing will be required - and neither party is showing a willingness to budge - yet.
 - Meanwhile - Two recent polls indicate that 46% of respondents would support toll or fees paid by users for roads, tunnels and bridges - while 27% favor higher taxes paid by everyone. 60% of respondents say traffic congestion gotten worse. However - constituents want to get serious and paying more may be the way.

Coast Guard News

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

Army Corp of Engineers

John Dilla presented the **attached** report.

Kathy Griffin discussed several items:

- As previously highlighted by Mary Ann Bucci, outreach to generate alternative funds by allocating 10% of Hydro-electric revenues to water rehabilitation instead of the general fund continue.

- The new communication plan that was developed by Beth Schneller will be reviewed with industry prior to the spring implementation.
- Over the next year, the development of a consortium to discuss the Upper Ohio issues. The recent funding request to initiate a pilot project for remote lock operations (ROLAT) could be promising for expanding operations.
- COL Short would like to engage with industry at an event that could possibly include a project tour.

The Waterways Newsletter along with all the attachments are posted on the website at www.wapgh.org. Anyone can access these documents and can be shared outside the Waterways membership.

National Weather Service

Alicia Miller covered the **attached** report.

Education Committee Report

Michael Graham was unable to attend.

December Membership Meeting

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 12, 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 Friday, December 7, 2018 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

**Waterways Association of Pittsburgh
Meeting Response Form**

Chartiers Country Club
December 12, 2018 @ Noon

Menu:

Mixed Field Greens w/Chartiers Crouton (balsamic dressing)
Roasted Sirloin of Beef w/mushroom demi-glace sauce
Scalloped Potatoes
Crème De Menthe Parfait
Cold Tea, coffee and hot 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, December 7, 2018** to:

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