

Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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November 13, 2019

www.wapgh.org

November Highlights

A total of (38) thirty-eight members and guests were registered for the November 13, 2019 luncheon meeting at Chartiers Country Club.

Patrick Kelly presented William Porter with a Lifetime Achievement Award honoring his 45-year career within the maritime industry. Bill's participation within the Waterways Association of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Maritime Club and the Pittsburgh Maritime Association provided strong leadership and stewardship.

Navigation Committee Report

David Podurgiel provided the following report:

- Allegheny Lock 2 is set to open Wednesday, November 13, this is 17 days past the original open date due to contractor damaging a pre-cast concrete panel that includes the embedded metals for the ladder rungs and line hooks. The embedded metals have a long lead time so a new panel could not be fabricated in time to install during the current closure that ends on 27 October. Beth Schneller has kept the lines of communication open and I feel the USACE has done everything in their power to rectify this and it's much appreciated.
- Over the past couple months Industry has been reporting areas we have rubbed bottom due to shoaling at the lower approach to area locks, Maxwell, Lock 4 Mon, and Emsworth. The USACE set up dredging contracts and has already rectified Emsworth with little delay to vessels. Lock 4 Mon will take place once they can divert the water, current construction is possibly causing the humps 600' below approach and 50' below land wall. Awaiting confirmation when Maxwell will be in the schedule.
- December 12 will be the ORS Stakeholder Engagement meeting in Cincinnati where we will discuss the 2020/21 lock outage schedule.

Port of Pittsburgh Commission

Mary Ann Bucci provided the following report:

- The 16th Annual Waterways Symposium was well attended and provided strong programming. A committee has been established on to bring attention to the low-use rivers designation. More progress was made on this issue than what had been expected.
- Senator Casey is supporting the cost share change of the Inland Waterways Trust fund from 50/50 to 75/25. There are currently 13 Senators signed on to this proposal.

- The Port of Pittsburgh honored Bill Porter for all his years within the maritime industry and all his assistance in the Port's activities.

Legislative Report

Dean Marlin was unable to attend but submitted the below report:

- **CONGRESS IS IN SESSION UNTIL MID DECEMBER**

- **FY 20 APPROPRIATIONS.**

- Since October 1 the government has been operating under a short-term continuing resolution which will expire 11/21.
- The Energy and Water Development (E & WD) Appropriations Bill for \$48.9 Billion (the one that funds the USACE) was stalled in the Senate, along with other spending bills, on September 18.
- This bill would fund the USACE at \$7.75 billion - \$357 million over last year and \$2.53 billion over the President's FY 20 budget request.
- However - absent agreement, the appropriation for any unfunded department or agency will either move to either a) another short-term CR (likely December) - or b) to a long-term C.R which will continue to the end of fiscal 2020.
 - If b) occurs to the E & WD appropriations bill - it will force Corps funding to the Administration's budget request of \$4.8 billion (vs the 7.75 billion).
- The Transportation-HUD bill is leading the way as one of only 4 spending bills passed by both the House and Senate.

- **WRDA 2020**

- Throughout October the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held hearings for setting WRDA priorities. These hearings have included the Corps of Engineers and Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) R D James.
- As previously reported, The WCI is pressing for a cost share change of the Inland Waterways Trust fund from 50/50 to 75 (General Revenue Fund and /25 (Inland Waterway Trust Fund for more effective use of the annual diesel fuel tax.

- **INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Congress continues to struggle with this crucial bill - and how to fund \$ Trillions in water, highway and numerous other national infrastructure needs.
- The latest funding concepts range from a pared-down proposal by funding maintenance and safety design projects that can be justified by connecting people to jobs and services ... to a reduced surface transportation bill proposed by Kentucky's Rand Paul's to take 1 percent from the government discretionary spending fund and place that \$12.3 billion in funding for highways, airports, railroads and waterways.

□ **REPORT: THE COMMITTEE FOR SAVING AND REVIVING LOW USE RIVERS**

- With help from a number of folks in this room - we are developing a national campaign to recognize the 2012 Level of Service Regulation as a nation-wide threat to the IMTS - and a symptom of a need for more recognition, stakeholder/federal cooperation and funding for the entire IMTS. In point:
- The IMTS was created as one of our nation's largest investments in economic development, socio-economic development and national defense. There is past, current and future dependence for the IMTS to function to this end - particularly in view of increasing global competition and global economic circumstances.
- 15 of the 27 rivers constituting the IMTS have, are, or will soon become endangered due to the 2012 Level of Service Regulation born of the need for more O & M funding and productivity improvement.
- That the health of the IMTS can be restored by a combination of better industry/commercial coordination with the USACE.

□ We have begun to contact and meet with several political and community groups, are receiving great support from the Port of Pittsburgh. However, this effort will soon become much greater in scope as it involves national level "policy determination" and advocacy.

□ At last week's Waterways Council Symposium

- We (WAP and the Port of Pittsburgh) distributed the 1-page provocative piece "Help Stop the Slow Strangulation of Commerce on the IMTS" to stimulate conversations, contacts and national advocacy.
 - Of note, we encountered much encouragement for this effort and have developed a number of contacts and potential resources. We met other river interests, folks offering assistance - and a general consensus for the effort.
- This meeting was well attended and included many attention-grabbing presentations with topics ranging from how the global conditions may affect our waterways - to potential changes in commodity movements on our waterways - to a geopolitical presentation that, among other things, opined that a change in the Jones Act could positively impact the IMTS.
 - A particular highlight for me was a panel discussion "Capital Investment Strategy -the Next Phase" which involved the USACE's Chief of Operations of the Rock Island District, the Commander of the Pittsburgh District (Colonel Short) - and the President of the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway.

□ This panel clearly demonstrated just how crucial and effective a close and mutually beneficial working relationship can be for the Corps, Industry and

- Stakeholders for overcoming the enormous financial and operational obstacles confronting the IMTS.
- o It will take some time to download and follow-up on this meeting - but we can provide cliff notes and some PowerPoints presentations for any who may would like more information.

Coast Guard News

The **attached** report was reviewed.

Army Corp of Engineers

The **attached** report was reviewed.

National Weather Service

The **attached** report was reviewed.

Bill Porter received a Certificate of Appreciation recognizing his maritime career.

Education Committee Report

Michael Graham was unable to attend. The following report was presented on behalf of Mike by Patrick Kelly:

- On October 17, 2019, we held the Barge Breakaway Seminar at the Floreffe Fire Hall in West Elizabeth. Attendance was exceptional with 117 people representing 32 companies and government agencies. With a revamped agenda and some new technology, there were a lot of tough topics discussed and a lot of great questions and answers during the event. The hands-on discussions and demonstrations at the landing were also a great add on and garnered a lot of interest and questions. This was a huge step in the right direction stemming from a need for companies to step up and take responsibility in guiding our industry into a safer culture and taking the necessary steps to control and minimize Breakaways and their lasting effects. We as an organization need to keep this commitment going and make sure the focus is on the future of our industry through education, communication, and working together.
- Through December the education committee will look to identify dates for the Man Overboard, Barge Breakaway, and Who Works the Rivers seminars for 2020. I will announce them once we have them.

Patrick Kelly took a moment to recognize the passing of Charlie Jones of Amherst Madison on October 21st at the age of 102.

December Membership Meeting

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 11, 2019 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, December 6, 2019 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

**Waterways Association of Pittsburgh
Meeting Response Form**

Chartiers Country Club
December 11, 2019

Menu:

Tossed Baby Greens Salad w/ Balsamic Vinaigrette
Spinach Ravioli
Steamed Broccoli w/Toasted Garlic
Assorted Cookies and Brownies
Coffee, Decaf, Ice 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 6, 2019** to:

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