

# Waterways Association of Pittsburgh

## Newsletter

P.O. Box 178, Valencia, PA 16059

October/November 2020

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### October / November Highlights

Our scheduled November 11 meeting was cancelled. This is due to current employer restrictions in place for many of our members, coupled with the fact the date happened to coincide with Veteran's Day and many of our members had the day off as a federal holiday. We give our sincere thanks to all of you who are or have served to protect the rest of us and all our freedoms.

Our October meeting was held jointly with the Huntington District Waterways Association at the Lafayette Hotel in Marietta, Ohio on October 7, 2020. Forty-three members were in attendance, many of those arrived early to attend the USCG Incident Summit which preceded the luncheon.

Bill Barr, President HDWA welcomed everyone to the meeting. He spoke briefly regarding the importance of the Jones Act, the law that regulates maritime commerce in US waters; all goods shipped between U.S. ports must be transported by U.S. vessels, operated primarily by Americans. There is a certain amount of domestic security afforded by the Jones Act. There have been recent unsuccessful efforts to repeal.

Dave Podurgiel, Vice President WAP, followed up with the Navigation Report. He noted it is the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Jones Act and reiterated its importance to those who utilize the in-land waterways. He spoke briefly regarding the "War on Coal" and other fossil fuels. He stated the general public should be better educated in the fact that it will be decades before alternative energy is plentiful enough to replace fossil fuels; Oil, gas and coal. He noted as a group we should continue to fight for use of fossil fuels as an important commodity for our well-being.

Mike Graham, President WAP, gave a brief update of current education efforts. The Breakaway Barge Seminar has officially been cancelled. This is primarily due to the Covid restrictions set by employers which do not allow employees to attend group functions. Mike is working with the WAP group to reschedule this important educational event as early possible in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2021. It may be a combination of on-line and hands-on education.

Finally, the October guest speaker was Captain Bob Kubota. He is a former Captain with Ingram Barge, who is currently Captain of an LST 325 touring the in-land waterways. The history of the LST 325 (Landing Ship

Tank carrier) is quite interesting. Please check out our photograph page to see Captain Bob and his ship.

***Please note: All the following reports are current as of November 11, 2020***

#### **Coast Guard News**

The **attached** report was provided for the newsletter.

#### **Navigation Committee Report**

David Podurgiel provided the following report for the newsletter.

- Due to a pump failure on the RF3 crane the final repair to the lower gate cannot be completed and the fleet will have to return and close the Primary Chamber for 2 weeks in January. There were multiple conference calls discussing alternatives, this was the best due to not setting back the Hannibal outage. Emsworth will open on November 13 as planned. USACE personnel at Emsworth Lock and Dam have been great at managing the queue and keeping the communication to industry daily at 0700 & 1900. Average delay has been 51 Hours.
- Braddock Locks and Dam Monongahela River Mile 11.3, Closure of Primary and Auxiliary Chambers: The auxiliary chamber will require an 8 hour and a 12 hour closure that will occur sometime between November 16th and November 27th. Note that the primary chamber will remain open during the auxiliary chamber closure. The primary chamber will require two 8 hour closures that will occur sometime between December 7th and December 18th. Note that the auxiliary chamber will remain open during the primary chamber closure.
- Operating conditions are near normal with some shoaling on all three rivers mainly due to low water.
- Below are upcoming USACE projects that will affect river commerce in 2021
  - o Pike Island L/D OR 84.3: Primary Chamber Intermittent Closures for river wall crack repair, April 15-30
  - o Willow Island L/D OR 161.7: Primary Chamber intermittent closures for hydraulic system replacement. Awaiting design completion, June 1-September 30.
  - o Montgomery L/D OR 31.8: Primary Chamber dewatering, July 26-August 27 Major Delays.
  - o Hannibal L/D OR 126.4: Primary Chamber intermittent closures for culvert valve replacement, October 25- December 10.

#### **National Weather Service**

Alicia Miller of NOAA Federal provided the **attached** report for the newsletter.

#### **Port of Pittsburgh Commission**

A current Report is not available.

## Legislative Report

Dean Marlin provided the following report for the newsletter. The lame duck session began in the Senate November 9 and the House returns November 15.

## WRDA 2020 OR "THE AMERICA WATERWAY INFRASTRUCTURE ACT OF 2020"

- All indications are that WRDA will be passed during this session.

## 2021 APPROPRIATIONS

- On November 10 the Senate released all 12 of its appropriations bills which includes the FY21 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill.
- Although we are under a continuing resolution that extends funding to all federal agencies through December 11 - this recent development bodes well for moving our nation forward into 2021 without further deliberation.

## ADDITIONAL

- Surprisingly the US Treasury has reported that September industry contribution into the Inland Waterways Trust fund where over \$30 million - bring annual receipts collected to \$112 million - only \$8 million below 2018 year to date receipts.
- In mid-October a Presidential Executive Order was signed establishing a Water Subcabinet in order to coordinate relevant government agencies in the effort to improve water infrastructure planning and promotion.
- There is an excellent editorial in the November 9 issue of The Waterways Journal entitled "Infrastructure: Now Is the Time". It points out that it is time to stop bipartisan disagreement about the ways and means and costs - and focus in on the goals necessary to restore and improve use of our Nation's greatest commercial highway.

## Army Corp of Engineers

John Dilla provided the **attached** report for the newsletter.

## Education Committee Report

Mike Graham reports WAP is hopeful the Break Away Barge Seminar can be rescheduled in the first quarter of 2021.

## December Membership Meeting

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9 at Chartiers Country Club.

Please email the response form below, or you may call or text your response by Thursday, December 3, 2020 **if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.**

**Waterways Association of Pittsburgh**  
**Membership Luncheon Meeting**  
Chartiers Country Club  
Wednesday, December 9, 2020 @ 11:30am

**Covid Restrictions:**

- *Mask must be worn at **ALL** times except when eating / drinking*
- Seating will be 50% at all tables, please do not rearrange seats

**Menu:**

Butternut Squash Soup with Bread Basket  
Roasted Pork Loin with Pomegranate Glaze  
Wild Rice & Basmati Pilaf  
Roasted Brussel Sprouts  
Dessert: Dutch Apple Pie

**\*\*Special Dietary Requirements:** \_\_\_\_\_

***Guest Speaker to Be Confirmed:*** Representative Guy Reschenthaler

**Cost: \$30/per member**

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I will be attending

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print)

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please respond by Thursday Dec 3, 2020***

Carole Ann Krelow

e-mail response form to: [ckrelow@wapgh.org](mailto:ckrelow@wapgh.org)

**OR**

Call, Leave Message or Text: 724-991-0136

***Payment of Cash or Check will be accepted. Please advise if you require an invoice for your Accounts Payable Department.***