

Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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September 2017

www.wapgh.org

September Highlights

A total of (38) thirty-eight members and guests were registered for the September 13, 2017 luncheon meeting at Chartiers Country Club. First-time attendee, Rick Pennza of Great Lakes Power was introduced.

Richard Lockwood was presented a token of appreciation honoring his years of service in the Port of Pittsburgh. The Waterways Association wished him well in his retirement.

Navigation Committee Report

David Podurgiel provided the following report:

- The Coast Guard will report on the Congested Waterways Committee's meeting held today.
- On Thursday, there will be a meeting with the GAO, I will update once meeting is complete.
 - Last year the Corp was hoping to get an increase in the level of manning for Locks 2, 3 Allegheny and this will start FY 18 (October 17). Currently Locks 2,3 are Level 1 (24/7,365) but only for singles after 10PM till 8AM. In March, manning levels should increase whereas they will be able to do 'doubles' 24/7. This is great news for shipping.
- Campbell Transportation hosted the annual Congressional visit on Sept. 7 hosting representatives from PA, OH and WV. We had staffers from the offices of: Casey D-PA, Toomey R-PA, Capito R-WV, Rothfus R-PA, Johnson R-OH, and Mooney R-WV. Points covered:
 - Industry needs for uniform national standard for ballast water and other vessel discharges.
 - Continued support for Jones Act
 - We are asking for the Inland waterways to be included and supported in 2017 Infrastructure package.

Port of Pittsburgh Commission Report

Mary Ann Bucci provided the following report:

- Gifts of appreciation were presented to Joe Palko recognizing his upcoming retirement.
- Administrator Director, Gloria Ralston, announced her retirement for January 5th. She will be greatly missed.

- PPC and WAP representatives (Mary Ann Bucci, Peter Sephaich, David Podurgiel, Pat Kelly and Rich Kreider) will meet with members from the GAO. The GAO is part of the legislative branch with a broad mandate to investigate how federal dollars are spent. The Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and the House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure asked GAO for a review specifically on alternative models for managing the Inland Waterways Trust Fund. They are visiting Pittsburgh as part of a broad approach to first understand the issues and challenges before identifying any solutions. They will be seeking to obtain our views on what's working well and the challenges you face related to inland waterways infrastructure.
- A meeting was held with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) which is a cabinet-level agency operating under the authority of the Executive Office of the President. The agency is responsible for administering the President's annual budget request, issuing circulars on agency management practices, and reviewing agency regulations. The Upper Ohio River Study was discussed to illustrate the questionable spending on the 13-year process costing approximately \$19 million. Authorized projects must have the appropriated funds to complete.
- The Annual Waterways Symposium and WCI Annual Meeting is scheduled for November 8-10, 2017 in Mobile, Alabama.

- **Upcoming Events**

- **Smart Rivers** will be in Pittsburgh **September 18-20, 2017** at the **Sheraton Station Square**
- **Platts 40th Annual Coal Marketing Days Conference** will be in Pittsburgh **September 26-27, 2017** at the **Omni William Penn Hotel**.
- The Port of Pittsburgh Commission will be hosting an opening reception for the **Ohio River Basin Inspection Tour** (ORBIT) that will be in Pittsburgh **October 17-19, 2017**. The conference is being hosted by BG Mark Toy and the Great Lakes & Ohio River Division. Pittsburgh is the first city to host this conference. The attendees of this conference will be visiting various sites and projects that the USACE is currently working.

Legislative Report

Richard Kreider was not able to attend but provided below report: Gifts of appreciation were presented to Joe Palko recognizing his upcoming retirement.

- In a surprise move, particularly to the Republican leadership, President Trump struck a deal with Democrats to raise the debt ceiling, complete a Hurricane Harvey disaster relief package, and extend government funding through December 8 in a short-term (two-plus months) Continuing Resolution.
- Congress bought a little more than two months of time to allow the government to remain operating through December 8. For the Corps of Engineers Civil Works Program, during that two-month period, the agency will be funded at a strong level of \$5.997 billion. This is a \$41 million reduction of the \$6.038 billion total amount that

Congress appropriated for FY17. The bad news is that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requires agencies to operate at the lowest funding level among House and Senate appropriations levels, and the Administration's budget request. The full House passed its strong FY18 appropriations bill, and only the Senate Appropriations Committee has passed a similarly strong bill, so the Corps will need to adhere to the level of the Administration's budget proposal of \$5.002 billion through December 8. While the impact should not be too bad for the Civil Works program for this short time frame, the Construction account will be hit hardest, with the Administration's \$856 million cut and funding for only the Olmsted project. This impacts the other top projects (Lower Mon, Kentucky and Chickamauga), but also creates challenges for major rehabilitation work at the LaGrange Lock since no new starts were allowed in the Administration's FY18 request. The least impacted account will be Operations & Maintenance (O&M) since the Administration requested a record-setting amount of \$3.1 billion, almost the same level Congress had appropriated in FY17.

- A Budget Resolution, ideally adopted at the front-end of the appropriations process to establish spending levels in the House and Senate, has not yet passed in either the House or the Senate for FY2018. The House Budget Committee has approved its FY18 budget resolution and had hoped to get it to the House floor before it recessed in August. That did not happen, and it did not come up this week when they returned and is currently not projected to be taken up next week. The Senate has not moved its version of a Budget Resolution, instead holding off until the health care debate had fully concluded. The importance of a Budget Resolution is it allows the opportunity to put in place a budget reconciliation process to allow tax and other legislation related to the budget to be passed by a majority rather than a super majority in the Senate. The Senate can then bypass the filibuster rule to stop legislation that the minority party has not supported.

Coast Guard News

CDR Leon McClain provided the following:

- The new Chief of Prevention LT Christie Smith was introduced to the group.
- The Port of Pittsburgh Area Maritime Security Committee will be conducting its Area Maritime Security Training and Exercise Program (AMSTEP) annual exercise on Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at the Beaver County Emergency Operations Center in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. Registration commences at 8:00 a.m. with the exercise start time at 9:00 a.m. The AMSTEP is focused on building relationships within the Federal Maritime Security domain to write, review, and update the Pittsburgh Area Maritime Security Plan, in addition to supporting other transportation entities that rely upon the port being secure. As the Federal Maritime Security Coordinator, the Coast Guard has the lead in coordinating such exercises.

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

Army Corp of Engineers

The new Chief of Operations/Regulatory, Kathy Griffin, addressed the members and looks forward to working with the group to better our waterways system.

John Dilla covered the **attached** lock closure report.

Following the Corp report, a question was raised regarding the notes from the 2018/2019 Lock Repair Schedule meeting that was held in Vicksburg. Kathy Griffin highlighted some of the areas addressed during the meeting and informed members that a revised schedule should be available within the next several weeks.

National Weather Service

Joe Palko covered the **attached** report.

Education Committee Report

Michael Graham provided the following information:

- The Barge Breakaway is scheduled for October 12, 2017 at the Floreffe Fire Hall and the Red Lion has been confirmed for catering needs. Dick Ehringer has provided materials for this seminar that will illustrate the consequences of a breakaway.
- The October 19th Who Works the River already has South Park and Blackhawk schools committed.

October Membership Meeting

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 19, 2017 at the Lafayette Hotel in Marietta, Ohio. This is our annual joint meeting with the Huntington District and the meeting will begin upon the conclusion of the Industry Incident Summit meeting around 11 a.m. Cost of the luncheon will be **\$30**. **ALL PAYMENTS SHOULD BE MADE IN PERSON AT THE MEETING IN MARIETTA**. Please call, email or fax the response form below by Wednesday, October 11, 2017 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Meeting Response Form

Lafayette Hotel, Marietta, OH
October 19, 2017 @ 11 a.m.

Menu:

Roast Sirloin
Chicken Marsala
Whipped potatoes w/gravy
Green beans
Cole slaw/Garden salad
Assorted Desserts
Lemonade, Ice Tea & Coffee Station

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 Wednesday, October 11, 2017** to:

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