

Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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September 9, 2020

www.wapgh.org

September Highlights

A total of (17) seventeen members were registered for the September 9, 2020 luncheon meeting at the Chartiers Country Club. Due to Covid restrictions in place for many of our members attendance was fewer than normal.

Michael Graham welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Covid restrictions currently limit the amount of time the US Coast Guard can spend at the meeting and they are not allowed to stay for the luncheon; the meeting order was altered to allow for their restrictions.

Coast Guard News

MST1 Schnieder introduced LT James Dunbar as the new Prevention Department Head. He will hold this position for three years.

The **attached** report was reviewed.

Navigation Committee Report

David Podurgiel provided the following report. As he was unable to attend, it was presented by Shane Checkan:

- 🕒 WAP COVID Task Force: nothing to report, Industry has been focused on internal policies to keep Mariners safe as have the USACE/USCG.
- 🕒 MAJOR DELAYS TO NAVIGATION: The 110-ft x 600-ft primary lock chamber at Emsworth L/D will be closed from 6:00 AM August 31, 2020 through 11:59 PM November 13, 2020. The 56-ft x 360-ft auxiliary chamber will remain open to navigation, except during the first three weeks and final week of the project the auxiliary chamber will experience intermittent closures of 16 hours or less. The first 16-hour closure was delayed by a day but well communicated by the USACE. Tier and delay sheets are being provided daily at 0700 and 1900 by Emsworth personnel, average delays have been between 3 to 9 hours, much less than expected to date.
- 🕒 I participated in a conference call with the USACE to discuss work plans at area locks through 2022, we have a few significant outages that will affect the PITTPOOL. The following three are in succession.

- o Montgomery Mile 31 OR: 7/26-8/27 2020, Primary Chamber dewatering similar to upcoming Emsworth outage.
 - o Braddock Lock 2 Mile 11.2 MR: 9/13-10/15 2020, Primary Chamber 2-week outage
 - o Hannibal Lock Mile 126 OR: 10/21-12/10 2020, 2 two-week closures of Primary Chamber.
- ⌚ Pittsburgh Pool RNA: there seems to be issues with what the PA Fish and Boat Commission perceives as what authority they have enforcing the PITTPPOOL RNA. We recently had an issue where the Captain of a local sightseeing vessel with paying customers had to divert multiple trips from going up the Allegheny River due to Rec boats mooring/loitering in the channel. The Coast Guard response vessel wasn't in the area at the time and the PGH River Rescue reported they didn't have manning for the vessel. This has been cleared up by Chief Richard Linn JR, he told me they are manned 24/7, 365 days a year and he was looking into who gave the Captain this information. The issue that needs addressed is the PA Fish and Boat Commission. Those of us who were part of the Congested Waterways group were of the understanding that once the RNA became regulation that they were one of the parties allowed to enforce it but they refuse to help but have no problem pulling vessels over for making a wake. My hope is once the Congested Waterways group is able to meet in person again, we can clear up this issue and a greater push needs made to educate the Recreation community on the RNA prior to next season.

⌚ **National Weather Service**

Alicia Miller of NOAA - Federal, provided the report which was presented by Shane Checkan.

- ⌚ Of note is the preliminary winter forecast that predicts a La Nina - with warm temperatures and less snow. Leading to the possibility of a wet winter, similar to 2018.

The **attached** report was reviewed.

Port of Pittsburgh Commission

Scott Harshman provided the following report:

- ⌚ The Commission and staff continue to operate, both remotely and with limited office hours, due to COVID-19.
- ⌚ Expecting the final report for our Economic Impact Study to be completed within the next month. We have two-page profiles for both PA & Pittsburgh that we plan to distribute in the coming weeks.
- ⌚ We continue to advocate and monitor in Congress both the NDAA bill that includes the Coastal and Inland Ports and Terminals Commerce Improvement Act (HR 7416) in the House version and the WRDA 2020 legislation that contains a cost-share change from 50/50 to 65/35.
- ⌚ Have not rescheduled yet the seminar with USDOT MARAD on Marine Highways.

- ⌚ Working with the American Red Cross in planning and conducting CPR and Water Safety courses in the future.
- ⌚ Our second issue of the new PPC newsletter went out in early August. If you didn't receive it electronically, please e-mail matt@portpitt to get on the distribution list.
- ⌚ PA Multimodal Transportation Fund now accepting grant applications through November 6th.
- ⌚ USDOT releases the National Strategic Freight Plan.
- ⌚ PPC will be participating in a Working Group put together by the City of Pittsburgh and USACE related to our river banks.
- ⌚ FYI, the Pittsburgh Safe Boating Council will be sending a letter to the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission in support of the enforcement of the USCG RNA.

Legislative Report

Dean Marlin presented the following report:

CONGRESS RETURNS TO SESSION THIS WEEK

- ⌚ Government funding runs dry on September 30. There are less than 11 days left in session for the year. Both the 2021 appropriations and the 5th COVID Relief effort may become wrapped together in much turbulence with the strong possibility of a either a government shutdown or continuing resolution. As an example, there remain significant differences for funding Covid Relieve as the Democrats propose \$900 billion in state and local aid, and the Republicans suggest \$150 - \$200 billion.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

- ⌚ Senator Bob Casey is calling for Congress to re-introduce a "New Deal" type spending package to reduce unemployment while simultaneously improve our nation's infrastructure ("from bridges to highways to locks and dams"). This program was successful in reviving our depression-era economy and offers a similar opportunity to help 17 million unemployed Americans and 900,000 unemployed Pennsylvanians - as well as the businesses and communities they support.

AND MORE:

- ⌚ The National Waterways Foundation just published an Economic Impact State profiles on many IMTS waterway systems including Pennsylvania. The study graphically depicts the effect of our waterway systems on jobs, personal income, tax revenues, and economic savings by commodity - and as compared to other modes of transport. To see all profiles, including Pennsylvania. Visit <https://waterwayscouncil.org/waterways-system>.

Army Corp of Engineers

The **attached** report was reviewed by Michael Graham.

Education Committee Report

Michael Graham presented the following information regarding educational seminars.

- ⌚ The Barge Breakaway Seminar is still on the schedule for October 15th at the Floreffe Fire Hall. It has been reported that Covid restrictions may be lifted soon from 25% occupancy to 50% which would allow the seminar to stay on schedule. An update will be provided by Michael Graham.

- ⌚ There has been no update on the "Who Works the Rivers" program.

October Membership Meeting

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7. It is our annual joint meeting with the Huntington District Waterways Association and will be held at The Lafayette Hotel in Marietta, Ohio. Cost of the luncheon will be **\$30**. Registration will begin at 11 a.m.

- ⌚ The Guest Speaker will be Captain Bob Kubota, former Captain with Ingram Barge and Current Captain of LST325.

Please email the response form below, or you may call or text your response by Thursday, October 1, 2020 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

**Waterways Association of Pittsburgh
Joint Meeting Response Form with
Huntington District Waterways Association**

Lafayette Hotel
Marietta, OH
October 7, 2020 @ 11am

Covid Restrictions:

- 🕒 *Mask must be worn at **ALL** times except when eating / drinking*
- 🕒 *Lunch will be a buffet but served by attendant; Drinks will also be served*

Menu:

Roast Sirloin
Chicken Marsala
Whipped potatoes
Green Beans
Garden Salad / Cole Slaw
Assorted Desserts
Coffee, Tea and water

Guest Speaker: Captain Bob Kubota, LST 325
Former Captain, Ingram Barge

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 Tuesday, Sept 22 to:

Carole Ann Krelow

e-mail response form to: ckrelow@wapgh.org

OR

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