

SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for October 27, 2022, Full-Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterway Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on October 27, 2022 at the Sabine Pilots Office in Port Arthur, TX. The current SETWAC Charter is dated January 29, 2019. Meeting information and power point presentations are available electronically through the SETWAC website www.setwac.org.

1. Call to Order:

- SETWAC Chairman, Mr. Randall Ogrydziak, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Ogrydziak welcomed 70 members and guests in attendance. Mr. Ogrydziak opened the floor to CAPT Suffern, MSU Port Arthur.

2. Remarks by the USCG Captain of the Port:

- CAPT Suffern (for CAPT Wike) welcomed those in attendance and thanked the Sabine Pilots for the use of their conference room. CAPT Suffern acknowledged the continued “strong attendance” at the quarterly meeting of the Harbor Safety Committee.

3. Approval of the July 28, 2022 Minutes and Proposed SETWAC Board Membership:

- A motion was made (Guidry) and seconded to vote to approve the July 28, 2022 minutes. A vote was conducted; the minutes were approved.
- Dan Plumley was nominated (Guidry) and seconded (Walker) to succeed Randall Ogrydziak as SETWAC Chair with a 2-year term commencing January 26, 2023. A vote was conducted; the nomination was approved.
- Randall Ogrydziak was nominated (Taylor), and seconded (Plumley), to succeed Bryan Markland as SETWAC Vice Chair with a 2-year term commencing January 26, 2023. A vote was conducted; the nomination was approved.
- Micah DeRanieri was nominated (Fitzgerald), and seconded (Bradshaw), to a second 3-year term as the LNG Representative commencing January 26, 2022. A vote was conducted; the nomination was approved.
- Mr. Scott Whalen, USCG, informed the group of impending term expirations and vacancies across several positions on the SETWAC Managing Board (Slides on SETWAC website).

4. Committee Reports:

Navigation Sub-Committee Report:

- CAPT Guidry, Sabine Pilots, informed the group that the previously scheduled Blue/Brown Water Seminar was to be pushed to Spring 2023 and co-sponsored with the Houston Seminar.
- CAPT Guidry addressed the Enterprise WSA Review, indicating the sub-committee and submitted a list of questions to Enterprise and are awaiting further response.
 - Enterprise presented a project introduction of the proposed expansion of their LHG facility at Beaumont Marine East Terminal, including construction of a new dock (Berth #4) on east bank.

Tug Utilization Sub-committee Ad-Hoc Report:

- CAPT Sean Marchant, Valero, informed the group of the establishment of the Tug Utilization sub-committee, designed and implemented to be a “Warehouse for Tug Knowledge” on the SNWW. CAPT Marchant indicated the first meeting of the sub-committee will likely be in the first quarter 2023. Invites will be sent to those desiring to attend.

Education, Research & Workforce Development Sub-committee Report:

- Mr. Keith Jones, Lamar State College Orange, addressed the absence of a delineated pathway for area high school students to gain maritime credentials to enable them to immediately enter the workforce upon graduation. Mr. Jones intends to send a survey to local maritime businesses seeking input on base competencies required of their programs. The end goal is create regional “Centers of Excellence” aimed at middle and high school students (as early as 8th grade) to facilitate pathways to earning maritime credentials.

Port Welfare Public Ad-Hoc:

- Ms. Doreen Badeaux (for Fr. Sinclair Oubre), Seafarer’s Center, briefed the group on seafarer mental health during and post-pandemic, and she brought attention to the excellent job being undertaken in the maritime program at Lamar State College Orange.

Commercial Fisheries Report:

- Ms. Nikki Fitzgerald, Texas A&M AgriLife, stated she held a hurricane meeting in July with participation by 23 fisherman. Ms. Fitzgerald indicated there has been a large influx of imported shrimp from Ecuador that has caused local shrimp to plummet to \$1/pound. Coupled with the high price of diesel fuel, most of the local fisherman remain at the dock.
- Ms. Fitzgerald announced the TED/BRD class to be held on January, 18, 2023, and the CPR/1st Aid Class to be held on February 16-17, 2023.

Waterway Maintenance and Improvement Sub-committee:

- Mr. Larry Fountain, SNND, reported \$200M in bonds were secured for the deepening project (money in the bank). Mr. Fountain reiterated Contract #3 (SNND) will pick up where Contract 2B (USACE) stops at Cheneire LNG, and will continue to the Taylor's Bayou junction. He anticipates dredging on that contract to start during the 1st Quarter of 2023.

Dredge Operations Report:

- Mr. Tim White, USACE, spoke to ongoing and future dredge projects including PA-8 improvements; Neches River maintenance improvements; SNWW Entrance Channel to Sabine Pass deepening; the Orange County and Port Arthur & Vicinity Coastal Storm Risk Management Projects, and the Taylor's Bayou Channel improvement changes (slides on SETWAC website).

Area Maritime Security Report:

- Due to a current vacancy in the MSU Port Arthur Port Security Position, Mr. Scott Whalen (for Mr. Keith Pierre) reported the new Port Security Specialist will be arriving at the unit in January 2023. Mr. Whalen passed a PRC meeting was held during which the 2022 Cyber-Security checklist was completed for MARAD. Further, the Cyber Protection Team plans to conduct a Cyber Assessment of the Port of Beaumont in 2023.

ATON Status/Projects Report:

- USCG ANT Sabine reported 7 current ATON discrepancies including: Sabine Pass Jetty Light (EXT); Sabine Pass LB 29 (sinking); Charlie Rear Range Light (not synchronized); Neches River LT 66 (DEST); Quebec Range Front Light (Damaged); Uniform Rear Range Light (in rebuild), and Sabine River LT 22. The ANT is working with CEU Miami on repairing the Jetty Light, and, the final stages of the securing the land-lease is underway for the rebuild of the Uniform Range.
- ANT Sabine indicated USCGC HATCHET and USCGC CLAIBORNE will both be in the area in mid-November to service aids to navigation.

5. New Business:

- Mr. Scott Whalen, USCG, updated the group on the extension of the Safety Zone in Taylor's Bayou. It is currently published in the Federal Register and open for comment until November 4, 2022. When the extension has been finalized, the Safety Zone will remain in place for 2 years.
- Mr. Whalen passed for Mr. Quentin Stubbs (NOAA): NOAA is in the process of updating/validating charts of the local area. Mr. Stubbs asks that anyone with known chart corrections please pass them on to him for consideration.

6. Next Meetings:

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District offices on Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.
- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur (tentatively) on Thursday, January 28, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

7. **Adjourn:**

- Mr. Ogrydziak adjourned the meeting at 11:02 a.m.