

SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for October 24, 2019, Full-Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterway Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on October 24, 2019 at Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Port Arthur, TX. The current SETWAC Charter is dated January 29, 2019. Printed materials presented at the meeting are available for copying at the office of the U.S. Coast Guard, Marine Safety Unit at 2901 Turtle Creek Drive, Port Arthur, TX 77642. Meeting information and power point presentations are also available electronically through the SETWAC website www.setwac.org.

1. Call to Order:

- SETWAC Chairman, Mr. Randall Ogrydziak, called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. Mr. Ogrydziak welcomed all participants and observers. 73 people were present. Mr. Ogrydziak immediately proceeded with the agenda.

2. Remarks by the Captain of the Port:

- CAPT Twomey thanked the group for attending the meeting. She informed the audience of several “near-misses” that took place on the SNWW during the preceding months while stressing that “teamwork” remained the underlying premise that contributed to the professional handling and quick resolution of these events.
- CAPT Twomey thanked all port partners for their combined efforts following Tropical Storm Imelda. She informed the group of the upcoming Ports and Waterways Safety Assessment to be conducted February 2020. Finally, CAPT Twomey passed that Rear Admiral John Nadeau, Eight District Commander, will be visiting the area on November 15, 2019.

3. Approval of the April 25, 2019 Minutes:

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the July 25, 2019 minutes.

4. Committee Reports:

Navigation Sub-Committee Report:

- CAPT Charles Tweedel introduced Sabine Pilot’s Operations Manager Mr. Peter Kolp to those in attendance. CAPT Tweedel briefly commented on the Sun Oil Energy Transfer WSA, asking all concerned to attend a meeting addressing the WSA directly after the SETWAC meeting.

Port Education, Research & Workforce Development Sub-committee Report:

- Mr. Erik Stromberg, Lamar University, addressed past and upcoming industry workshops, commenting that nearly 500 people attended 15 workshops throughout 2018-19. Fall 2019 workshops include the Cybersecurity workshops (October 30, 2019) and the “CAPM” research projects, 2017-2019, poster session on December 5, 2019.

- Mr. Stromberg spoke to approved, in-development and planned industry certifications. He addressed proposed research topics and the subcommittee's role in the planning and implementation of workforce development.

Waterways Awareness Sub-committee Report:

- Mr. Randall Ogrydziak (for Ms. Sade Chick), Port of Beaumont, briefed the group on the new SETAWC website.

Port Welfare Sub-Committee Report:

- Fr. Sinclair Oubre, Port Welfare Public Ad-Hoc, addressed Seafarer's access to maritime facilities, including implementation dates for industry to enact policies. Fr. Oubre also spoke to the various ways the Seafarer's Center addresses educating those who are interested in pursuing careers in the maritime industry.

Waterway Maintenance and Improvement Sub-committee:

- Mr. Paul Beard (for Mr. Randy Reese), SNND, announced the USACE and SNND signed their partnership agreement to kick off the Deeping/Widening project. Mr. Beard informed the group that the first contract for constructing an anchorage basin on the Neches River should be underway November 1, 2019.

Dredge Operations Sub-committee:

- Mr. Tim White, USACE, spoke to ongoing dredge contracts including maintenance dredging at the Neches River Intersection and Port Arthur Ship Canal. New dredge work included Anchorage Basin No. 1 (award contract in December 2019); Sabine Pass and Outer Bar and Bank Channel (award in May 2020); Placement Area No. 8 improvements (award June 2020) and PA-11 shoreline stabilization (award August 2020).

Waterway Security Sub-Committee Report:

- Mr. Jeremy Hanson, USCG, commented on the upcoming Cybersecurity workshop to be held on 30 October 2019.

ATON Status/Projects Report:

- BMC Zurlo, ANT Sabine, reported eight (8) outstanding aids to navigation discrepancies on the SNWW, all of which require a Construction Tender to rebuild. Chief Zurlo notified the committee that the Neches River "Uniform" Rear Range Light (RRL) has been deemed unsafe to climb and will require rebuild.

5. New Business:

- Dr. B. Craig, Lamar University, announced the inaugural “Center for Midstream Management and Science” Symposium to be held on the Lamar University Campus in Beaumont on November 21, 2019.
- Mr. Whalen, USCG, briefed the audience on Coast Guard actions undertaken during Tropical Storm Imelda including imposed vessel traffic restrictions due to excessive currents at the West Port Arthur Bridge; urban SAR response; Coast Guard representation at local EOC’s, and flood punts teams and Coast Guard air assets that operated across the affected area.
- Mr. Whalen, USCG, commented on ongoing waterway projects including the safety zone and cabling work at the KCS Railroad Bridge; dock construction at the Port of Port Arthur (#5), and dredging at Golden Pass LNG and Cheniere LNG.
- Mr. Whalen, USCG, spoke to the upcoming Ports and Waterways Safety Assessment (PAWSA), 12-13 February 2020. He asked membership and port partners to participate in a structured workshop to provide local expertise in navigation, waterways conditions and port safety. Mr. Whalen stressed that members provide their input to ensure important environmental, public safety and economic consequences are given appropriate attention during the PAWSA.

6. Next Meetings:

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District offices on Thursday, January 9, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.
- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur on Thursday, January 23, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

7. Adjourn:

- Mr. Ogrydziak adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m.