

# **SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

## **Meeting Minutes for April 27, 2023, Full-Committee Meeting**

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterway Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on April 27, 2023 at MSU Port Arthur 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](http://www.setwac.org).

### **1. Call to Order:**

- SETWAC Chairman, Mr. Dan Plumley, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Mr. Plumley welcomed those in attendance. 64 members and guests were present at MSU Port Arthur. Mr. Plumley opened the floor to CAPT Wike, MSU Port Arthur Commanding Officer.

### **2. Remarks by the Captain of the Port:**

- CAPT Wike welcomed those in attendance. She thanked the members of SETWAC for their outstanding teamwork and cooperation across a myriad of waterways and weather-related events during her tour. CAPT Wike announced her upcoming retirement on June 15, 2023. Retirement (invites will be forthcoming). She informed the group that CAPT Anthony Migliorini, the prospective Commanding Officer, will report prior to her retirement.
  - CAPT Wike presented the USCG Certificate of Merit to Captains Michael Deemy, Dylan Simmons, and David Seymour of the pilot boats SPINDLETOP and PORT ARTHUR for their lifesaving efforts of the crew of the tug SEA CYPRESS after the vessel was swamped and sinking in Sabine Pass.

### **3. Approval of the January 27, 2023 Minutes:**

- A motion was made (CAPT Guidry) and seconded (Mr. David Peacock) to vote to approve the January 27, 2023 minutes. A vote was conducted; the minutes were approved.

### **4. Committee Reports:**

#### ***Navigation Sub-Committee Report:***

- CAPT Guidry, Sabine Pilots, informed the group of the success of the “Blue Water / Brown Water” seminar hosted by the Houston Pilots on 20-21 April. CAPT Guidry said we should move forward with hosting a similar event in our waterway; however, it would have to come with a different name as “Blue Water / Brown Water” remains a proprietary title.

- Mr. Whalen, USCG, commented that there were no public comments posted in the Federal Register in response to the Enterprise WSA. As a result, the Coast Guard can continue processing the WSA.
- CAPT Sean Marchant, Valero, informed the group of the initial meeting of the “Tug Utilization Sub-Committee (Ad Hoc).” CAPT Marchant indicated the meeting was light/brief, and he is looking forward to the next meeting of the committee in June.

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

- Mr. Robert Dubois, Lamar University, spoke to the M.S. in Port and Terminal Management Degree, and several post-graduate certificates, offered through Lamar.
- Mrs. Sadé Chick, Port of Beaumont, presented workforce training and education information, including continued efforts toward creating a sustainable workforce education pipeline (information available under Community tab on the Port of Beaumont website and on SETWAC website).

***Port Welfare Sub-Committee (Ad-Hoc) Report:***

- Fr. Sinclair Oubre, Seafarer’s Center, spoke to seafarer access and upcoming events including National Maritime Day (May 22, 2022).

***Commercial Fisheries Report:***

- Ms. Nikki Fitzgerald, Texas A&M AgriLife, informed the group of another successful commercial fisheries safety training session in February. 48 fishermen and 12 individuals from the USACE attended. She also held a Hurricane Prep/Marine Debris session for recreational boats that saw 20 attendees. July 5, 2023, Ms. Fitzgerald will be holding the annual shrimper’s hurricane meeting.
- Ms. Fitzgerald indicated the local shrimper fleet has yet to see any inflationary relief. Most boats remain moored because the market is flooded with foreign product.

***Waterway Maintenance and Improvement Sub-committee:***

- Kyle Reed, SNND, passed that 4 pipelines remain to be removed for Contract #2A. Scheduled completion of Contract #2A remains October 2023. Contract #2B and Contract #3 to be awarded in late FY-23 with completion in FY-24 (Slides on SETWAC website).

***Dredge Operations Report:***

- Ms. Desiré Legé, USACE, spoke to ongoing and future dredge projects, including deepening and widening plans, the offshore channel extension, Coastal Storm Risk Management Projects, and the Taylor’s Bayou Channel improvement proposal (Slides on SETWAC website).

***Area Maritime Security Report:***

- Mr. Michael Hiatt, USCG, spoke to the April 11, 2023 meeting of the Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana AMSC. There were 78 attendees. He indicated he's looking to build upon AMSC attendance through increased participation of USCG Auxiliary, State agencies and port partners. He also plans to rotate meeting locations between Texas and Louisiana to make participation more accessible.
- Mr. Hiatt provided submission deadlines and contact information for the Port Security grant Program (Slides on SETWAC website).

***ATON Status/Projects Report:***

- BM1 Sistrunk, ANT Sabine, reported the release of the Local Notice to Mariner announcing the proposed permanent change of the position of Neches River Lighted Buoy 2. The proposed change is open for comment until June 27, 2023.
- BM1 Sistrunk passed that USCGC HATCHET has worked ATON in the SNWW on 12 April, and the USCGC HARRY CLAIBORNE is tentatively schedule to work in the area in May.

**5. New Business:**

- Mr. Whalen, USCG, presented the recently published 2021 U.S. Port Ranking (Slides available on SETWAC website).
- Ensign Sourvinos, USCG, recapped the 2022 Hurricane Season, and presented the 2023 Atlantic Hurricane Season outlook (Slides on SETWAC website).

**6. Next Meetings:**

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District offices on Thursday, July 12, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.
- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur on Thursday, July 26, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

**7. Adjourn:**

- Mr. Plumley adjourned the meeting at 11:04 a.m.