

# **SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

## **Meeting Minutes for October 28, 2021, Full-Committee Meeting**

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterway Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on October 28, 2021 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](http://www.setwac.org).

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

- SETWAC Chairman, Mr. Randall Ogrydziak, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Mr. Ogrydziak welcomed those attendance. 51 members and guests were in attendance. Mr. Ogrydziak 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 and thanked the Sabine Pilots for the use of their conference room. She commented on general waterways operations including the heavy lift op at Golden Pass LNG; the resubmission for congressional review of the Anchorage 1 Regs, and the unit's work with CG-HQ (CG-Nav) and local Aids to Navigation personnel to prepare for marking the forthcoming extension of the SNWW Entrance Channel.

### **3. Approval of the July 22, 2021 Minutes:**

- A motion was made (Mike White) and seconded (Erik Stromberg) to vote to approve the July 22, 2021 SETWAC minutes. A vote was conducted; the minutes were approved.

### **4. New Member Nomination and Vote:**

- A motion was made (CAPT Tweedel) and seconded (Arip Ismael) to vote to approve the proposed membership of Mr. Sean Marchant as a SETWAC managing board member representing Chemical/Oil Refining Docks. The vote was approved; Mr. Marchant was awarded a 3-year term that will commence October 29, 2021.

### **5. Committee Reports:**

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

- CAPT Tweedel updated the group on the recent work of the "Near-Miss Working Group." He thanked all participants of the Sub-Committee, indicating the results have been clearly positive. CAPT Tweedle said, "The "word" is getting out and it is making a noticeable difference in near-miss situations."
- CAPT Tweedel offered comments on ongoing efforts to rebuild the ALFA Rear range. He recently had the opportunity to meet the Commandant of the Coast Guard. While taking questions, CAPT Tweedel asked the Commandant why there was such an unreasonable length of time required for the Coast Guard to rebuild a critical Range Light. CAPT Tweedel's question resulted in near-immediate action, including congressional inquiries to local Aids to Navigation assets.

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

- Mr. Erik Stromberg, Lamar University, presented the “*Port and Supply Chain Management*” General Studies Degree Program; Continuing Education Webinars (2021/2022); the Pathway Program (K-12), and CAPM-sponsored research programs at Lamar (slides on SETWAC website).

***Port Welfare Public Ad-Hoc:***

- Fr. Sinclair Oubre, addressed mariner access (and delays) to facilities indicating some facilities are still not on the “correct page” with access requirements. He discussed President Biden’s “*Proclamation on Advancing the Safe Resumption of Global Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic.*” Fr. Oubre announced his return to the National Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee. Finally, he discussed the departure of CAPT Chris Horner from the Maritime Program at Lamar State College, Orange (slides on SETWAC website).
- Mr. Doreen Badeaux spoke to continuing progress with mariner vaccinations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

***Commercial Fisheries Report:***

- Ms. Nikki Fitzgerald, Texas A&M AgriLife, reported on the Port Arthur Shrimper’s Association meeting; recent efforts toward hurricane safety for the fishing fleet; and continuing efforts towards derelict fishing vessels. She is planning a January 2022 meeting; an update to the Hurricane Contact List for post-storms concerns, and a December 7, 2021 meeting with Mike White and Scott Whalen to address post-storm actions in the SNWW.

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

- Mr. Tim White (for Mr. Larry Fountain) gave a brief update on the SNWW Deeping Project, indicating there is to be a 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter announcement of contract “2B” (\$10M), funded by SNND, to pick up where USACE stops dredging for contract “2A.” Mr. White indicated Anchorage Basin 8 is 95% complete on design plan/specs.

***Dredge Operations Report:***

- Mr. Tim White (USACE) spoke to ongoing and future dredge projects including PA-8 and PA-11 improvements; Neches River improvements; SNWW Entrance Channel to Sabine Pass deepening; Sabine Outer Bar & Bank dredging; and the Orange County and Port Arthur & Vicinity Coastal Storm Risk Management Projects (slides on SETWAC website).
  - CAPT Tweedel asked if there was a start date for offshore dredging. Mr. White responded there was not a specified start date at this time.

- CAPT Tweedel also asked Mr. White if it was possible to reprioritize dredging the Texaco Island Intersection and behind Texaco Island over the Neches River. Mr. White replied that it was possible to do so.

***Area Maritime Security Report:***

- Mr. Jeremy Hanson, USCG, spoke to the recent release of Port Security Grant monies, indicating the Port Arthur COTP Zone received \$6.7 Million, which is \$1 Million more than Houston received. Good job to all and start planning for 2022!
- Mr. Hanson reported that October is DHS Cybersecurity Month. He and CAPT Wike attended the SETX Plant Manager Forum earlier in the morning. Mr. Hanson stressed the ever-growing list of cybersecurity resources available, including the forthcoming hiring of a Maritime Transportation System Specialist (Cyber) at MSU Port Arthur by mid-2022.
- Mr. Hanson notified the group of the creation of a Focus Group under the AMSC “Vessel and Facility Security Officer” sub-committee to address and align seafarer access with current regulations. Mr. Hanson intends to solicit volunteers to form the Focus Group, and plans to give a seafarer access presentation during the December 9, 2021 AMSC meeting.

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

- BMC Harold Zurlo, ANT Sabine, provided a list of 7 currently discrepant aids. He indicated Coast Guard Cutter HATCHET is to be in the area for aids to navigation work in two weeks. Chief Zurlo informed the group the NEPA was completed for the Uniform Rear Range Light, which is a major step toward rebuilding the structure.

**6. New Business:**

- Mr. Larry Kelley, Port of Port Arthur, discussed the MOU between the Port of Port Arthur and Stabilis Solutions to facilitate the use of LNG bunkering at the port. A Stabilis representative provided a short presentation on the set-up and operation of the Truck-to-Ship bunkering equipment.

**7. Next Meetings:**

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District offices on Thursday, January 13, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.
- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur on Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

**8. Adjourn:**

- Mr. Ogrydziak adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.