

SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for July 27, 2023, Full-Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterway Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on July 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.

1. Call to Order:

- SETWAC Chair, Dan Plumley, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Plumley welcomed those in attendance. 68 members and guests were in attendance at MSU Port Arthur. Mr. Plumley opened the floor to CDR Hantal, XO, MSU Port Arthur.

2. Remarks by the Captain of the Port:

- CDR Hantal, XO, MSU Port Arthur, welcomed those in attendance. She informed the group that CAPT Migliorini was attending the GICA Convention but he looked forward to attending the October SETWAC meeting. CDR Hantal passed that a new VTS Director had accepted the position; however, ETA wasn't known as of the meeting. She also passed the implementation of the new "Waterways Department" (LCDR Gates and LT Yanez) at the MSU while assuring those in attendance that Waterways functions would continue in the same professional manner they are used to seeing.

3. Membership Report:

- Mr. Plumley informed the group of the expiration of terms for several members of the Managing Board. Nikki Fitzgerald, Jack Bradshaw, and Mr. Plumley agreed to new 3-yr terms commencing 7/27/2023. A vote was conducted; all were approved for new terms.
- Representatives from Barge Operating Companies and Shipyard/Vessel Repair Facilities were not in attendance. New members and/or new terms will be voted on for these positions during the October SETWAC meeting.
- Captain Arip Ismail is to take over a new 3-yr term as of 7/27/2023 as the Alternate Rep for Ship Operating Companies. A new Primary Rep will be determined during the October SETWAC meeting. A vote was conducted; CAPT Ismail was approved for a new 3-yr term as the Alternate Rep for Ship Operating Companies.

4. Approval of the April 27, 2023 Minutes:

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

5. Committee Reports:

Navigation Sub-Committee Report:

- CAPT Guidry, Sabine Pilots, spoke to the new signs to promote boater education and safety that the Pilots will be installing at boat ramps on the SNWW. CAPT Guidry indicated the “*Safe Boating Areas Fact Sheet*,” and the “*Safety Near Commercial Ships*” brochure is available on the Sabine Pilots website. (Slides on SETWAC website).

Education, Research & Workforce Development Sub-committee Report:

- Mr. Rob Dubois, Lamar University, spoke to the Maritime and Industry educational pipeline available through Lamar State College Orange, Lamar State College Port Arthur, and Lamar Institute of Technology. (Slides on SETWAC website).
- Mrs. Sade Chick, Port of Beaumont, addressed the success of Camp Seaport, thanking everyone who participated. She spoke to the need for “school speakers” with school resuming. Mrs. Chick spoke to the Lamar State College Orange “Mobile Training Unit” (simulated barge). (Information available under Community tab on the Port of Beaumont website).

Port Welfare Public Ad-Hoc:

- Fr. Sinclair Oubre, Seafarer’s Center, briefly addressed continuing issues with seafarer access (Slides on SETWAC Website).
 - LT Coburn, USCG MSU Port Arthur, addressed the possibility of enforcement action if the waterway continued to have problems with seafarer access. LT Coburn stressed, “We can address these issues formally, but we have to be notified.”

Commercial Fisheries Report:

- Mrs. Nikki Fitzgerald, Texas A&M AgriLife, informed the group of the success of the July 5, 2023 Shrimpers meeting. She indicated the local fishing industry is in “critical” mode with most F/V having been on the dock for the better part of two years. As a result of the Texas City Rally, Mrs. Fitzgerald received personal telephone calls from Congressman Babin and Senator Cruz. Mrs. Fitzgerald also spoke to the success of Camp Seaport, thanking the Port of Port Arthur and all who helped.
 - Mr. Larry Kelly, Port of Port Arthur, also spoke highly of the success of Camp Seaport with participation of 33 kids, half of whom desire to work in the marine industry. In Mr. Kelly’s word, “We need to grow our own.”

Waterway Maintenance and Improvement Sub-committee:

- Kyle Reed, SNND, provided an update on the SNWW deepening project, and he gave a pipeline removal update. Mr. Reed indicated there are 4 pipelines to remove. Kinetica is to remove a 16-inch and a 30-inch lines (August); Targa is to remove a 10-inch and a 12-inch line. Targa's permits are in the approval phase; work should begin in September.
- Mr. Reed indicated Project 2A (offshore extension) should be completed in November 2023. Project 2B (doglegs to Cheniere) is projected to be complete by the 3rd quarter of 2024.
- Mr. Reed anticipates the entire waterway being at a 44-foot operating depth by 2027.
- Mr. Reed was asked if SNND can start posting written updates on the deepening/widening project. Mr. Reed stated they can indeed do that.

Dredge Operations Report:

- Mr. Tim White, 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 Port Security, spoke to the FY-23 SETX and SWLA awarded port security grants (\$4.2 Million). Mr. Hiatt addressed the upcoming AMSTEP Seminar at MSU Port Arthur on November 29, 2023.

ATON Status/Projects Report:

- BM1 Gandy, ANT Sabine, reported the ANT is arranging airborne transportation to address the outage of the Sabine Pass East Jetty Light, and the USCGC CLAMP is expected to be in the area in mid to late-August to correct the Bravo Front Range Light.
- BM1 Gandy stressed the importance of reporting ATON discrepancies, and that dredge pipelines damage and/or destroy a lot of CG Aids to Navigation.

6. New Business:

- None.

7. Next Meetings:

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District offices on Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur on Thursday, October 26, at 10:00 a.m.

8. **Adjourn:**

- Mr. Plumley adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

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