

SOUTHEAST TEXAS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for July 28, 2016, Full-Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Southeast Texas Waterways Advisory Council (SETWAC) was held on July 28, 2016 at Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Port Arthur, TX. The current SETWAC Charter is dated January 23, 2014. 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:

- The meeting was called to order promptly at 10:00 by SETWAC Chairman Larry Kelley.

2. Remarks by the Chairman:

- Chairman Larry Kelley welcomed guests and members.
- SETWAC members and guests were asked to introduce themselves in turn. Approximately 50 people were present (20 members and 25 guests).
- Mr. Kelley called on Commander Lovejoy, Acting COTP, for his remarks.

3. Remarks by the Captain of the Port:

- Commander Lovejoy welcomed all.
- He communicated Captain Ogrydziak's regrets for being absent. He also commented on the recent Continuity of Operations (COOP) exercise conducted at the Orange, TX Emergency Operations Center.

4. Approval of the April 28, 2016 Minutes:

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the previous meeting's minutes.

5. Committee Reports:

Navigation Sub-Committee Report

- Sabine Pilot President, Captain Mike Egan, reported on concerns related to fouling hazards in Stanolind Anchorage. Wires potentially related to the mooring of barges on the island.
- Additional hazards related to debris in Taylor Bayou due to drainage from recent heavy rains. There was discussion about who could or should address the issue. Most expect the issue to abate when the rain ceases.

Port Welfare Sub-Committee Report:

- Fr. Sinclair Oubre reported on the maritime education opportunity at Lamar State College. Efforts include bringing radar renewal capability to the local area.
- Mr. John Owens discussed efforts to designate the city of Port Arthur as a “Coast Guard City.” Recent efforts stalled with comments that additional support in the way of business and city support to the Coast Guard. It was suggested that a letter from SETWAC in support of the endeavor might be helpful.

One member asked what it meant to be designated a Coast Guard City. CDR Lovejoy explained the intentions and politics of the designation. Recent outreach efforts included the delivery of Welcome Packages to newly arriving Coast Guard members. Suggestion was made to place information about this effort on the SETWAC website.

- Fr. Oubre remarked and pertinent anniversaries including the loss of TEXACO OKLAHOMA in 1971, loss of GULFSTAG in 1966 and German U-boat action against U.S. shipping during World War II.
- Mr. Larry Kelley commented on Camp Seaport – outreach to local youth. He reported the program is working well and made comments on the positive impacts being seen on the young participants.

Waterway Maintenance and Improvement Sub-Committee Report

USACE Waterway Maintenance Report

- Mr. Matthew Kauffman provided an update on the status of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA). Navigation District continues to work on improving the Benefits-to-Cost Ratio (BCE) and getting funding included in the FY-18 budget.
- Mr. Ed Morgan gave an operations and maintenance update on projects and planned bid solicitations scheduled for 2016.
- He reported that the first project (Texaco Island area) bid is on hold. Hopeful that the contract will be let NLT August and completed by the end of the year.
- He anticipated the bid for offshore maintenance dredging will be awarded by August 18, 2016.
- Mr. Morgan reported that new mooring buoys had been delivered and they would be working to replace them soon.
- Discussion around the possibility for a local dredge for emergency use. Mr. Fisher noted a shallow area had been identified in Beaumont.

Dredging Operations Sub-Committee Report - Ed Morgan

- Ed Morgan reported on on-going private projects on the Sabine-Neches Waterway. Private projects noted included Valero, Motiva and Sunoco projects.
- Mr. Morgan reviewed issues surrounding submerged pipelines under the Sabine-Neches Waterway. He reported the USACE is looking into issuing letters to the owners of 11 pipelines that of concern. Images of the areas affected were shown to the audience.
- Details of Mr. Morgan's presentation are posted on the SETWAC Web site.

Waterway Security Sub-Committee Report

- Mr. Jeremy Hansen reported on the status of FY-2016 Port Security Grants. \$100M allocated. He reported that eleven local applicants received grants for 17 projects totaling ~\$4.8M. Details are included in the presentation that will be posted to the SETWAC website.
- A discussion on cost-match expectations followed.

ATON Status/Projects Report

- Mr. Whalen reported that there was nothing significant to report concerning ATON projects.
- He reported that there had been two ATON knockdowns recently.

6. Old Business:

- There was no Old Business on the agenda.

7. New Business:

- CWO Matthew Tilimon provided an overview of the F/V CAPT. KEVIN sinking and ensuing Coast Guard response. The F/V CAPT. KEVIN sank west of Sabine Pass ship channel just inside the jetty entrance. Traffic was delayed until the stability and location of the vessel could be determined. Traffic movement was resumed that morning and continued throughout salvage operations. The vessel was ultimately lifted and moved to a salvage facility at Mesquite Point.
- Mr. Whalen commented that a PCT meeting was initiated using text messaging capabilities. This was the first use of this method for an actual event and initial feedback is that it worked well.
- Mr. Mark Underhill gave a presentation on TGLO's Abandoned Vessel and Structure Removal Program. The presentation included the history of abandoned vessels/wrecks in southeast Texas waterways. His presentation concluded with the current effort to raise and remove the sunken F/V FLYING CLOUD located in Old River, Sabine Pass. This effort is ongoing.

- Mr. Greg Fountain presented information on the Mass Notification Alert System. He recommended going to the Jefferson County website which provides info on registering for this service and he provided a number (844-578-7826) for registering by phone.
- Mr. Larry Kelley opened a discussion on 2017 board membership. He solicited nominations/applications and stated that members should be prepared to discuss and address at the next meeting.
- It was reported that the Sabine Pilots will be sponsoring a Rib Dinner for the Shiners on August 20, 2016.
- A discussion occurred about upcoming Coast Guard Day activities to be held on August 4th, 2016 at the Brentwood Country Club in Beaumont, TX.

8. Next Meetings:

- The next working group meeting will be held at the Sabine-Neches Navigation District offices on Thursday, October 13, 2016, 10:00 a.m..
- The next full committee meeting will be held at MSU Port Arthur on Thursday, October 27, 2016, 10:00 a.m.

9. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.