



LONE STAR HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

November 1, 2019, 0900

Houston Pilots

203 Deerwood Glen Drive, Deer Park.

Meeting was called to order at 0905 by the Chair. Everyone was reminded to sign in.

CAPT Oditt provided his opening remarks. "While fairly quiet in the area, we did have a few issues with the Greenpeace, Tropical Storm Imelda and I-10 Bridge Collision, all in about a week and a half span."

CAPT David Foret stood Nav Ops up to provide assistance to the response to the collision to help set the parameters for the industry to allow the industry to keep moving cargo. There is good drone video posted online from shortly after the incident.

The Chair then began discussions regarding the vacancies and appointments. The Executive Board has reviewed the applications and proposed the new slate. Greg DeLong made first, Niels Aaland seconded. No discussion ensued and were approved. The committee also recognized outgoing members who were term limited, Robert Baker and CAPT Rich Russel.

The Chair then turned the attention to the Executive Board positions. The proposed new slate was proposed to the Committee. Amy Arrowood made first, and CAPT Tracy Cheramie second. No discussion ensued and were approved. The committee also thanked the Chair for his services.

CAPT David Foret then began the Subcommittee Reports and Working Group updates. He first discussed the recently published Mariner Guide to Navigating the Houston Ship Channel. Steve Byrnes gave a brief summary of the creation of the document and how it should be used. The electronic version will be available online on Lone Star's website shortly.

CAPT Naval Aranke updated on the Menhaden Working Group. The group last met in August. It's been relatively quiet lately. One ship had an issue and had to stop for 5 to 10 minutes to clean things out. He also noted that the Houston Pilots are taking an active role in discussing the potential for clogs caused by the fish, which is helping prepare vessel personnel prior to transits getting underway.

CAPT Tracy Cherami updated for the ATON Working Group. A large focus is on ATONs that have had a high frequency of knockdowns. They are also going to try a virtual buoy for #20.

CAPT Foret discussed the new Fleeting Area Working Group that will focus on best practices at fleeting areas, especially after the recent incident at the I-10 Bridge. LCDR Rousseau indicated that they are also looking at some of the high-water plans in place at area on the Rivers as reference material to be used in the development. CAPT Oditt noted that a bridge is, in a sense, a “hazard to navigation”. There have been a number of allisions with the bridge in the past, and it is important that the fendering system is appropriate considering the traffic that passes through it. Also want to focus on preparing for heavy weather and high water (levels and flows). There is a new bridge planned in 2040, but that is a long way off. There is some interest in the maritime industry for moving the timeline on that to an earlier date.

CAPT Plunkett the discussed Waterways Utilization, providing an update on their last meeting. The NCIC is willing to conduct free audits, but it takes about a year to get one conducted. Traffic stats were about 2% down from last year, but there was a record for LPG transits. Also, a lot of container ships moving in the 3rd quarter.

CAPT Jeff Kindle provided an update on the Certificate of Compliance Working Group. From the last meeting, the Coast Guard then held an internal meeting to look at some of the suggestions coming from that. They Working Group meets next the 3rd week of November.

CAPT Greg Brown provided an update on efforts from the Facility Working Group, discussing the various facilities they have visited recently.

Mark Nokelby provided an update on the Anchorage Working Group.

Mark Warner provided an update from the Technology Working Group. There is 2,500 miles of watershed that flows into the Houston Ship Channel. This is driving a need for technology to be able to understand what is happening on the waterways. In particular, there are needs in the upper channel where it is narrower. The Sabine Area has 6 meters, more than what we have in the Houston Ship Channel. There are new projects under development to install additional meters at Sheldon Landing (funded and underway), I-10 Bridge, Magellan and 610 Bridge. Likely need at least another 6 meters to support the needs on the waterway. Xylem has some new prototypes that they would like to test, so they are now participating in the committee. Key issues remain funding the equipment and its annual maintenance. Need to work with industry to provide a funding source for the new and ongoing needs. There are also efforts underway to put cameras in the middle bay to help with visibility and assessment of fog. Tropical Storm Imelda also raised the issue that there is no detailed protocol to decide when it is safe to resume traffic based on currents. The new meters will help provide a way to better assess the conditions. Tim Osborn with NOAA discussed what is happening on other ports. Some ports have equipment that provides information on AIS displays. It was also suggested that with the potential for future aqueducts coming, the Working Group should work with agencies to conduct modeling of the impact that these changes may cause on the waterways, and also advocate that those projects must fund any new equipment needed on the waterways for monitoring the currents and such.

David Casebeer provided an update on the Dredging and Marine Construction Subcommittee. Trish Campbell from the Army Corps of Engineers provided an update on their current projects.

Amy Arrowood provided an update on the Maritime Education, Training and Outreach. After the last Subcommittee meeting, they received a request to conduct a workshop Feb 29th for recreational boaters. They are working on the agenda of topics to cover during the workshop. Goal is to better help recreational boaters understand how to share the waterways with the industry. San Jacinto Maritime is

having a Maritime Career Fair on Wednesday, Nov 6th, with about 30 organizations attending. The Port of Houston is having their first Maritime Gala in support of their Nov 21st.

Colleen Kallestad provided an update on the Freeport Subcommittee. Major effort to update the charts for Freeport with NOAA and other stakeholders. LNG has begun exports. Tim Osborn with NOAA stated his appreciation for the folks in Freeport being proactive to meet with NOAA's and their cartographers to help bring charts better up to date.

The Chair then transitioned to remarks from the US Coast Guard. CDR Rousseau provided an update on Waterways. Sector Houston-Galveston will host Industry Day focused on Security on Dec 5th from 0800 – 1200. Industry is encouraged to attend and should RSVP to attend. Steve Nerheim provided an update on the PAWSA (Port and Waterways Safety Assessment) that is planned for January 15th and 16th of 2020 at WGMA's facilities. There will be about 30 participants that will be looking at safety issues and mitigations strategies, with the focus on the ICW and Houston Ship Channel.

The Houston Ship Channel Security District funded the update to the Area Maritime Security Plan. A working group is providing suggestions for updates to the plan and initial action plans for closures of the waterways, chemical releases, and expanding on asymmetric threats such as attacks against soft targets, active shooters, drones and etc. Next Tuesday, Nov 5th, is the annual meeting for the Houston Ship Channel Security District, with updates from many of the local authorities. Our area received \$9.2 million in security grants, so a job well done by the working group effort.

The Coast Guard also provided an update to the protest at the Fred Hartman Bridge that led to a partial closure of the Ship Channel for a portion of the day on September 12th. This is the 4th time they have staged this type of protest since 2015.

Julio Gonzales provided an update on the Area Maritime Security Committee. The annual exercise was held at Freeport LNG in August. The Cybersecurity Subcommittee is the FBI InfraGard chapter. They have a lot of tools to assist companies with cybersecurity concerns. The FSO Subcommittee is aggregating NRC reports from our region to identify trends to focus on. A lot of that has to do with surveillance, so the group is looking to identify what operations may have been underway that led to the surveillance. That will help with enhanced awareness of what to watch for.

Next came an update on the Area Committee. The Marine Transportation Recovery Plan has been updated, but there remain some gaps to be worked on (contact Julio Gonzales if interested in assisting). In addition, there are a number of working groups that are being formed based on the learnings from the ITC Incident. One will be focused on identifying critical commercial infrastructure and possible pre-booming strategies. Another will focus on developing vessel decon plans, strategies and locations. Another will focus on air monitoring, and another on water sampling.

The Roundtable of members and the public attendees was conducted.

The new Chair and Vice Chair were recognized, with thanks to outgoing members and CAPT Plunkett for his efforts the past 2 years as Chair.

Motion to adjourn by Karl Schroder, Seconded by Tracy Cheramie. Meeting adjourned at 10:45AM.

Notes Presented by James Prazak

