

South Texas Waterways Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

13:30, 21 April 2022

Meeting was held at the Ortiz Center

A. Call to order/opening remarks by chairman

At 1330 Chairman of STWAC, Mr. Russ Pickering, Sr. called the meeting to order. A quorum was reached.

B. Administration

The January 20, 2022 meeting minutes were approved.

C. Coast Guard Remarks

CAPT Jason Gunning, U.S. Coast Guard Sector/ Air Station Corpus Christi, provided remarks and announced the reorganization of Sector Corpus Christi and Air Station Corpus Christi on July 8, 2022. He also thanked the Port and maritime community for their response to the Corpus Christi Ship Channel Anomaly.

D. Presentations

- Pipeline Removal Project/CC Ship Channel Dredge Project
 - Mr. Dan Koesma, Port of Corpus Christi, provided an update of dredging activities.
 - Callan Marine started dredging on March 14, 2022 in the lower bay reach with the dredge GENERAL MACARTHER and removing 5 pipelines near Pelican Island.
 - Great Lakes Dredge and Dock is working outside the Harbor Bridge.
 - Anticipate work to be completed by mid 2023.
 - Maintenance dredging expected to be awarded in August for the entire La Quinta Channel. Work is expected to begin in Q4 of this year.
- Hurricane Season
 - CDR Douglas Salik, U.S. Coast Guard Sector/ Air Station Corpus Christi, highlighted the Sector / Air Station Corpus Christi's upcoming Hurricane Preparedness message as well as plans to participate in upcoming Port Hurricane exercises.
 - He requested open and honest communication during Hurricane response.
 - It was requested that the Coast Guard attempt to narrow down the Port Coordination Team meetings to relevant geographical partners.
 - Feedback was provided to request more lead-time for Port conditions changes.

- Danielle Hale, Port of Corpus Christi, announced the Regional Hurricane Conference, Virtual Town hall with USCG/NWS, and county re-entry programs.

E. Committee Reports

1. Vessel Movement Committee

- Mr. Russel Cordo, Port of Corpus Christi, provided a movement report for March. The Port of Corpus Christi continues to see increase in traffic from 548 to 607 compared with last March. Increases are reflected in all vessel types across the board. VLCCs are up 25%, LNCGs are up 20%, Panamax vessels make up the largest percentage of ship movements.

2. Waterway Optimization/Dredging Committee

- Nothing to Report.

3. WSA Advisory Committee

- Nothing to Report.

4. Marine Firefighting Committee

- Danielle Hale, Port of Corpus Christi, reported that the committee is testing work products through table-top exercises. The recent exercise simulated an incident in Cut-B and covered initial, on-going, and recovery responses. Overall the work products are effective. Areas for improvement include: sustained training and exercises, focus on on-scene-command, need to expand exercises to other areas, need to recruit fire-fighting specific industry representatives, improve consent agreements, and assess staging areas.

5. Gangway Safety and Waterway Rescue Ad Hoc Committee

- Nothing to Report.

F. Old Business

None

G. New Business

1. Consideration and action on new memberships

- Buster Myrick, Thomas Martin, and Tracy Adams approved for STWAC membership.

2. Ingleside Currents

- Concerns were raised about the increased currents near Ingleside after dredging is completed. Anecdotally, currents seem to be stronger in the area. The current meter is back in operation and data will need to be analyzed.

3. LNG Ship movement

- Recreational boats have raised concerns about LNG ships causing dangerous wakes. Efforts are being made to monitor occurrences via social media and a few of the members are exploring options for increased education to the boating public.

4. Permanent Safety Zone of Corpus Christi Ship Channel

- U.S. Coast Guard is considering a proposed rulemaking to establish a permanent rule for moving safety/security zones within the Port of Corpus Christi. The Coast Guard will provide the same external notifications, but will streamline the internal regulatory process.

5. Tug Matrix

- Pilots do not support a tug matrix as it does not provide increased efficiency or decreased cost. This conclusion is based on discussions with the Houston Pilots who expressed some opinions that the Houston Tug Matrix has become irrelevant/obsolete. Discretion should continue to remain with the Master and Pilot and a Tug Matrix may give less flexibility to decrease tugs in ideal situations.

6. General Public

- Del Mar College has been working to build a maritime education program since 2018. Del Mar has received approval for training courses (Basic Safety Training Course, one-day revalidation course, two-day combined company and ship security officer course) and looking to build out class schedules for the next year. They are soliciting for instructors with ship captain experience.
- NOAA is requesting data for chart update. A discussion followed about the importance of terminals to submit chart updates to NOAA.

H. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Pickering.

Meeting Schedule of the Full Committee

July 21, 2022

October 20, 2022

January 19, 2023

April 18, 2023