

**South Texas Waterways Advisory Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**13:30, 21 January 2021**

**Meeting was held Zoom**

\*Below is a list of attendees that announced their name/ presence via Zoom.

Xavier Valverde	Kris Lamb	Renee San Miguel	Margaret Brown
Sonny Boyd	Joe Harrington	Belynda Kinman	Adrian Wilson
John Pasch	Danielle Hale	John Williams	Robert Hawn
Gewyn Olson	Kevin Miller	Michael Richardson	Dwayne McCullion
Benjamin Watson	Toby Tschoepe	Jalyn Stineman	Jason Gunning
Emily Soltow	Joey Franco	Quentin Stubbs	Sean Strawbridge
Arip Ismail	Kurt Hallier	Russell Cordo	Doug Salik
Greg Payne	Paul Silva	Josh Johnson	Michael Stineman
Mark McGinnis	BJ Schulze	Andrew Smith	Richard Ludwig
Mike Kershaw	Kevin Campbell	Jay Rivera	
Larry Perryman	Wes Turybury	Josh Macklin	
Jason Weeks	JR Shaw	RJ Thomas	
Dan Koesema	Jack Carroll	Mike W	

**A. Call to order/opening remarks by chairman**

At 1332 Chairman of STWAC, Xavier Valverde, called the meeting to order, the quorum is present. Xavier Valverde thanked all for attending.

**B. Administration**

At 1333 there a motion was made to approve the minutes from the October 14, 2020 meeting; the motion carried. At there a motion was made to approve the minutes from the December 22, 2020 meeting; the motion carried.

**C. Coast Guard COTP Remarks**

At 1334 CDR Salik, U.S. Coast Guard Sector/ Air Station Corpus Christi's Chief of Prevention, greeted those in attendance, and noted that he will make further remarks during his presentation.

**D. Presentations**

At 1336 Dan Koesema from the Port of Corpus Christi gave a presentation on the Corpus Christi Ship Channel Improvement Project and the Annual Dredging Services Program. The POCC Commission approved the program in December 2020. POCC is now in a multi-year dredging agreement with Callan Marine. This program will add more management (such as location of placement areas, and performing BD and AD surveys) to the dredging program

and more value to the POCC customers. Anyone with more questions should contact Dan Koesema.

At 1345 CDR Doug Salik gave an update on marine investigations and casualties. CDR Salik discussed that nationally fishing vessels have significant issues with marine casualties (approximately 90% of total destruction have been due to fire.) The Coast Guard is working to minimize fishing vessel incidents but frequent visits. CDR Salik discussed that the Coast Guard will be establishing a weekly Dredge Coordination Call. The intent of the call is to assist with communications so as to not negatively impact navigation and operations. CDR Salik also discussed gangway safety, specifically regarding the angle of inclination. The Coast Guard has established a team of vessel and facility inspectors to respond to reports on unsafe gangways. Kurt Hallier from Conoco-Philips inquired about a public source of information for marine casualty trends so as to compare past years data as the port continues to grow. CDR Salik replied that he will provide additional information as it becomes public. Harbormaster Russell Cordo inquired about the manpower of inspectors so as to increase inspection throughput. CDR Salik said that the Coast Guard is looking into ways to increase amount of inspections completed per day. As a training port, the Coast Guard is pleased to have recently hired a training officer that will greatly expedite the qualification timeline. COVID has dictated that inspectors are split into teams, and technology issues have occasionally hindered progress. Jose Franco from MODA inquired if there was a timeline that more inspectors could be expected due to the increase in port traffic. CDR Salik replied that two civilian inspectors are being hired and an additional three active duty members will be reporting, but there are budgetary demands nationwide. Adrian Wilson asked about conducting inspections at anchorage, and additional training to allow transit to anchorage via helicopter. CDR Salik said that they will look into it but there are complications due to the limitations (PPE and weather) of utilizing helicopters. Arip Ismail from AET concurred with Adrian Wilson, and inquired about doing an inspection at a load terminal. Adrian Wilson said that all the terminals in Corpus Christi are amenable to allowing COC inspections at the dock, but sometimes there are scheduling challenges. Joe Harrington from Valero inquired about doing a partial COC inspection in the afternoon in order to start cargo loading/discharge, and then finish the inspection the next day. CDR Salik said that each situation is closely evaluated, and he will work with the Inspections team regarding the concerns./

At 1415 Xavier Valverde began a presentation on Corpus Christi Ship Channel 2020 Trends. The takeaways are that the number of vessels moving in one day is increasing, and with that safety risks increase. Xavier Valverde clarified that all movements are tracked, not just arrivals, because all vessels underway present safety risks. Overall in 2020, the number of vessel movements decreased downward about 10 vessel movements a month, likely due to the pandemic and the downward trend of barge movements. Similarly, there was a downward 2020 trend in total daily vessel movements, however there was a slight increase in daily ship movements. The average daily vessel movements per day was 37. Xavier Valverde also looked at trends from 2018, which showed a general upward trend until the pandemic outbreak. From December 2018 through December 2020, VLCC movements have increased and doubled since 2019. From January 2014 through December 2020, Suezmax and Aframax vessel movements have significantly increased, and Panamax vessel movements have showed a downward trend. LNG Carrier movements decreased in the summer 2020 due but

continued to increase throughout the remainder of 2020, doubling since 2019. Xavier Valverde discussed the AECOM report completed in 2018, which shows a strong upward trend in vessel movements through 2023. John Williams of Aransas-Corpus Christi Pilots commented that the AECOM projections were made prior to the announcement of offshore terminal traffic. Michael Richardson inquired if the AECOM report showed more specific break-downs of projections.

## **E. Committee Reports**

At 1443 Russell Cordo gave a presentation on the Vessel Movement Committee mentioned that a tonnage record was achieved in 2020, despite COVID and the oil market. Russell Cordo noted that with new development, there is construction and dredging; he encouraged all to maintain communication about dredging operations. Russell Cordo also encouraged tows to not be made in the La Quinta Channel as that is already a narrow area. Joe Harrington inquired if there is any follow-up to the December 22, 2020 Special STWAC meeting. Kurt Hallier mentioned that he hopes the conversations continue.

At 1449 Andrew Smith from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers noted that there was ongoing dredge in the Inner Harbor, and expects a dredge in the La Quinta Junction soon. Xavier Valverde asked if information can be shared at the next meeting about which aids to navigation will need to be moved or altered due to the Channel Improvement Project. Kurt Hallier inquired if vessels will be allowed to use the channel progressively as it is dredged. Andrew Smith noted that those conversations will need to take place with the Pilots and the Coast Guard.

At 1503 Margaret Brown, U.S. Coast Guard Sector/ Air Station Corpus Christi Waterways Management, gave a presentation on the Waterway Suitability Advisory Committee. Margaret Brown noted that the Committee has not met in at least two years, she solicited participation for an upcoming WSA meeting. Margaret Brown noted that per the STWAC Charter, the ACC Pilots are the Chairperson of the Committee, but CG will facilitate the meetings.

At 1506 Danielle Hale gave a presentation on the Marine Firefighting Committee. Danielle Hale discussed the shipboard marine firefighting seminar, the fabrication and purchase of the Port Authority's new marine firefighting assets, development of a virtual ICS course, and discussed the marine firefighting findings regarding the Tule Lake Channel Fire Hotwash. The local Fire Departments have committed to attending marine firefighting training. The Marine Firefighting Resource Guide is being updated. ICS300 class is being held this week and is well-received by the students. Danielle Hale gave an update on the Avery Dock Fire Drill, with an outstanding participation of about 200 personnel. The next meeting is March 11, 2021.

At 1514 Xavier Valverde noted that he contacted NOAA regarding the update of CoastPilot5 and encouraged others to do so. Joe Harrington also encouraged others to make Coast Pilot updates.

## **F. Old Business**

There is no old business.

## **G. New Business**

At 1520 Margaret Brown introduced the following personnel applying for STWAC membership: Cory Fontenot from ACC Pilots, Ryan Miller from ACC Pilots, Benjamin Watson from ACC Pilots, Ryan Read from ACC Pilots, and Quentin Stubbs from NOAA. At 1522 a motion was made to approve membership; the motion carried.

At 1523 Joe Harrington stated that it was great that Pilots are joining STWAC because they are the heartbeat of the Port. Joe Harrington also stated that he would like to plan a Bluewater/ Brownwater Symposium and that there is a possibility that funding could be received for facilitation.

At 1530 Quentin Stubbs noted that NOAA has received chart update requests from POCC, and NOAA is processing those requests.

## **G. Adjourn**

At 1533 the meeting was adjourned by Mr. Valverde.