

FINAL
SUMMARY OF THE PORT OF BALTIMORE
HARBOR SAFETY AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
March 9, 2022 10:00 AM
Association of Maryland Pilots
3720 Dillon Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21224

Attendees:

Association of Maryland Pilots (AMP): Captain Beth Christman, Captain John Kinlein, Captain Eric Nielsen
Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE): Bonnie Johansen
Burns & McDonnell: Cody Duplisea
Chesapeake & Interstate Pilots: Captain David Lieberman
Dominion Energy: Jerry Barnes
Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR): John Gallagher
Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA): Ryan Barry, Dave Bibo, Brian Miller, Holly Miller
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Stephanie Peters
Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA): Ruel Sabellano
Moran Towing Corporation: Nathan Hauser
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Coast Survey (OCS): Ryan Wartick
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS): Chris DiVeglio
National Weather Service (NWS): Dan Hoffman, Steve Zubrick
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District: Graham McAllister
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Philadelphia District: Mike Hart
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), District 5: Albert Grimes, Scott Taylor
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Sector Maryland–National Capital Region (MD-NCR): Kerry Bolen, LCDR Sam Danus, Fred Dolbow, Ron Houck, Morgan Merritt, CAPT David O’Connell, BOSN Chris Runt

Action Items

Philadelphia District – USACE

P2 – Consideration of Arnold Point emergency anchorage/turning basin. *(Ongoing) No update*

Baltimore District – USACE

B6 – Deepen one of the Harbor anchorages to 50-ft. *(Long-term request – The Seagirt Loop Feasibility Study, which is a three-year, \$3M joint venture between USACE and MDOT MPA, to deepen the Seagirt Loop channels started in October 2020 and is also looking at deepening one of the Anchorages to 50-ft.) Ongoing.*

USCG Sector Maryland–National Capital Region

C5 – Construct upper reach York Spit Channel range lights to be positioned below York River Channel. *(On hold due to 50' Widening Study; completion of lights scheduled for 2020.) No update.*

C6 – Evaluate traffic separation scheme (TSS) at Smith Point. *[Ongoing – D5 intends to conduct a Port Access Route Study (PARS) to determine existing or additional routing measures and is seeking input on the particular geographic area to be studied (i.e. how large of an area in the vicinity of the TSS should the USCG study). Once initiated, the study may take up to a year to conduct and may lead to future rulemakings or appropriate international agreements. D5 Point of Contact: LTJG John Frank; John.R.Frank@uscg.mil, 757-398-6298.] No update.*

C26 – Rebuild Craighill Channel Range lights. *(Ongoing – Received the 95% documentation from CEU Cleveland on March 2, 2022. The project estimate is \$3,949,862. Initial expectation has been for construction to begin in April 2022 with completion by February 2023.)*

MDOT MPA

M6 – Evaluate the possibility of dredging in two (2) areas around the Seagirt Marine Terminal to address areas of concern identified by the MD Pilots as pinch points: an area around 3SW Buoy turning into Seagirt and widening an area off Buoy 1C in Colgate Creek. Priority would be area off Buoy 1C in Colgate Creek. *(Ongoing – Buoy 3 was moved as part of the Seagirt Berth 3 Dredging project. MDOT MPA is widening Colgate Creek in two phases. The first phase of dredging occurred in June-August 2021. Buoy 1C was relocated during the first phase of dredging and returned to its post-dredging position on March 30, 2022.)*

General Action Items

- Overcrowded VHF-FM Channel 13: A solution to reduce the number of bridge-to-bridge users on channel 13 is being examined by D5 (bridges) and C4ITSC in Norfolk. The D5 Bridge Branch may require the installation of a sign on drawbridges, on the upstream and downstream sides, indicating that the bridge is equipped with and operates a VHF radiotelephone. The preferred working channel on the signage should be shown in the lower left quadrant and the preferred working channel should be shown in the lower right quadrant. C4ITSC recommended having two frequencies, one for recreational and channel 13 for commercial. *(Ongoing – Mr. Hal Pitts from the USCG D5 Bridge Branch has advised that he will be sending information to the bridge owner in April 2022, focusing on Knapps Narrows).*

Statements for the Record

1.0 Greetings and Introductions

Dave Bibo, MDOT MPA

- Mr. Bibo welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.
- Attendees present and those available by phone introduced themselves and stated whom they represent.

2.0 Approval of Summary for Record

Dave Bibo, MDOT MPA

- Mr. Bibo asked for a motion to accept the December 2021 meeting summary. The motion was put forth and the summary was accepted.

3.0 Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) Crossing Update

**Bonnie Johansen, BGE
Cody Duplisea, Burns & McDonnell**

- Ms. Johansen thanked all partners involved in the Key Crossing Reliability Initiative project; they were instrumental to its success. The project is three-quarters of the way to completion, though the in-water work is complete. BGE did not receive any bad complaints during the project; Ms. Johansen attributed this to the extensive outreach conducted.
- Mr. Duplisea stated that the project is in its final stages. Contractor McLean has been given incentive date of 4/22 to get most of the overhead work done; decommissioning work will occur throughout 2022. He provided an update on the construction of the project, sharing photographs installation of vessel collision protection (VCP) structure rebar at Towers 3 and 4, installation of topping formwork, installation of the Tower 5 VCP fender system, and concrete topping placement at Tower 3 VCP.
- BGE is working on a closure video for the project. The project should be energized in June, with subsequent substation and underground cable fluid decommissioning. The project is anticipated to be completed in December 2022.
- Mr. McAllister added that USACE Baltimore District will be starting a dredging project in the Fort McHenry Channel around the end of May; USACE will coordinate with BGE regarding the work in case BGE in-water work is occurring at that time.
- Regarding finalization of aids to navigation: the structures are marked temporarily; permanent lighting will be installed by 4/22. The structures should be lit by the beginning of boating season.
- Information on the BGE Key Crossing Project can be found at www.bge.com/keycrossing.

4.0 Salvage and Marine Firefighting Committee

Frederick Dolbow, USCG

- Mr. Dolbow stated that the USCG Salvage and Marine Firefighting (SMFF) subcommittee will hold its first meeting on March 23, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. [*Note: due to the grounding of the M/V Ever Forward, the meeting was later postponed until April 2022 (date TBD)*]
- Mr. Dolbow presented the agenda of the first meeting, the subcommittee's objectives, the April 13 Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (PREP) tabletop exercise scenario, and PREP tabletop exercise objectives, as detailed in the attached SMFF presentation.

5.0 Port Guidance Subcommittee: Dead Ship Movement

Sam Danus, USCG MD-NCR

- Mr. Danus stated that the subcommittee determined that dead ship movement guidance would be a good topic to review and potentially update. The subcommittee may meet monthly, with a first meeting potentially in April. Those interested in participating in the subcommittee should reach out to Mr. Danus.

6.0 U.S. Coast Guard: Fifth District/Sector Maryland–National Capital Region (USCG MD-NCR)

Albert Grimes, USCG D5
Ron Houck, USCG MD-NCR
David O’Connell, USCG MD-NCR
Chris Runt, USCG MD-NCR

- Captain O’Connell thanked the Maryland Pilots for hosting today’s meeting, as well as all port partners for various coordination efforts required over the past year. ATONs are a focus of the sector’s efforts. The sector did not experience much severe weather over the past few months. He thanked Mr. Dolbow for his efforts associated with the SMFF Subcommittee and associated PREP exercises.
- Mr. Runt will be retiring soon; this will be his last Harbor Safety and Coordination meeting.
- Mr. Runt provided updates regarding action items and Aids to Navigation, per the attached Briefing Sheet provided during the meeting.
- Mr. Kinlein asked for follow up on Brewerton Eastern Extension light; it has been 6 months since the pilots reviewed the design. The situation at that location continues to be hazardous. A review of the soundings with the USACE Baltimore indicated significant shoaling on the outer quarters, reducing the amount of usable channel width. With dredged material placement restrictions and sediment flowing downstream from the Conowingo Dam, this PEL light has become even more imperative to safe navigation. Mr. Grimes indicated that D5 has been coordinating with CG-NAV-1 to ensure that the appropriate equipment is being used. The project team also needs to ensure the existing structure doesn’t need modifications. The other issue at this time is procuring the \$60,000 PEL light. No installation timeline is available because fabrication and shipping times are unknown. USCG will also need assistance in installation and alignment from the manufacturer since that is out of the scope of USCG’s capabilities. The USCGC Sledge will also assist in lifting the light.
- Mr. Lieberman stated that there is a discrepancy in information regarding the availability of radar beacons (RACONs), which is the type of transponder ATON the pilots prefer at buoys 42 and 62. They are preferable because they are less susceptible to human interference than other types of signals. He stressed the importance of these aids in avoiding potentially environmentally disastrous incidents, regardless of the price of the aid. Mr. Kinlein agreed, adding that the virtual aids become useless when impacted by gyro error. Mr. Runt suggested that the pilots continue to provide comment to the Local Notice to Mariners article regarding this ATON. Mr. Hauser added that tugs are primarily using visual and radar signals, so when these non-virtual aids are removed, the tugs are working at a disadvantage. Mr. Lieberman added that 95% of his customers do not have AIS radar-compatible systems.
- Mr. Houck provided updates regarding Waterways Management per the attached Briefing Sheet presented during the meeting.

7.0 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District (USACE Philadelphia) Updates

Mike Hart, USACE Philadelphia

- Mr. Hart stated that USACE Philadelphia has one active dredging project at this time; the contractor, Cormar Marine/Kokosing, is behind schedule and will not complete this year’s work. A waiver on the time-of-year restriction (which begins March 30) has not yet been

requested. Their dredge is currently down; once it is back up, it is being directed to Worton Point since that has been identified as the most problematic area of the contract. What remains of this year's project will determine what is included in next year's contract. Corman Marine/Kokosing is also under contract for several other Baltimore Harbor projects, which may be impacted by this project schedule.

- Mr. Nielsen stated that the contractor has not completed the most important areas of the contract area, which may result in the implementation of draft restrictions.
- Mr. Hart remarked that there are three active bridge contracts for Chesapeake City, SR-1, and St. George's bridges. Work at Chesapeake City Bridge is anticipated to begin in mid- to late summer 2022; a 16-inch air gap reduction will be in place for half of the bridge main span at any one time. USACE will provide notice once a more detailed schedule is available. Neither the SR-1 bridge nor the St. George's Bridge projects will impact navigation traffic.

8.0 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District (USACE Baltimore) Updates

Graham McAllister, USACE Baltimore

- Mr. McAllister provided updates per the attached presentation.
- A contract was awarded to Dutra Group for dredging 2.36 mcy from the Cape Henry Channel and placement at the Dam Neck Open Water Placement site. Dredging began in December 2021 and will be complete by the end of April 2022. This schedule minimizes impacts to endangered sea turtles. Turtle observers must be present starting April 15. So far there have been no turtle or sturgeon takes during this work.
- The upcoming dredging of the Harbor and Maryland Approach Channels was awarded to Cashman in February 2022. Last week, the pre-construction conference was held and Notice to Proceed was issued; mobilization to Poplar Island began today. In May, Cashman will begin dredging about 1 mcy total from Craighill Entrance then Cutoff Angle. Cashman will then move to the Fort McHenry Channel, dredging approximately 500,00 cy to be placed at the Cox Creek DMCF. USACE expects to award an optional item for dragging of the East Channel is included to knock down high spots to a uniform elevation of -48 ft. Dragging will even out the channel to the desired depth while conserving DMCF capacity. The contractor anticipates doing this work when dredging work cannot be completed due to wind or other conditions.
- The USACE expects to advertise a solicitation in July 2022 for dredging the Harbor and Maryland Approach Channels. Approximately 2 mcy dredged from Craighill Upper Range and just south of the Craighill Entrance will be placed at Poplar Island. Approximately 500,000 cy dredged from Brewerton Angle, Curtis Bay, and Curtis Creek will be placed in a Harbor DMCF. USACE expects to be constrained by capacity and funding. Award is expected by September 2022; work is expected to begin in December 2022.
- Mr. Kinlein commented that with respect to high dredging costs paired with funding constraints noted by various agencies, good ATON could allow for reduced/more cost-effective dredging.
- Mr. McAllister provided an update on the Seagirt Loop Study. The Tentatively Selected Plan, a 47-foot-deep channel, was approved on December 9, 2021. The draft report was released to the public on February 9, 2022; the 30-day public and agency review period ends March 11, 2022. No public comments have been received thus far. The study is scheduled for completion in September 2023.

- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act included \$37.5M for the Mid-Bay project, which will allow for construction to begin on the Barren Island portion of the project.

9.0 NOAA/NOS/NWS Updates

Ryan Wartick, NOAA/OCS
Chris DiVeglio, NOAA/PORTS
Steve Zubrick, NOAA/NWS

- Mr. Wartick provided updates from NOAA Office of Coast Survey per the attached presentation.
- In 2021, NOAA ship Thomas Jefferson surveyed a central portion of the Chesapeake Bay. In 2022, the area of Cove Point will be surveyed per request of the Pilots; in 2023, Baltimore will be surveyed. If any other problem areas exist, or areas outside of USACE jurisdiction, committee members are encouraged to reach out to Mr. Wartick so that NOAA can ensure the charts are as accurate as possible.
- Chart updates occur each Thursday at https://distribution.charts.noaa.gov/weekly_updates/
- NOAA's replacement for the RNC custom chart viewer has gone live. This has the look and feel of the traditional paper charts but are in a customizable view that produce a printable PDF.
- Raster chart cancellation continues; 141 charts are currently scheduled for cancellation. Once a chart comes up for cancellation, a notice will remain in the LNM for 6 months until the chart has been cancelled. The last edition of each chart will remain available for download, but the charts will no longer be updated or maintained.
- Mr. Wartick provided the different types of marine advisories and warnings, as well as cold water danger, as a reminder to the attendees.
- Mr. Wartick stated that NOAA received information regarding federally mandated speed zones, which NOAA was then able to chart. If any committee members feel there are speed zones that should be charted, please contact Mr. Wartick to discuss. Mr. Gallagher stated that Maryland DNR has a speed zone map; he suggested the inclusion of the Fort McHenry speed zone of 6 knots. He also shared information regarding a MDNR app called iShellfish, which lists out pound net sites and natural oyster bars.
- Mr. DiVeglio reported that the Chesapeake City air gap sensor performed at 99.9%, Francis Scott Key (FSK) Bridge air gap performed at 99.1%, and Bay Bridge air gap performed at 99.8%.
- The Chesapeake City current station sensor performed at 100%. The Tolchester Front Range current meter is currently out of commission. This will be converted to a buoy-mounted station in the future but is on hold for now. The Bay Bridge current meter performed at 29.7%. Data transmission stopped transmitting in early January. This is a high priority repair, planned to occur March 2022. The Cove Point meter performed at 99.8%. The Rappahannock Shoal current meter performed at 0.0%. The station went out in early November and is past due for a visit. NOAA has emphasized to the contractor that this location is a high priority. Weather and COVID have delayed response, but repair is planned for March 2022.
- NOAA will proceed with enhancing the FSK Bridge air gap in 2022. The existing platform has plenty of room to add another electronics box and sensor. This will add the desired redundancy with two separate data collection platforms.
- The second Bay Bridge system agreement with MDTA is currently under legal review.
- Mr. Zubrick provided updates from the National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecast Office (WFO). This past winter (2021-2022) was overall on the normal to mild side (warm

December, cold January, normal February) with not much snow; a little ice reported on the Bay waters (a few days of some light ice on back Bay estuaries and tributaries at times).

- NWS/WFO Sterling does issue headlines for "Freezing Spray Advisories"; e.g., for the weekend Jan 29-30, 2022, with Gale-force winds occurring and very cold (sub-freezing) temperatures, NWS/WFO issued headlines highlighting "freezing spray."
- The climate outlook for the next 3-months has temperatures tending above normal and precipitation near normal. More climate information can be found at the following link: <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>
- NWS has a Weather Ready Nation (WRN) Marine Ambassador Program. Any maritime organization across all levels of government, business large and small, non-profit and non-governmental organizations, and academia can become a WRN Marine Ambassador. The WRN Marine Ambassador initiative is designed to help serve the public by strengthening national resilience against extreme weather events and marine weather hazards. Prevention/resilience through preparedness is a shared value. Marine/coastal ambassadors play a key role in maintaining that value. Safe and efficient marine transportation systems require critical weather decisions to be made - before, during, and after high impact weather events.
- "Safety at Sea" and the health and vitality of our coastal communities are two NOAA priorities that directly relate to meeting the NWS mission of saving lives, protecting property, and enhancing the economy. A 2-page Flyer on the NWS WRN Marine Ambassador Program: https://www.weather.gov/media/wrn/WRN_Marine_Ambassador_Trifold.pdf How to apply to become a NWS WRN Marine Ambassador: <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/amb-tou>
- The National Hurricane Center is holding a Mariner's Weather Hazards Workshop on March 15-17, 2022 (Virtual). Register at this [link](#).
- To access the latest official NWS local weather forecasts and conditions, including marine forecasts and warnings, go to the NWS WFO/Sterling web page: <https://www.weather.gov/lwx/>

10.0 Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Updates

John Gallagher, MDNR

- Mr. Gallagher shared photos of MDNR's new ice breaker and buoy tender, the M/V Eddie Somers. It was built in 2021 at Blount Shipyard in Warren, Rhode Island. The project was constructed on budget and on schedule. This vessel is named after the former captain of MDNR's other vessel, the M/V Tawes. The Eddie Somers has a vinyl wrapped aluminum super structure, reinforced at the bow and stern. While it is not yet fully outfitted, it does have QSK 19 engines and a 1500 hp valve thruster. This vessel will handle 4 ft of water. The vessel's christening was held earlier this month, delivery should be in April 2022, and commissioning will occur around May 20, 2022.
- Matt Negley has moved on to another position at MDNR.
- Boating regulations became involved late in the process for construction at the Nice/Middleton Bridge; Mr. Gallagher requested that committee members notify him of any construction projects so he can help ensure smooth processing at MDNR.
- Mr. Gallagher stated that the supply chain for buoys is bad right now.
- Mr. Gallagher noted an increase in boating regulation requests over previous years (presumably since more people are at home due to increased work from home).

- MDNR has had a lot of resignations and retirements, so if committee members are not receiving the response they need from DNR, contact Mr. Gallagher and he will help in whatever way he can.

11.0 Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) Updates Ruel Saballano, MDTA

- Mr. Saballano stated that, regarding the second Bay Bridge air gap sensor, the MOA with NOAA is still under development (for right of entry and installation and maintenance of the sensor). The MOA with MDOT MPA (for payment) has been executed. Once the MOA with NOAA has been executed, design and construction will move forward.
- The MOA between MDTA and MDOT MPA for the FSK Bridge navigation lights relocation has been executed. MDTA awaits concurrence from USCG; once received, the project will move to construction.

12.0 Chesapeake & Interstate Pilots Updates David Lieberman

- Mr. Lieberman had no further updates.

13.0 Association of Maryland Pilots (MD Pilots) Updates John Kinlein, MD Pilots

- Mr. Kinlein expressed thanks to USCG (D5 and Sector MD-NCR) and USACE (Baltimore and Philadelphia) for their continual excellent response to Pilot concerns.
- Mr. Kinlein commented that ships are getting bigger, and the POB is moving forward. The Pilots aim to be the best in country, if not the world. However, if they don't have support they can only do so much; ATON and shoaling should not be the limiting factors. Mr. Kinlein stressed the importance of physical ATON, likening them to airport runway lights.

14.0 Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) Updates

Dave Bibo, MDOT MPA

- Mr. Bibo noted upcoming dredging projects that remain to be completed and placed within the state DMCFs include Dundalk Berth 3 Reconstruction, Ports America Chesapeake Pocket Phase 2, Tradepoint Atlantic, USCG shipyard and access channel, Steinweg, and USACE projects.

15.0 Comments/Adjourn David Bibo, MDOT MPA

- Mr. Hauser noted a change in tugboat activity for the National Gypsum terminal: McAllister and Moran Towing will no longer be providing line handling services to ships calling on the terminal. Moving forward, Chesapeake Marine Towing and Salvage will provide a line vessel for ships calling on the terminal.
- Mr. Bibo expressed thanks to the group for a productive and smooth meeting.
- The next meeting will be held on June 8, 2022.