SUMMARY OF THE PORT OF BALTIMORE
HARBOR SAFETY AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
December 11, 2024 10:00 AM
Association of Maryland Pilots
3720 Dillon Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21224

Attendees:

Anchorage Marina: Wayne Easton
Association of Maryland Pilots (MD Pilots): Captain John Kinlein, Captain Eric Nielsen, Captain Noah Seiple
Baltimore Banner: Hayes Gardner
Community member: Will Feuer (via phone)
Dominion Energy: Mike Lewis (via phone)
Gahagan Bryant Associates (GBA): Jake Derolf (via phone)
Interport Pilots: Mark Roesner
Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR): Ken Choi (via phone)
Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Ryan Barry, Dave Bibo, Brian Miller, Holly Miller, Kelvin Moulden, Rockye Truelove (via phone), Andrea Williams (via phone)
Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA): Eric Almquist, Tekeste Amare, Heather Lowe, James Turner (via phone)
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Stephanie Peters
McAllister Towing: Mike Reagoso
Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC): Valerian Rivere
Moran Towing: Jonathan Steinberg
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Coast Survey (OCS): Martha Herzog, Ryan Wartick
NOAA Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS): Chris DiVeglio (via phone)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District: Kevin Fenyak, Rachel Kierzewski, Eric Lindheimer
USACE, Philadelphia District: Michael Hart (via phone)
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Auxiliary: Henry Hayes (via phone)
USCG, District 5 (D5): Albert Grimes (via phone), Jesse Collins (via phone), Tom Rader (via phone)
USCG, Navigation Center (NAVCEN): Kristopher Eleazer
USCG, Regional Exam Center-Baltimore: Scott Taylor
USCG, Sector Maryland–National Capital Region (MD-NCR): Chris Briggs, Doug Bullock, Fred Dolbow, Gregory Goetz (via phone), Brian McGee, Joshua Motta, Kate Newkirk
USCG Sector Virginia (VA): Patrick Grizzle
US Wind: Ben Cooper
Virginia Harbor Safety Committee: Raymond Newlon (via phone)

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 feet. Long-term request – The Seagirt Loop Feasibility Study, which is a three-year, $3M joint venture between USACE and MPA, to deepen the Seagirt Loop channels started in October 2020 and also looked at deepening one of the Anchorages to 50 feet. An economic study conducted as part of the Seagirt Loop Feasibility Study did not support a 50-foot-deep anchorage in Baltimore Harbor. *No update.*

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.*

C26 – Rebuild Craighill Channel Range Lights (LLNR 8040-Front/8050-Rear): Contract Awarded December 15, 2023, with estimated completion by December 19, 2025. Cleveland Engineering Unit (CEU) update: CEU is continuing to receive and review project submittals as of 23 July 24. *Update: Project on track for December 2025 completion. On-site work set to begin early 2025.*

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 – USCG moved Buoy 3 as part of the Seagirt Berth 3 Dredging project. MPA is widening Colgate Creek in two phases. The first phase of dredging occurred in June-August 2021. USCG relocated Buoy 1C during the first phase of dredging and returned to its post-dredging position on March 30, 2022.

General Action Items

- Mr. Motta will draft information about the angular offsets of the PELs and send it to Mr. Wartick and Captain Kinlein for review to ensure it aligns with the requested details, with the intention of publishing this information in the light list.

<u>Statements for the Record</u>

1.0 Greetings and Introductions **Dave Bibo, MPA**

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

2.0 Approval of Summary for Record **Dave Bibo, MPA**

- Mr. Bibo asked for a motion to accept the September 14 meeting summary.
- The motion was put forth and the summary was accepted.

3.0 Tier 2 Bay Crossing Study **Heather Lowe, MDTA**
Eric Almquist, MDTA

- Ms. Lowe and Mr. Almquist provided information per the presentation provided in **Appendix A.**
- MDTA is in the midst of scoping public open houses following the notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement. Additional information regarding the open houses and project can be found at BayCrossingStudy.com.
- Slide 12: The proposed sequence of construction is to construct a new span just south of the existing bridges, then remove the existing eastbound span, then construct a new span in the space between the current bridges, then remove the existing westbound span. This would minimize environmental impacts while maximizing funding availability.
- Mr. Bibo asked whether anyone had suggested leaving remnants of the old Bay Bridge for fishing, similar to Tampa's Skyway Bridge. There have been comments about this at public meetings. Maintenance of these remnants would have to be included in the analysis of maintenance costs.
- The elevation of the new bridges has not yet been determined, as it is a decision for USCG. The planned navigation clearance for the rebuilt Francis Scott Key Bridge is 230 feet; it is possible that USCG may require a similar height. Captain Kinlein noted that the Pilots would recommend a height of 230 feet, as well.
- Mr. Dolbow asked if bridge strike mitigation would be incorporated into the design. Ms. Lowe answered that the bridge would be designed to current standards, which includes bridge strike mitigation.
- Mr. Moulden asked if the higher cost of constructing a tunnel, which was estimated to be two and a half to three times more expensive than bridge construction, would also apply to tunnel maintenance. Ms. Lowe explained that while exact numbers aren't available, tunnels are likely more expensive to maintain than bridges. Mr. Almquist said this is due to the need for ventilation systems and additional infrastructure. A full tunnel would require ventilation shafts and an island in the bay, adding complexity and high costs, including considerations for emergency egress.
- The ballpark estimate of twin-span bridge construction costs is $7.5 billion for an 8-lane structure and $8.5 billion for a 10-lane structure.
- The navigation impact report to USCG is likely to be submitted within the next six months, which will help finalize the elevation of the bridge.

4.0 Salvage and Marine Firefighting Subcommittee & 2024 Hurricane Season MTS Recovery **Fred Dolbow, USCG**

- Mr. Dolbow stated that the next Salvage and Marine Firefighting Subcommittee (SMFF) meeting will be held in April 2025.
- Mr. Dolbow highlighted training efforts, including vessel fire training with local fire companies and entry-level training at recruit fire academies. They plan to bring recruits to the dead ship marina at Curtis Bay for maritime vessel training and are in preliminary discussions regarding creating a SMFF Center of Excellence at the Maritime Institute of Technology & Graduate Studies (MITAGS).

5.0 Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Project **Mike Lewis, Dominion Energy**

- Mr. Lewis provided information per the presentation provided in **Appendix B**.
- Slide 2: Dominion Energy acquired two additional wind energy lease areas off the coast of Virginia and North Carolina. Dominion Energy recently published their integrated resource plan, which outlines the forecasted energy demand for the next decade. They expect a 100% increase in demand over the next 15 years. Dominion Energy is taking an all-of-the-above approach when it comes to meeting that demand, which includes offshore wind, solar, and small modular reactors. Current energy generation capabilities will not meet the expected demand.
- Slide 3: The cable-laying barge Ulisse will begin operations about 400 yards offshore from State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach. Offshore cable installation has already made significant progress, with four segments successfully laid and buried from the lease area westward through the cable corridor to the jointing area, where they will connect to the nearshore cables. Omega jointing, which connects the nearshore and far shore cables at the 12-nautical-mile line, will occur from March 2025 through May 2026 (*note that the presentation erroneously states this work began in March 2024*).
- Slide 5: A five-point anchoring system will be used for the cable-laying barge, allowing it to leapfrog as it moves offshore. This operation will be supported by various support craft.
- Slide 9: The wind turbine installation vessel Charybdis, currently under construction in Brownsville, Texas, is expected to arrive in June. A challenge is its air clearance, even when unloaded, which could impact flight operations near Naval Station Norfolk and Chambers Field. The Navy, Port, and USCG are working together to resolve the issue.
- Slide 10: In recent months, recreational vessels have unintentionally entered the lease area during construction. While the area is open with no restrictions, the project team is working to ensure safe navigation and clear communication. The project team is increasing outreach to the recreational community to keep them informed about offshore activities.
- Mr. Wartick asked if the concrete mattresses had been laid for the cable crossings. Mr. Lewis confirmed that all pre-lay concrete mattresses were installed, and four deepwater cables have been laid. They are currently gathering as-built data to provide to NOAA for charting. NOAA is preparing to chart cautionary areas around the crossings and will update charts as post-construction surveys are completed.

6.0 U.S. Coast Guard Updates **Chris Briggs, USCG MD-NCR**
Gregory Goetz, USCG MD-NCR
Joshua Motta, USCG MD-NCR
Doug Bullock, USCG MD-NCR

- Mr. Briggs thanked the pilots for hosting the meeting, as well as the whole committee for their continued engagement, support, and participation in ensuring the safety of this area's waterways and beyond.
- Mr. Goetz demonstrated the new Local Notice to Mariners (LNM) interactive web viewer (https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/msi), which replaces the PDF format with a geospatial map. Users can now view charts and maps directly on the website. The viewer lets users zoom into areas, toggle layers of information, and toggle electronic navigation charts (ENC) charts.

- Key features include options to view and print sections of the LNM and light list, view LNM and light list prefaces, download marine safety data for GIS systems, and access resources like offshore wind supplements. The viewer works on mobile devices, allowing mariners to access real-time safety information, even when on the water. To print or display data in a table, users must zoom in to level eight or higher. The geospatial map shows information based on selected layers, such as aids to navigation or marine construction projects.
- Mr. Rivere asked if changes could be highlighted in the new system, as they used to be highlighted in yellow on the PDF version; Mr. Goetz explained that the new system doesn't have a way to highlight changes. He can add an "updated" date at the beginning of the article, but there's no way to specifically highlight new changes. Mr. Briggs stated that a representative from the USCG Navigation Center is present and will take the request for highlighting changes back as a potential improvement.
- The system updates every 15 minutes during business hours, and the light list updates daily at 5 a.m.
- The "locate" button allows users to quickly zoom into their current location without having to manually zoom in from a broad view of the entire country.
- Ms. Newkirk mentioned that the public notice for the Francis Scott Key Bridge application permit has closed. While there weren't many comments, she encouraged anyone with concerns to reach out to her.
- Mr. Motta provided information regarding Aids to Navigation per the brief provided in **Appendix C.**
- Mr. Bullock provided information regarding Waterways Management per the brief provided in **Appendix C**.
- An upcoming event is New Year's Eve fireworks, with two launches in Baltimore—one in the Inner Harbor and one in the Outer Harbor. There will also be regular fireworks around Annapolis.
- The Harry Nice Bridge project is finished.
- Dredging will be occurring throughout the harbor in the coming months, including Curtis Creek.
- As hurricane season ends, USCG is preparing for ice season. Satellite technology will be used to monitor ice, and the National Weather Service expects a warmer winter with normal precipitation. Committee members were asked to report ice to the command center with details like location and thickness. This helps focus ice reports on affected areas, such as the Potomac River, which ices over first. Command center contact information is available if needed.

7.0 Philadelphia District Corps of Engineers **Mike Hart, USACE Philadelphia**

- Mr. Hart stated that the Philadelphia District is working on this year's dredging contract, which opens at 1 pm today. The plan is to award the contract in December, with work starting in early January. The project involves dredging 300,000 cubic yards of material from the Pooles Island and Worton Point areas, with disposal at the Pearce Creek disposal area. Contractors have until March 31 to complete the work within the three-month environmental window. Progress will depend on production rates and potential ice in the

Chesapeake. If necessary, an extension may be requested, or the remaining work could be completed next year.
- Work on the St. George's and Reedy Point bridges is complete.
- A $6.6 million steel repair and painting contract was recently awarded for the Summit Bridge. The project will run until mid-2026. It's uncertain if an air gap restriction will remain in place for the entire duration of the project; more information will be available once the contractor submits their work plan.

8.0 Baltimore District Corps of Engineers **Eric Lindheimer, USACE Baltimore**
Rachel Kierzewski, USACE Baltimore
Kevin Fenyak, USACE Baltimore

- Mr. Lindheimer noted that Jo Ann Grundy is the new Section Chief of Navigation. Mr. Lindheimer expressed enthusiasm about her joining and noted she would be a valuable asset to the Navigation Branch.
- Ms. Kierzewski, Mr. Fenyak, and Mr. Lindheimer provided information per the presentation provided in **Appendix D**.
- Slide 3: There is a change to what is in the presentation regarding the sequence of dredging. Fort McHenry Channel will be dredged before Curtis Creek Channel because power cables under the I-695 bridge have been identified but have not been located or the depth verified. The contractor is working with MDTA to resolve this issue; dredging in this area will not occur until the issue has been resolved. Dredging in Fort McHenry Channel began Sunday and will last 1–2 weeks before moving to Curtis Creek Channel. Coordination is also ongoing to locate cables under the CSX bridge and a Verizon cable under another bridge. Work is paused while construction of the unloader at Cox Creek is completed, with unloading expected to start late Thursday or Friday morning. Full operations should resume by Friday.
- Mr. Bibo stated that the authorized depth in the Curtis Creek Channel is 22 feet, but for the new class of ships coming in, the depth needs to be increased to 28 feet. He also mentioned that before this can be done, the cables need to be located, and their depths verified. Mr. Fenyak agreed. Mr. Bullock added that they are actively looking for the cables this morning; several have already been found, sitting on the mudline. Mr. Lindheimer said the dredging contractor will not dredge under the I-695 bridge if the cables are determined to be on the mudline, so that part of the channel will be left untouched, and the contract may need adjustments.
- There is coordination between the dredging contractor, the pilots, and USCG, with a 24-48-hour look-ahead schedule. If anyone wants to be added to this coordination, they can let Mr. Fenyak know. Captain Kinlein said Curtin, the dredging contractor, has been great to work with. Their proactive approach and detailed daily reports make them stand out, and the pilots are very happy with their performance.
- Mr. Bibo raised concerns about dredging in the borrow area for Barren Island Phase Two, especially with vessel waves near the channel. He noted that the contractor's schedule is unclear; he would like this information broken out for further analysis.

9.0 NOAA/NOS/NWS **Ryan Wartick, NOAA/OCS**
Chris DiVeglio, NOAA/PORTS

- Mr. Wartick stated that hydrographic survey information for the Craighill Entrance was published to the ENC in November, and the Craighill Upper Ranger was published in September. Moving forward, whenever USACE publishes a new survey to E-hydro for a section of the channel that doesn't have hydrographic survey information, it will be added to the ENC at that time.
- NOAA has a new website for chart updates where users can search by area, USCG district, ENC, or date range. Users can also load a NOAA custom chart product to see updates for that chart or check an entire chart catalog to identify the outdated charts. The website will eventually be integrated with the NOAA custom chart tool. Since paper charts are canceled and the USCG LNM no longer shows chart updates, this new system offers a way to track updates. The website can be accessed through the normal NOAA ENC or NOAA charts pages.
- Mr. DiVeglio provided information per the presentation provided in **Appendix E.**
- Slide 3: Since the last meeting, equipment placed in response to the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse, including the buoy for currents and wind and the meteorological station placed on the non-collapsed portion of the bridge, was removed at the end of September. At the beginning of September, the current meter equipment that was previously on buoy 92 just south of the Bay Bridge, was moved across the channel to buoy 91. Since it became operational on September 23, the data returns have been good.
- Slide 5: USCG Civil Engineering Unit granted permission this morning allowing the mounting of meteorological observing equipment to the Brewerton Channel Range Front light structure.
- Captain Kinlein expressed appreciation for the coordination on the front range sensor, especially with the approaching windy season. Wind is especially impactful to the car carriers that enter the port, so an anemometer at a high elevation is critical. He also discussed relocating some wind sensors, specifically suggesting moving the Fort McHenry wind sensor to the Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse. This location combined with the Brewerton Channel Range Front light structure will allow the Pilots to see a more complete picture of wind conditions in the Harbor. He thanked Mr. DiVeglio and the USCG for their efforts.
- Mr. Rivere asked if there could be a tool to measure visibility and predict fog density in the harbor. Mr. DiVeglio replied that forecasting fog would likely need coordination with the weather service and offered to discuss it further offline, noting that fog is an important factor alongside wind. Captain Kinlein supported Mr. Rivere's suggestion.

10.0 Maryland Department of Natural Resources **Ken Choi, MDNR**

- So far in 2024, 50 abandoned vessels have been removed, with an average length of 25 feet and an average weight of 7,000 pounds, totaling 161 tons. Additionally, 58 debris removal cases have been handled, totaling 69.5 tons.

11.0 Maryland Transportation Authority **Tekeste Amare, MDTA**

- Geotechnical borings for the reconstruction of the Francis Scott Key Bridge will begin in January 2025. The borings will take place outside the existing spans, Piers 17 and 19.
- Regarding the Bay Bridge, the usual coordination with the USCG for inspection and maintenance will continue. There will be some inspections in December and possibly in January, which may affect air gap restrictions.

12.0 Association of Maryland Pilots Updates **Captain John Kinlein, MD Pilots**

- Captain Kinlein expressed his gratitude for the coordination efforts of Andrew Payson (USACE Baltimore) and Mr. Grizzle. He highlighted the quick resolution to a situation where a lost anchor caused a draft restriction in the York Spit Channel. He emphasized the importance of fast action when dealing with low underkeel clearance for ships, due to the risk of damaging the ship if an anchor is caught underneath. Captain Kinlein praised Sector Virginia for their swift response and the aggressive draft restriction that helped address the issue quickly. He also commended the excellent coordination between the Sector and Seaward, the salvage company, for executing the resolution efficiently.
- Captain Kinlein mentioned that the PELs are oddly represented on the ENC. He suggested displaying the sectors in an info box on the ENC to show the exact channel offsets. Currently, when zoomed in, the sectors look like traditional sector lights, but don't fully capture the needed details. He believes more information, possibly in the ENC or light list, would be helpful for all stakeholders, especially non-state pilots, to make better use of the data. Mr. Wartick asked Captain Kinlein what kind of information is needed. Captain Kinlein explained that the issue is the angular offsets of the PELs, which change along the channel. Mr. Wartick suggested publishing the information in the light list. Mr. Motta mentioned that USCG could draft some information and send it to Captain Kinlein to ensure it aligns with what is desired.

13.0 Maryland Port Administration Updates **Dave Bibo, MPA**

- Mr. Barry expressed his appreciation for everyone's efforts and teamwork, acknowledging the changes in sector and pilot leadership, and noted that things have continued to run smoothly.
- Mr. Bibo introduced Mr. Moulden, a new member of the MPA Office of Navigation, Innovation, and Stewardship (NIS; formerly Harbor Development) team, who will lead the NIS innovative reuse initiative. This initiative aims to repurpose dredged material into usable products, addressing the high costs of building dredged material placement sites while supporting channel deepening for vessel traffic. The project is a top priority for the Maryland Port Administration and the state of Maryland.
- Maintenance dredging of 25,000 cubic yards is planned at the CSX coal pier. A pre-construction meeting with the contractor, Kokosing, is scheduled for next week, with dredging set to begin mid-January. The material will be sent to the Masonville DMCF.
- East Alcoa, a facility near the Key Bridge, plans 14,000 cubic yards of maintenance dredging. The project is currently on hold until the terminal operator completes sediment testing.

- Key Bridge demolition work includes an estimated 100,000 cubic yards of dredged material. He clarified that only dredged material will be accepted; concrete, rebar, and asphalt are not. Mixed materials might be better handled at alternative sites, as done previously at Tradepoint Atlantic.
- Inquiries from General Ship Repair and Rukert Marine Terminal have been received regarding future dredging, but no concrete plans are in place yet.

14.0 Comments/Adjourn **David Bibo, MPA**

- Mr. Rivere explained the increasing frequency of container inspections by the USCG and US Customs and Border Patrol at the Port of Baltimore, noting that previously, the USCG did not inspect containers as often. He mentioned a situation where a container seal appeared to be from the USCG but lacked official confirmation. He emphasized the need for communication from the USCG to confirm the seal's authenticity before informing the consignee. Mr. Rivere and Ms. Newkirk plan to meet to resolve this issue.
- Meetings for 2025 will be held on March 12, June 11, September 10 and December 10.