

**South Texas Waterways Advisory Committee**

**Special Meeting Minutes**

**13:30, 10 February 2020**

**Port of Corpus Christi Authority**

**A. Call to order/opening remarks by chairman.** At 13:36 the meeting was called to order at by Chairman Mr. Xavier Valverde.

**B. New Business**

Mr. Xavier Valverde discussed a letter that was submitted to STWAC from the Captain of the Port to identify choke points within the Port and develop a process for communicating situational awareness for vessel movements. A decision was made at the previous STWAC meeting to not make decision without Pilots' input which is why we are having the meeting now. Capt John Williams, in attendance, asked to understand the contents of the letter; Mr. Valverde read letter

Capt John Williams said if communications had happened, the situation on 16 Aug 2018 would have been prevented. He also stated that what one would consider a choke point is dependent on the situation, vessels in area, and location. Capt Williams does do call-outs at several locations to ensure safety and the pilots have done that for many years.

Mr. Russell Cordo said that if radios are not monitored, communication will not happen. CDR Butwid mentioned that the PAWSA identified this being a concern, and he suggested codifying the standards in a document.

Mr. Valverde said the intention in the last STWAC meeting was to decide if STWAC wanted to take this letter on as a Committee, or solve it now. STWAC could appoint the task to a current committee or create an ad hoc committee. The Coast Pilot 5 could also be updated, or STWAC could create an operating document similar to the document that Lonestar Harbor Safety Committee created.

Capt Joe Harrington said it was improper communication that resulted in the 16 Aug 2018 incident, but that the Pilots and brownwater/ barge industry should work out any issues.

Capt John Pasch suggested that all parties discuss, then post so the discussions as a 'lessons learned'.

CDR Butwid said the guidance should be established not just for people who are familiar with Corpus Christi, but for all mariners who visit.

Mr. Cordo said any updates should go in the Coast Pilot and on the HMO's website. CDR Butwid stated that the Coast Pilot is vague.

Mr. Jim Reardon stated that the issue should be between Pilots and brownwater industry, and he questioned what the deliverable is once the choke points are decided.

Capt Williams said the issue should be pushed to one of the standing committees to review.

AET call-in stated that an adhoc committee should be formed. Mr. Valverde thinks the Vessel Movement Cmte would be the most logical choice.

Capt Josh Macklin from Signet stated that if people do not read the Coast Pilot or if they turn their radios down, the Coast Pilot ineffective.

Capt Harrington proposed to form an adhoc cmte. Capt Williams does not think it is necessary because there is no debate because the protocol is already there to talk to each other.

CDR Butwid said that there are nuances about navigating in the port that should be established in a document.

Capt Monaco said even with a playbook, it will not alleviate the communications issue and people not answering on the radio.

Mr. Olson mentions that there is a complacency issue too.

Capt Kevin Miller asked who would write, own, and enforce a potential operating procedures document.

Mr. Valverde said the Lonestar Harbor Safety Committee's documents could be utilized for assistance, but once we start it we will own it as a Committee

Capt Williams said it should start smaller, but questioned who will take all the time to do this.

Adrian asked how brownwater goes to a location that they are unfamiliar with and Jim Reardon replied that they would not send someone to Corpus Christi who has not been there without going with someone who has already been there.

Capt Jim Reardon and Capt Kevin Monaco both think the previous issues are human error, not technical that a written document could solve.

Discussion was had about a VTS and if that would help. Capt Kershaw said it was a mariner that failed to practice good seamanship and that we are trying to write a manual to solve it from happening again.

Capt Harrington filed a motion to form a working group with pilots and brownwater to address both issues. Capt Pasch motioned for a second. Capt Williams and Jim Reardon would like the task to be to consider the request. Mr. Olson says that if there are no consequences for failing to communicate on the radio, then it will continue. Mr. Reardon said there was accountability.

Motion passed at 14:21: Form a working group consisting of Pilots and Brownwater to consider the Coast Guard's request to identify chokepoints within the Port.

Motion passed at 14:22: Form a working group consisting of Pilots and Brownwater to develop a process for communicating situational awareness for vessel movements within the Port.

14:22 Mr. MacDonald began discussion about bunkering within the Port. Mr. Cordo said certain facilities do not allow bunkering at the facility. There have been several situations within the Port

that have had no environmental impact. Mr. Cordo said companies should allow bunkering at the facilities. Capt Williams said if you do not allow the vessel to bunker at the dock then the vessel has to go back on the waterway and bunker somewhere else. Mr. Valverde asked who says no, and if it is specific docks that say no. Mr. Olson said that there is a reason for not allowing bunkering at the docks but they are working on allowing it, and that a singlepoint mooring like at Bolivar Roads in Galveston would be useful.

Mr. MacDonald said it is wasting Pilots hours to move a ship from here to there just to load or bunker. Mr. Wilson stated that there is a limited amount of bunker barges and limited lay berths in this Port. Mr. MacDonald said that in the event that we do have a spill, both dock and the dock owner receive negative publicity and that said we are running out of layberths.

Capt Harrington said it is a liability issue for the terminal but for the Port it is an issue because it is tying up assets.

Mr. MacDonald said it is a safety issue for the Port too. He wants a plan for what should be done.

Mr. Peterson said we can/ should ask Magellan to do bunkers after cargo. But Mr. Cordo said that solution will tie the dock up. There are only three bunker barges in this Port. Valero and Citgo allow bunkering during cargo transfer.

14:44 Meeting adjourned by chairman Xavier Valverde.