

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of The  
New Jersey Maritime Pilot and Docking Commission**

**April 16, 2024**

A hybrid meeting of the New Jersey Maritime Pilot and Docking Pilot Commission was held on Tuesday, April 16, 2024.

Commissioner Dacey called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM.

Open Public Meeting Statement

Roll Call

Commissioner Timothy J. Dacey (via ZOOM); Commissioner Nicholas Fixmer (via ZOOM); Commissioner Dana Martinotti (via ZOOM); Commissioner Bjoern Kils (via ZOOM); Commissioner Charles Wowkanech (absent); Commissioner Brendan Roberts (via ZOOM).

Ms. Stuckey advised that Commissioner Wowkanech sent his apologies for not attending the meeting, he is in Washington, DC on business.

Also included in the meeting were: Andre Stuckey, Executive Director (present); Al Hawkins, Administrative Assistant (present); Captain Timothy Ferrie, President, Sandy Hook Pilots (via ZOOM); Captain Kirk Pinto, President Harbor Pilots (via ZOOM); Captain Jon Miller, President Metro Pilots (present); Dorian Smith, Authorities Unit (via ZOOM), Adam Richardson, President Interport Pilots (present)

Approval of the March 19, 2024 regular meeting minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Roberts and seconded by Commissioner Martinotti to approve the March 19, 2024 meeting minutes.

All voted in favor.

Resolution #24-08 to approve the April, 2024 Treasurers' Report

A motion was made by Commissioner Kils and seconded by Commissioner Martinotti to pass Resolution #24-08 to approve the April, 2024 Treasurers Report.

All voted in favor.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Stuckey welcomed Captain Andrew Beard and his family to the meeting.

- A. Pilot trip log - A copy of the pilot log was sent to the Commission.
- B. Pilot Guard Kick-off - The Pilot Guard program began on April 15<sup>th</sup>. There are 8 pilots participating in the program from the 3 docking pilot associations. An official announcement was published on LinkedIn and in the Maritime reporter. Ms. Stuckey advised that she is excited to see how the program progresses and is planning to meet with all participants after the first 3 months of operation.
- C. Workforce Career Forum - Ms. Stuckey and the Maritime Association's Executive Director Stephen Lyman facilitated a Workforce Development Career Forum on March 27<sup>th</sup> at Fort Wadsworth. Ms. Stuckey thanked all off the pilots that attended and participated in the event. There have been inquiries soliciting dates for the next career forum. The Counsel on Port Performance is putting together a full report of the event that will be forwarded to the Commission once received.
- D. Harbor Ops - Ms. Stuckey reported that she was not able to attend the Harbor Ops meeting as it was on the same day as the Workforce Development Career Forum. She asked Captain's Ferrie and Pinto to report anything of note when they report to the Commission.
- E. Maritime Career Forum - Ms. Stuckey hosted a virtual Maritime Career Forum for the Gateway Chamber of Commerce with representation from each of the pilot associations. Ms. Stuckey thanked all for their participation. The program focused on career opportunities within the industry. There have been requests for similar events, but

Ms. Stuckey does not want to over burden the pilots and will commit to hosting such events once a quarter until the man-power issue has been resolved.

- F. Amtrak Tunnel Project - The first phase of the tunnel project has begun. They have started stabilizing the soil. The work has not had an impact on commercial traffic. Once the cruise ship traffic picks up, Ms. Stuckey will work with the pilots to schedule another visit to the seaside of the site to observe the construction and provide feedback to the contractors.
- G. EDC Maritime Career Fair - The Commissioners was sent a flyer for the EDC Maritime Career Fair. Ms. Stuckey reported that she will attend the event along with a Sandy Hook apprentice who will discuss maritime careers in detail. Ms. Stuckey reported that she is also scheduled to give a brief presentation on the work of the New Jersey Pilot Commission at the event.
- H. Ms. Stuckey reported that she is scheduled to attend a Career Fair at Elizabeth High School on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Stuckey advised that she is excited to attend the career fair because she is an alum of the high school.
- I. Meeting with the New York Commission - The meeting with the New York Commission to discuss the proposed changes to the Sandy Hook Pilots Association's Apprentice Training Program has been delayed due to scheduling conflicts. The meeting is anticipated to take place in May so the Committee can report back to the full Commission and hopefully have a proposal at the May meeting.
- J. Annual Report - The annual report for FY23 has been delayed. Ms. Stuckey is waiting on important submissions for the report. Once received, the annual report will be formatted and forwarded to the Commission for review. Ms. Stuckey hopes to have the report distributed before the Commission's Harbor Inspection Tour in June.
- K. COTP Change of Command Ceremony/Frocking - The Change of Command Ceremony and Frocking of Captain Zeita Merchant will take place on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Ms. Stuckey advised that if any of the Commissioners would like to attend, to email her and she will forward the information for the ceremony.

- L. Move to Gateway II - Ms. Stuckey received the itemized list for the furniture suggested for the Commission to purchase. Ms. Stuckey reported that items in the list will be needed for the new office space. She will circulate a draft FY25 budget that includes \$40,000 to fund the relocation for the Commissioners review.

The Commission's lease will not be renegotiated with New Jersey Transit until the move is completed. The scheduled date of the Commission's move may be postponed because the IT department is still working out the logistics. Ms. Stuckey advised that she will continue to monitor and update the Commission as information is received.

- M. Area Maritime Security Committee Annual Meeting - Commissioner Kils and Ms. Stuckey attended the Area Maritime Security Committee's Annual meeting. During the meeting, outstanding awards were presented. The Coast Guard also announced the proposed dates for Tabletop exercises to take place in 2025. Ms. Stuckey advised that she had a discussion with Captain Merchant about the article published in industry outlets about a power-loss that occurred in the anchorage. An anonymous tug captain gave a misleading interview criticizing the Coast Guard's response during an incident. Ms. Stuckey advised that the Commission is handling the incident as they would any other incidents and is aware that there are some inaccuracies in the article. Captain Merchant suggested that she and Ms. Stuckey meet and discuss the situation further before she leaves office.

Ms. Stuckey and Commissioner Kils had a discussion with Captain Jonathan Andrechik, the next Captain of the Port regarding the illegal recreational and tour boaters in the channel. They also discussed "Operation Clear Channel". Captain Andrechik agreed to meet with the Commission to discuss these issues in further detail. Captain Andrechik would also like to attend one of the Commission's meetings during the beginning of his tour and continue the cooperative working relationship established with the Commission.

- N. Maritime Association Annual Elections - The Commissioners were provided with a notice for the Maritime Association for the port of New York/ New Jersey Annual Elections. The Commission agreed to support former Commissioner Dennis Lombardi as a potential member of the Board of Directors.

- O. Mandatory Ethics Training - Ms. Stuckey reminded the Commissioners that there will be an in-person ethics training immediately following the June 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. She advised that it is very important for any Commissioner that will not be present at that meeting to let her know as soon as possible, so arrangements can be made for them to complete the training with another agencies state officers. Because the in person training will be done in June, the Commission will not be required to complete the online training module in November.
- P. Articles of Interest - The Commission was provided with two articles of interest. Ms. Stuckey highlighted the article that discussed a ship agent fined because a pilot fell off a ladder.

#### Committee Reports

- A. Occurrence Investigation Committee:  
Tabled for Executive Session.

#### Public Comment (s)

Comments from Captain Timothy Ferrie, President, Sandy Hook Pilots Association:

Captain Ferrie reported that the Sandy Hook pilots took part in man overboard drills. The Training went well, and is part of Sandy Hook's safety program.

Captain Ferrie congratulated Captain Rivas on his upgrade and wished him the best of luck in the upcoming year.

Captain Ferrie advised that Mr. Dennis Lombardi would be a great choice for the Maritime Association's Board of Directors.

Captain Ferrie reported that following the boating accident in Baltimore, Beth Rooney of the Port Authority was able to provide contact information to get in touch with bridges at any time. He advised that the Sand Hook Pilots dispatchers were given the phone numbers, and they are being proactive to prevent any issues.

Captain Ferrie reported that the Commission's June 14<sup>th</sup> Industry Cruise will have to be changed to another date because the pilot boat New York will be out of service.

After discussions, the Commission and Captain Ferrie agreed to move their Inspection tour to June 28<sup>th</sup>.

Comments from Captain Jon Miller, President, Metro Pilots Association:

Captain Miller reported that he attended the Harbor Ops meeting and advised that there was nothing of importance to report, it was a follow up meeting about the fixed bridge in the Passaic River.

Ms. Stuckey gave a summary of her experience in providing information on the bridge to Amtrak. She inquired whether the fixed bridge would impact commercial traffic.

Captain Miller reported that he believes that the bridge will not impact any commercial traffic because the bridge is so far up the Passaic River. The only concern is the construction equipment on barges. A solution was offered to bring the equipment in via trucks.

Captain Miller was also contacted by the Port Authority regarding the bridges. He was assured that all of the VTS operators had the numbers to the bridge operators.

Captain Miller reported that since the article was published with the anonymous whistle blower, the port partners have been on edge. However, they continue to work well together.

Captain Miller congratulated Captain Beard and his family for getting through the apprenticeship and wished him a great future.

Comments from Captain Kirk Pinto, President, Harbor Pilots Association:

Captain Pinto reported all is going well with Harbor Pilots.

Captain Pinto reported the bridge strike in Baltimore is a very unfortunate situation and advised that McAllister also has the contact information for the bridges that were given out by the Port Authority.

Captain Pinto reported that the Army Corps of Engineers has begun to clear up the dredging process for Port Jersey channel.

Comments from Captain Adam Richardson, President, Interport Pilots Association:

Captain Richardson reported there are some concerns for the bridges, tugs and barges regarding the fixed bridge. He advised that although it may not affect Interport directly, shutting down the waterway for tugs and barges because of the bridge is something they will not support.

Discussion Re: Change of May meeting date.

After a short discussion, the Commission agreed to move the May meeting from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>.

A motion was made by Commissioner Martinotti and seconded by Commissioner Kils to move the May meeting from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>.

All voted in favor.

Resolution #24-09 to Approve the Issuance of a Docking Pilot License to Captain Andrew Beard

Ms. Stuckey reported that Captain Beard passed his test with very high marks and finished sooner than anticipated.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kils and seconded by Commissioner Fixmer to pass Resolution #24-09 to Approve the Issuance of a Docking Pilot License to Captain Andrew Beard. All voted in favor.

Captain Beard was sworn in by Commissioner Dacey.

Captain Beard thanked Captain Miller, Metro Pilots Association, Ms. Stuckey and his wife for all their support.

Captain Miller reported that Captain Beard is a very impressive, young pilot. He excelled and took full advantage of the opportunity and made it an easy choice for the association.

Resolution #24-10 to Approve the Upgrade of Captain Peter Rooss, Jr. to a Pilot of the Sixth Grade effective May 1, 2024.

Ms. Stuckey advised that this is the first of the resolutions that the Commission will be voting on for the 6 month increase in the first 2 grades for Deputy Pilots.

Ms. Stuckey reported that Captain Rooss is not present at the meeting and is not scheduled for his annual appearance for another 6 months.

A motion was made was made by Commissioner Martinotti and seconded by Commissioner Roberts to pass Resolution #24-10 to Approve the Upgrade of Captain Peter Rooss, Jr. to a Pilot of the Sixth Grade effective May 1, 2024.

All voted in favor.

#### Executive Session

WHEREAS, the open Public Meetings Act provides that a public body such as The New Jersey Maritime Pilot and Docking Pilot Commission may meet in closed session to discuss legal and personnel matters, and

WHEREAS, the Commission desires to meet in closed session to discuss such matters.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Commission shall at this time meet in closed session to discuss such matters the substance of the closed session would be disclosed publicly only if it would not warrant an invasion of privacy or constitute a breach of the attorney client privilege.

A motion was made by Commissioner Fixmer and seconded by Commissioner Roberts that the Commission goes into Executive Session.

All voted in favor.

The Commission went into Executive Session at 10:40 AM.

#### Return to Public Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Roberts and seconded by Commissioner Fixmer that the Commission return to Public Session.

All voted in favor.

The Commission returned to Public Session at 11:19 AM.

Resolution #24-11 to Upgrade Captain Sal Rivas to a Pilot of the Second Grade effective May 1, 2024.

A motion was made by Commissioner Roberts and seconded by Commissioner Martinotti to pass resolution #24-11 to Upgrade Captain Sal Rivas to a Pilot of the Second Grade effective May 1, 2024.

All voted in favor.

#### Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Martinotti and seconded by Commissioner Kils that the meeting be adjourned.

All voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.