

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of The
New Jersey Maritime Pilot and Docking Pilot Commission
December 16,2025**

A hybrid meeting of the New Jersey Maritime Pilot and Docking Pilot Commission was held on December 16,2025.

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

Commissioner Dacey announced that Commissioner Roberts has resigned from the Commission due to health-related issues. The official notification will be forwarded to the Governor's office.

Ms. Stuckey extended apologies on behalf of Commissioner Fixmer, who was unable attend the meeting.

Open Public Meeting Statement

Ms. Andre Stuckey read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement into the record.

Andre Stuckey Read Roll Call

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

Also included in the meeting were: Andre Stuckey, Executive Director, (present); Shahima Hudson, Administrative Assistant (present); Captain Adam Richardson President, Interport Pilots Association (present); Captain Jonathon Miller, Metro Pilots Association (via ZOOM); Captain Russell Henschmann President, Harbor Pilots Association (present), Dorian Smith, Esq Associate Counsel (via ZOOM), Captain Timothy Ferrie, President, Sandy Hook Pilots Association (via ZOOM).

The following Pilots were in attendance for their annual appearance. Captain William Blake (via ZOOM), Captain Coleen Quinn (via ZOOM), Captain Adam Graves (via ZOOM), Captain Russell Henschmann (present).

Approval of November 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Kils; seconded by Commissioner Wowkanech; to approve the November 18, 2025, meeting minutes.

The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution #25-37 to Approve the December 2025 Treasurers Report.

A motion was made by Commissioner Martinotti; seconded by Commissioner Kils; to approve the December 2025 Treasurers Report.

The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Directors Report

Ms. Stuckey reported that the Maritime Pilot Apprentice selection process is underway. A notice for applicants has already been published on the Commission's website, and an advertisement has been sent to Professional Mariner. It will appear in the February issue of the Professional Mariner. The deadline date will be April 15, 2026. However, this year, the interviews will be pushed back a month. Interviews will be in October instead of September.

Ms. Stuckey reported that the pilots were reporting issues to the Commissions office about downloading documents from the Commissions website. After looking into the issue, it was learned that the payment was declined because of the state's new contract with US Bank. Ms. Stuckey was able to get the situation rectified. There is a slight change to the web address. It is now a .net domain instead of a .com domain. Everything else remains the same. Ms. Stuckey sent a notice to the regulated community and the Port Stake holders of the changes.

Ms. Stuckey reported that she attended the November 19th Harbor Ops meeting, which was the last of 2025. There was not much of note to report. The Captain of the Port focused his report mainly on Op Sail 250. Ms. Stuckey will keep the Commissioners updated as information becomes available. The Captain of the Port also announced that he will rotate out of the Port in the summer of 2026. The change of command ceremony normally takes place in the spring. Ms. Stuckey believes that he is waiting until the summer of 2026 because he wants to be here for OpSail 250. Ms. Stuckey is

assuming that Doreen McCarthy, who is the Deputy Captain of the Port, will move up to captain, but there is no word on that yet.

Ms. Stuckey reported that at last month's meeting the Commission discussed hosting a Harbor Inspection Tour in 2026. There was some concern regarding the arrival of the vessels for OpSail 250. She has confirmed with the Captain of the Port that the vessels are not expected to arrive until the last week of June into the first week of July 2026. She informed Captain Ferrie that the Commission would like to have the tour on either June 5th or the 12th. There will be a determination from the Sandy Hook Pilots Association after their annual meeting in January 2026.

Ms. Stuckey reported that the carabiner holder that was initially designed by Commissioner Kils is at the final stage of design. The pilots will have the prototype for review, by the end of January. She will make arrangements for someone to attend the February meeting to give a demonstration of the finalized holder. At that time, she will discuss the possibility of the Commission providing a grant to purchase the holders for all New Jersey Pilots and Apprentices. The New York Commission is doing the same thing for all of their Pilots and Apprentices, which includes the Hudson River and the Long Island Sound.

Ms. Stuckey reported that there was an agenda item for the introduction of Timothy Bonner, the new Chief of Waterways Management. Timothy Bonner had a scheduling conflict but has promised to attend one of the future meetings.

Ms. Stuckey, Kyle Weist and the Presidents of the Sandy Hook Pilots Association traveled to MITAGS and observed a Ladder Training Course and provide feedback. The course has been finalized. The two-day course is a great idea for new Apprentices to attend because they no longer have access to the ladder rigged at High Exposure.

Commissioner Kils attended a course that was given by the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security on vessel familiarization drills and exercises. Commissioner Kils found the course to be worthwhile and asked that the Commissioner's send a letter of support to the Captain of the Port for it to become permanent. Ms. Stuckey asked Commissioner Kils to speak about the course.

Commissioner Kils reported that it was an interesting course designed for federal, state, and local first responders. The program, conducted during ship loading operations, offered a guided vessel walk through to enhance understanding of ship command, authority, response structures, and risks associated with self-deployment. The curriculum addresses critical aspects such as orienting oneself on a ship using decks, holds, and frame numbers, adherence to international standards, access and egress points and communication procedures. It also covers ship markings, including

non - standard signage like green and white triangles indicating exit points. Commissioner Kils believes this hands-on approach significantly enhances safety, situational awareness, and coordination for emergency responders, noting its superiority to a traditional classroom environment. The course is accessible to local personnel and those involved with ships in the port, providing a valuable guided experience through the vessel.

Ms. Stuckey sent the Commissioners copies of a press release announcing the completion of the first pair of tunnel boring machines for the Hudson Tunnel Project. The Gateway Development Commission reported that the funds for the project are still on hold, however, they are optimistic that they will be released in the spring when the work is slated to resume.

Ms. Stuckey sent the Commissioners copies of an announcement regarding changes that are coming to the oversight of mariner credentials. They have implemented a case tracking system that will help them keep track of cases, provide for training, create a policy to ensure the database is up to date, create a policy to aid in the investigation of certain cases, and provide for proper notification of each case. The changes will become active in February 2026.

Ms. Stuckey announced that she attended the 4th quarter Port Users Group Meeting. The focus of the meeting was to give port stakeholders a year in review. Ms. Stuckey sent the Commissioners copies of the presentations so they can read them at their leisure.

Ms. Stuckey announced that she will start her end of the year vacation after the meeting, she will check emails and be available via cell phone daily. She will also come into the office periodically to ensure everything is well.

Pension Surcharge Committee Meeting

Ms. Stuckey reported that the Committee met and went over the status of the surcharge. Based on current numbers the accountant and actuary feel that the surcharge is in good shape and there is no need to make any changes to the rate at this time. They will continue to monitor the numbers and if the need arises there will be a meeting in July 2026 otherwise, the Committee will reconvene in December 2026.

Capital Expense Surcharge Meeting

Ms. Stuckey reported that the Committee met to review the Capital Expense Surcharge. Sandy Hook provided a history of the surcharge and how it fluctuated over the years since its inception. The surcharge is in good shape, and there is no need to adjust it.

Ms. Stuckey reported that the pilots spoke about an interest-bearing account that was introduced by Marad that recently became available to them. It allows organizations to put money in an account towards the building of a future boat. The money would be tax free provided it's used for its intended purpose. They also spoke about a grant they received from FEMA for the purpose of building a new boat. Between the 2 funds, the pilots asked the Committee to vote on whether they could proceed with the building of an inner harbor pilot boat. The Committee voted in the affirmative. It is anticipated that the building of the boat will take approximately 1 year. Commissioner Roberts supported this initiative, which was his final act on behalf of the Commission.

Occurrence Investigation

Ms. Stuckey received a report that a crane operator started moving the crane while the vessel was sitting still waiting to be docked. Ms. Stuckey thought that they had the issue in hand, but she thinks that they need to look at it again. After the new year, she is going to meet with the Presidents of the Docking Pilot Associations and see if they can come up with a plan of action to address the issues.

Public Comment

Comments from Captain Timothy Ferrie, New Jersey Sandy Hook Pilots Association:

Captain Ferrie reported that they attended an OpSail, 250 meeting with Sector New York, at the Coast Guard with representatives from the Navy. Captain Russell Henschmann attended on behalf of Harbor Pilots Association, Captain Scott Esposito attended on behalf of Metro Pilots Association, and Captain John DeCruz, represented Harbor Ops.

Captain Ferrie reported that it was an in-depth meeting that started at nine in the morning and ended around 1400. A lot was

accomplished. The whole agenda was based on where the ships would be anchored and docked.

Captain Ferrie reported that it was the best meeting he attended. They are working together to figure out the timeline for the parade, the international review and how they are going to get the ships to the Dock taking the tides into consideration.

Captain Ferrie reported that it was a very informative meeting, and Captain Andrechik was instrumental in putting the meeting together.

Captain Ferrie reported that the Navy's going to have 55 ships, and they're going to be anchored in the Hudson River from the GW Bridge all the way down to the Narrows.

Captain Ferrie reported that that business remains stable, and it was a good year.

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

Captain Miller reported that Captain Scott Esposito one of his Vice Presidents will be the primary contact for OpSail 250.

Captain Miller reported that he tried to address efficiency in the agenda topics that were submitted for the terminal roundtable meeting. He and Captain Henchmann spoke to Chris Wescott from New York Shipping and invited him to the meeting because he represents the labor workers. They also invited Matt Storace from VTS to attend because he is a critical part of vessel movements and enforcement in the port.

Captain Miller stated that there's no sense in having the meeting without the appropriate people present with a direct effect on situations like crane movements, the lack of line handlers, or behavior of line handlers.

Captain Miller reported that in the past month, he addressed some bunkering issues with larger ships. MSC is starting to consistently bring large ships to PNCT, which is taking up more space, and the old rules are becoming outdated. They are working with the bunker companies and VTS to get everybody on the same page.

Captain Miller reported that they stepped up communications with VTS. They offered to take their staff on a ride along.

Comments from Captain Russel Henschman, President, Harbor Pilots Association:

Captain Henschman reported that he attended the Naval Sector meeting and there is no resolution on contract awarding. The tugboat companies are still waiting for clarification of how it's going to be put together.

Captain Henschman reported that the meeting was beneficial, and they were able to address the Navy's expectations versus what will happen as far as speed and location inside the parade.

Captain Henschman reported that vessels will be anchoring and docking at the Fourth of July Parade. It's going to be an event that is going to require every asset that they have in the Harbor.

Captain Henschman reported that commercial traffic is not being shut down for the fourth.

Captain Henschman reported that Captain Mark Hershey is back from his medical leave, his surgery was very successful. He completed all his familiarization rides.

Captain Henschman reported that Apprentice Matthew Keenan is back from medical leave as well and he will be completing his obligations for McAllister's Apprenticeship.

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

Captain Richardson reported that business is steady, and there is an increase since last year in every port they serve.

Captain Richardson reported that the November annual meeting has been delayed until December, to ensure a majority of their pilots will be available.

Resolution #25-38 To Approve the Hiring of Secretary/
Receptionist

A motion was made by Commissioner Wowkanech; seconded by Commissioner Martinotti; to Approve the Hiring of a Secretary/ Receptionist.

Ms. Stuckey reported that Shahima Hudson has been with the Commission's office for six months on a probationary period. She believes Shahima is going to be a good fit for the Commission.

The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution #25-39 To Approve Personnel Action Taken by the Commission

A motion was made by Commissioner Wowkanech; seconded by Commissioner Kils; To Approve Personnel Action Taken by the Commission.

The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Wowkanech; Seconded by Commissioner Martinotti; that the Commission enter Executive Session.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Stuckey read the following statement into the record:

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 personnel and legal matters, 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.

Whereas, the substance of the closed session will be disclosed publicly only if it would not constitute an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy.

The Commission entered Executive Session at 10:34 am.

The motion passed unanimously.

Return to Public Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Martinotti; seconded by Commissioner Kils; that the Commission return to Public Session.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission returned to Public Session at 11:01 am.

Adjournment

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

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:02 am.