

BOARD OF COMMISSONERS OF PILOTS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
Minutes of the Meeting of 5 March 2024

The following Commissioners were present:

James Mercante, President
Lucienne Bulow
Richard Hendrick
Joseph Ahlstrom
William Rowland
Jeffrey Loechner

UPON MOTION DULY MADE, SECONDED AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED UPON, (EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE MINUTED) IN A PUBLIC MEETING, WHICH CONVENED AT 10:30 A.M., THE BOARD CONDUCTED THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS:

1. The President called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.
2. Appearances in Public Session: None.
3. The Draft Minutes of the 27 February 2024 Board Meeting were reviewed, amended, and approved.
4. Adjournment to Executive Session for personnel, legal advice of counsel, medical, and/or official investigative matters, as necessary:

Pilot sick leave/other leave.

5. Return to Public Session from Executive Session.
6. Renewed, for a period of one year (unless otherwise noted), the following New York State pilot license(s) following a personal interview and review of work performance data, training, and medical/health records:

Clinton Walker (FBLIS/BISP)
Wyatt Smith (FBSHP)

7. Other Pilot/Personnel Matters: At today's meeting, the Board continued to review Captain Thomas Sullivan's letter regarding his license renewal appearance on 30 January 2024.
8. Sandy Hook Pilots Association:
 - 8a. Proposed Pilotage Fee Legislation: The Board reviewed and drafted a response to an email from the New York State Assembly requesting information. Continued on the docket.
 - 8b. Apprentice Selection: At the 8 November 2022 meeting, the Board discussed the apprentice candidate selection process used by various pilot associations. At the 23 January 2024 meeting, the Board approved an ad to be published in gCaptain for the 2024 Apprentice selection. At the 30 January 2024 and 6 February 2024 meetings, the Board reviewed the draft 2024 Apprentice Application. At the 13 February 2024 meeting, the Board was briefed on the 9 February 2024 Apprentice Selection Committee Meeting attended by Executive Director Garger. At the 20 February 2024 meeting, the Board was advised that the Apprentice Application has been finalized. Continued on the docket.
 - 8c. The Board was advised that a donation was made to the Sandy Hook Pilots Charitable Foundation in memory of retired Sandy Hook Pilot Captain Howard Hill.
 - 8d. At the 12 December 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the continuing education curriculum at MITAGS for 2024 pilot training courses. At the 16 January 2024 meeting, Commissioner Mercante briefed the Board on the 10 January 2024 meeting with the APA and SHPA regarding the curriculum. At the 30 January 2024 meeting, the Board discussed Board Opinions and Orders that will be addressed in the training courses. Continued on the docket.

8e. At the 26 December 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed the Apprentice Training Program Proposal prepared by the SHPA. Continued on the docket.

8f. Mandatory reduction in pilot grade for pilots that reach 68 years of age: At the 19 December 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed the New Jersey Regulations addressing reduction in grade. Continued on the docket.

8g. At the 19 September 2023 meeting, the Board discussed preparation of additional questions for the state licensing exam. Continued on the docket.

8h. At the 27 June 2023 meeting, the Board approved changes to the SHPA's Deputy Pilot grade structure as proposed and set forth by the SHPA NY President Captain James Mahlmann in his 26 June 2023 letter to the Board. At the 5 July 2023 meeting, the Board finalized a letter advising the SHPA of its approval. Continued on the docket.

8i. The Board has reviewed correspondence from the SHPA regarding the proposed North Atlantic Right Whale Seasonal Speed Zones regulations. At the 8 November 2022 meeting, the Board noted comments submitted by the SHPA regarding the regulations. At the 28 March 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the Seasonal Speed Zone Regulations with NYSHPA President Captain James Mahlmann. At the 26 December 2023 meeting, Commissioner Hendrick updated the Board regarding proposed legislation addressing the regulations. Continued on the docket.

8j. The Board was advised that the SHPA implemented a shipboard pilot ladder training program for apprentices and pilots at a climbing facility in Northvale, New Jersey. The minutes of the 15 March 2022 meeting on this issue are incorporated herein by reference. Continued on the docket.

8k. State Licensed Pilot Security Training and Communications/FEMA Port Security Grants: The 2020 Port Security Grant (PSG) awarded to the Board by FEMA supported a pilot security training and communications course at the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS). Training was completed in Spring of 2023. The 2021 Port Security Grant awarded to the Board was used to fund CCTV cameras for the SHPA's new Pilot Boat NEW YORK. The Minutes of the 7 February 2023 meeting and 5 July 2023 meeting on these issues are incorporated herein by reference. Continued on the docket.

8l. The SHPA's Apprentice Assessment forms have been reviewed and discussed by the Board. Continued on the docket.

9. Hudson River Pilots Association:

9a. At the 31 October 2023 meeting, the HRPA members met with the Board to discuss various Hudson River pilotage issues.

At the 13 February 2024 meeting, the HRPA membership, NYSHPA President Captain James Mahlmann and NJSHPA President Tim Ferrie met with the Board to discuss pilotage rates. At the 20 February 2024 meeting, the Board reviewed the HRPA's request to amend docking fees and the pension surcharge. At the 27 February 2024 meeting and today's meeting, the Board was updated regarding these requests. Continued on the docket.

9b. Champlain Hudson Power Express Project (CHPE): At the 5 December 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed information provided by HRPA President Captain Ian Corcoran. At the 30 January 2024 meeting and today's meeting, Commissioner Hendrick updated the Board on additional information received from Captain Corcoran. Continued on the docket.

9c. At the 14 March 2023 meeting and 2 May 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the status of Hudson River dredging by the Army Corps of Engineers. At the 30 May 2023 meeting, the Board was updated on Hudson River dredging by HRPA President Captain Corcoran. At the 12 December 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed additional information provided by Captain Corcoran. Continued on the docket.

9d. Following the formation of the Hudson River Safety and Navigation Operations Committee (HR Committee) to address issues raised in the Port and Waterways Safety Assessment study of the Hudson River, the Board has been regularly briefed by Commissioner Hendrick on the HR Committees activities, including its review of legislation regarding the establishment of anchorages on the Hudson River. At the 12 January 2021 meeting, the Board was advised that the United States Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2020 was passed by Congress and contained provisions that address the establishment of anchorages on the Hudson River and circumstances when vessels can be anchored outside established anchorage grounds. At the 2 May 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the issuance of the Coast Guard report on Hudson River anchorages. At the 30 May 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the status of the establishment of Hudson River anchorages with Captain Corcoran. At the 21 November 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed US Coast Guard MSIB 2023-03 dated 8 November 2023 regarding Hudson River anchorages. At the 5 December 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed additional information provided by Captain Corcoran. Continued on the docket.

10. Long Island Sound/Block Island Sound Pilotage:

10a. At the 20 February 2024 meeting, the Board reviewed correspondence from the Northeast Marine Pilots regarding proposed docking restrictions at New Haven Terminal. At the 27 February 2024 meeting, the Board reviewed additional correspondence received from NMPA. Continued on the docket.

10b. The Board noted an article regarding the award of two offshore wind projects by New York State.

10c. At the 13 February 2024 meeting, the Board reviewed a Coast Guard MSIB regarding federal pilotage requirements in Sector Long Island Sound waters. Continued on the docket.

10d. At the 30 January 2024 meeting, the Board discussed a proposal by the NMPA concerning pilotage trips to Connecticut ports. At the 6 February 2024 meeting, the Board continued to discuss the proposal. Continued on the docket.

10e. At the request of the NMPA, the Board filed proposed rate changes with the NY Department of State in January 2023. At the 16 May 2023 meeting, the Board was advised that the new Pilotage rates went into effect on 10 May 2023.

10f. Pilotage Requirements for offshore wind project vessels: The Board has reviewed and responded to several inquiries regarding New York State pilotage requirements for vessels operating in Long Island Sound and Block Island Sound. At the 14 February 2023 meeting, the Board approved a letter to DEME regarding the operation of the vessel LIVING STONE. At the 11 April 2023 and 18 April 2023 meeting, the Board discussed a request received from vessel operator Boskalis regarding pilotage requirements and discussed the request with Northeast Marine Pilots Association President Captain Richard Astles at the 2 May 2023 meeting. At the 9 May 2023 meeting, the Board was updated on the Rhode Island Pilot Commission's discussions regarding Boskalis' request. The minutes of the 25 January 2022 and 24 October 2023 Board Meeting are incorporated herein by reference. Continued on the docket.

10g. On 21 June 2023, Captain Elisa Garrity assumed command of Coast Guard Sector LIS.

10h. The Board has discussed correspondence from the Northeast Marine Pilots Association regarding the proposed North Atlantic Right Whale Seasonal Speed Zones regulations. At the 1 November 2022 meeting, the Board noted the response to the NMPA's request for comments regarding the proposed rule. At the 26 December 2023 meeting, Commissioner Hendrick updated the Board regarding proposed legislation addressing the regulations. Continued on the docket.

10i. At the 5 July 2023 and subsequent meetings, the Board discussed documentation for LIS/BIS license renewals. Continued on the docket.

11. The New York State pilot associations utilize Pilot Boarding Deficiency Report forms when a deficiency is found. The following reports from the previous three months have been provided to and reviewed by the Board (prior reports on file):

M/V THOR INTEGRITY (Singapore Registered Bulk Carrier, Built 2001) 6 January 2024: New York SHP Matthew Haley reported that a combination ladder should have been used due to excessive freeboard but was not due to frozen pneumatic lines on the vessel.

M/V GRANDE ABIDJAN (Italian Registered Ro-Ro/Container Ship, Built 2015) 18 January 2024: New York SHP Matthew Haley reported that there was no watch officer at the pilot ladder while boarding. A Pilot Boarding Deficiency Report was submitted for this ship for the same issue on 7 November 2023.

M/V SAKURA BELLE (Panamanian Registered Tanker, Built 2011) 13 February 2024: New York SHP Matthew Haley reported an improperly secured pilot ladder and damage to the ladder when the pilot boat pinched the bottom step.

12. REPORT(S) OF MARINE ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS UNDER INVESTIGATION:

12a. M/V PORTO LEONE (Panamanian Registered Bulk Carrier, Built 2014): 10 September 2023. While under the conn of FBHRP Samuel Zapadinsky southbound in the Hudson River off of the Tri-City Yacht Club, the M/V PORTO LEONE received a call from the yacht club claiming that a wave hit their dock. The ship's Captain, chief mate, and Captain Zapadinsky investigated by observing the docks from the bridge wing of the vessel and saw no damage. At subsequent meetings, the Board continued to review the incident. At today's meeting, the Board reviewed and discussed the Tri-City Yacht Club survey. Continued on the docket.

12b. M/V EAGLE TURIN (Singapore Registered Tanker, Built 2008): 5 August 2020. This incident involves the tragic fatality of FBSHP Timothy Murray resulting from a fall off a pilot ladder and onto the Pilot Launch AMERICA while boarding the M/V EAGLE TURIN at approximately 2230 upon its arrival at Ambrose Pilot Station. The P/L AMERICA then immediately proceeded back to the Pilot Boat NEW JERSEY (a three-minute transit) to pick up medical supplies, a stokes litter, and crew with paramedic training before departing for Staten Island. The U.S. Coast Guard, New York City Fire Department, and New York City Police Department were all notified. Crew personnel administered CPR and used the AED unit while proceeding to Staten Island. New York City Police Department Personnel were waiting at the Sandy Hook Pilot Base where Captain Murray was transferred to an ambulance and taken to Staten Island University Hospital.

After the incident, the EAGLE TURIN proceeded to anchor at the direction of the U.S. Coast Guard. On the morning of 6 August 2020, FBSHP Kevin Walsh piloted the vessel to Stapleton Anchorage where a further investigation ensued with the U.S. Coast Guard, SHPA, and Executive Director Garger. The Board was designated as a Party in Interest by the U.S. Coast Guard. At the 10 January 2023 meeting, the Board was updated on the status of ongoing litigation against the vessel owner arising out of the incident. At the 17 January 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed the Third-Party Complaint filed by the vessel owner against the SHPA. At the 21 March 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed the SHPA's Answer to the Third-Party Complaint. At the 9 May 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the Coast Guard's Report of Investigation. At the 23 May 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the status of the litigation. At the 5 July 2023 and subsequent meetings, the Board discussed the Subpoenas served on the Board. At the 3 October 2023 meeting, the Board noted the Confidentiality Order entered by the Court. At subsequent meetings, the Board has been updated on the status of discovery. Continued on the docket.

13. NEW YORK PILOTAGE WATER ISSUES:

13a. The Board has previously reviewed cruise ship pier allisions in the Port of New York/New Jersey and elsewhere. The Board has also reviewed 46 U.S.C. Section 8501 regarding the coordination of federal and state law requirements with respect to pilotage of cruise ships when the master docks the vessel and has noted incidents in Alaska where cruise ships were docked by the ship's master with a compulsory state pilot aboard. In light of the foregoing, the Board recommended that the SHPA work with cruise lines calling at the Port of New York to develop a joint training program that would improve communications between state licensed pilots and cruise ship masters. At the 28 March 2023 meeting, the Board discussed cruise ship dockings with NYSHPA President Captain James Mahlmann. Continued on the docket.

13b. The Board has previously advised the Army Corps of Engineers New York District (ACOE) of its concerns with the lack of visibility of large, unlit mooring buoys, especially during periods of darkness, located within certain designated federal anchorages in New York Harbor. Continued on the docket.

14. In view of several ship pilot ladder boarding accidents involving both New York and New Jersey State Pilots in the Port of New York, the Board of Commissioners formed a special Pilot Transfer Subcommittee. The Subcommittee consists of the Board President (Mercante), Executive Director (Garger), and members of the Board (Ahlstrom and Rowland). At the 22 February 2022 meeting, the Board reviewed the revised International Chamber of Shipping Industry Guidance on Pilot Transfer Arrangements. The New Jersey Maritime Pilot and Docking Commission also formed a Pilot Safety Committee to evaluate pilot transfer arrangements and issued its report on 6 November 2020. The minutes of the 21 December 2021 Board Meeting are incorporated herein by reference. At the 15 November 2022 meeting, the Board was advised that the IMO Safety Committee will open the SOLAS Convention for amendment with respect to pilot boarding arrangements. At the 17 January 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed the notice issued by the UK Maritime Pilots Association regarding a recent pilot fatality. At the 9 May 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the Coast Guard's Reports of Investigation for the EAGLE TURIN and the MAERSK Kensington. At the 16 May 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the article regarding the 5 May 2023 Japanese pilot fatality. At the 6 June 2023 meeting, the Board reviewed article regarding the conviction of ship operator and master after a pilot ladder fall injury in Perth Australia in August 2022. At the 20 June 2023 meeting, the Board discussed NY SHP President Captain James Mahlmann's attendance at the Maritime Pilots Institute in Covington, LA. Continued on the docket.

15. At the 4 April 2023 meeting, the Board was advised that legislation regarding New York State Commissions was signed by Governor Hochul. At the 5 September 2023 meeting the Board received an update on the legislation by Andy Roffe of Robinson and Cole. Continued on the docket.

16. Marine Society of the City of New York 25 March 2024 Dinner: The Board reviewed a draft ad for the dinner journal. Continued on the docket.

17. The Board was advised that the U.S. Coast Guard Sector New York Change of Command Ceremony will be held on 22 April 2024. Continued on the docket.

18. At the 4 April 2023 meeting, the Board noted the proposed legislation reintroduced in the New York State Legislature (S 5424 and A 3380) that provides for the revocation of a person's driver's license after a conviction for operating a vessel while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Continued on the docket.

19. There being no further business to conduct, or public comment, the Board meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.



Andrew Garger
Secretary