

Minutes of the Lower Coastal Commission of Pilotage Meeting

January 12, 2021

Charleston Branch Pilots Association Office

6 Concord Street

Charleston, South Carolina 29401

\*\*\*Meeting was conducted by Conference Call\*\*\*

Board Members Present:

Mr. Henry Hay III (Chairman)

Mr. David Galloway

Ms. Amy Riley

Mr. Joel Britt

Capt. Chris Thornton

Excused Absences were noted for:

Mr. Darrell Johnson

Mr. Kenney Riley

Staff and Others Present:

Capt. John Cameron, Pilot Commission Consultant

Capt. Whit Smith, Charleston Pilots Assoc.

Ms. Elizabeth Hills, Charleston Pilot Assoc.

Ms. Laura Smith, LLR

Mr. Hardwick Stuart, LLR Advice Counsel

Lt. Chad Ray, USCG

Ms. Owen Gregory, Secretary

The Commissioners of Pilotage for the Port of Charleston met Tuesday January 12, 2021 by conference call. Whereas, proper notice of date, time, place and agenda information having been properly provided to the Charleston Post and Courier and proper notice also having been posted on the LLR website/Pilotage 24 hours prior to the time scheduled for the meeting and a quorum having been noted as present, Chairman Hay called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. All votes referenced herein were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Chairman Hay asked the Commission to approve the agenda. **Motion:** Commissioner Riley moved to approve the agenda and Commissioner Thornton seconded. **The motion passed.** Chairman Hay asked the members to read and review the draft of minutes taken during the December 8, 2020 meeting and the November Financial Report. **Motion:** Commissioner Riley moved to accept the minutes and Commissioner Thornton seconded. **The motion passed.**

Under old business, Lt. Ray reported on behalf of the Coast Guard. Coast Guard Willow suffered a marine casualty in transit to Charleston. She was unable to complete her scheduled ATON movements in the entrance channel and harbor at Charleston. Coast Guard cutter Maria Bray is being dispatched from Jacksonville the week of January 19th to assist with the ATON movements. The dead ship move for the M/V Coastal Venture is scheduled for the 13th of January transiting the entrance channel from 16-1800. Vessel will be berthing at Pier K. A Pilot will not be on board. Lt. Ray reported on a vessel, MSC Jessinia R, that had COVID-19 implications. The MSC Jessinia R was en route from Johannesburg to New York, the 3rd engineer passed away and the body was offloaded in New York. The examination showed he was positive for COVID. The crew was then tested, and four tested positive. Their route was altered, and they anchored off the coast of Virginia. MSC Management is in touch with COTP zones along the east coast, and is working on their next move. Crew changes, sanitization and health care are all part of the consideration.

Commissioner Galloway reported that Channel 13 Recording is up and running. Recorded files have been listened to and all appears to be in good working order.

Capt. Cameron advised that there is nothing new to report on the Savannah River Commission.

Ms. Smith reported for LLR. Ms. Smith reported that all Pilot physicals are up to date. Capt. Stuhr and Capt. Stewart have physicals due by January 31, 2021. Capt. Lucas' physical has not been received by LLR. COVID extensions are still in place.

Capt. Cameron reported that S.689 was introduced two legislative sessions ago. The concern is the wording that license persons who have completed apprenticeships in other states and are licensed can automatically be licensed in South Carolina. The Pilots are asking for an exemption for licenses issued under Title 54. Laura reported that it had been pre-filed on December 9, 2020 and was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs on January 12, 2021. It was supposed to have been introduced and read on January 12, 2021.

Capt. Cameron reported on Pilot/Ladder Safety. Capt. Cameron informed the Commission that the Pilots have filed reports with the Coast Guard at a rate of about one every other week. The APA and the Coast Guard are discussing to what extent International Maritime Organization (IMO) resolutions are enforceable. The Pilots policy is to continue to report issues the same way they are now. Capt. Cameron reported that the prevention department of the Coast Guard has been very helpful and accommodating.

Capt. Cameron reported that Covid-19 precautions continue as noted previously. On January 11, at 7:30 AM Wick Stewart confirmed the authorization for Pilots and direct employees to be grouped in Group 1A and to receive their first dose of the vaccine (41 people total). All the pilots plan to be vaccinated. Of the employees, 5 have said they will abstain. This should cause no operational issues. At the time of this meeting, 25 of 37 people had received their first dose of the vaccine.

Capt. Cameron updated the Commission on the new licenses and reissue new licenses for all pilots to include the new wording of the Lower Coastal Area and Charleston Harbor versus just Charleston Harbor. LLR issuing ID cards was discussed for issue to all pilots. Commissioner Thornton made the motion for all pilots to be issued new LLR ID cards and for licenses to include the new wording. Commissioner Galloway seconded. The motion passed. Under New Business, Capt. Cameron reported on the Annual Report. He supplied the Commissioners with a five year summary of Pilot activity. The numbers are down over 300 moves from 2019 to 2020, which dropped the moves per pilot from 248(2019) to 231 (2020), not exceeding the 300 move per pilot yearly maximum. Currently, there are 21 working Pilots.

Pilots are reregistered annually. Three new Pilots were added to the list, including the same Pilots from last year. The new Pilots being registered included Capt. Kratz, Capt. Ward and Capt. Rowe as being registered as Short Branch Pilots. Three Pilots advanced to Full Branch Pilots, they include Capt. Cisco, Capt. Campsen and Capt. Teale. And, one Pilot was registered for Port Royal in the Savannah River (SC side). Commissioner Riley made the motion to approve the registration of the Pilots for 2021. Commissioner Galloway seconded. The motion passed.

Capt. Cameron reported that Capt. Steve Kicklighter of McAllister Towing submitted a letter reporting that Steven J. Kicklighter (Josh) has extended his limitations of a qualified docking master up to 38ft. of draft and 1,150 ft. of length. Capt. Thornton moved to accept the notification. Commissioner Riley seconded. The motion passed.

Commissioner Thornton notified the Commission that a vessel proceeded inbound without a Pilot onboard. The vessel was flying a Chinese flag. There apparently was a miscommunication or lack of communication; the Coast Guard is looking into it further. The Pilot was able to board the vessel in Fort Sumter range, approximately a mile and a half outside of the jetties. The Pilot was on his way out to board the vessel on time, the issue was not the Pilot being late for boarding.

There were no legal comments.

There were no public comments.

Under Announcements:

Chairman Hay thanked the Commission, LLR and all those with the committee as it was his last meeting as Chairman of the Commission. Chairman Hay announced that the position would be turned over to Commissioner Amy Riley.

There being no further business to bring before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry Hay III  
Chairman

A.Owen Gregory  
Secretary