

Waterways Association of Pittsburgh Newsletter

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April 2015

www.wapgh.org

April Highlights

A total of (thirty-five) 35 members were registered for the April 8, 2015 luncheon meeting at Chartiers Country Club. Dan Lacek was unable to attend the meeting. Eunice Ratcliff, WAP Vice-President, introduced first-time attendee Michael Shema of CEC, Inc.

Coast Guard News

CDR Lindsay Weaver covered the **attached** report. She also noted that their Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was well attended and thanked everyone for their participation. The availability of the Fiscal Year 2015 Port Security Grant Program Funding has been announced. Submission details will be highlighted at the upcoming April 21st Area Maritime Security Committee meeting.

LT Arianna Mohnke covered the bridge report and several other items on the **attached** report. An additional note: On April 24 - May 1st, a Safety Zone will be set up at mile marker 33.7 on the Ohio River. Closure will be from 7 a.m. - 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. daily. Commercial traffic will be permitted between 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Communication channels 13 and 16 will be utilized to convey any updates.

Army Corp of Engineers

John Dilla covered the **attached** report.

National Weather Service

Joe Palko covered the **attached** report.

Port of Pittsburgh Commission Report

Mary Ann Bucci covered the following information:

- There are still available funds for the FY14-15 CMAQ Program and an additional \$4 million that will be available for projects beginning on October 1, 2016. However, the full report must be submitted this Friday regarding funding usage. All industry members that may be interested should submit an application as soon as possible with a tentative time frame for work to be completed. Otherwise, the unused funds will be released. Contact Mary Ann Bucci directly with any questions.
- Special thanks to all those that showed support to the JD's family during their time of loss. All the correspondence was forwarded to the family.

Education Committee Report

Michael Graham was unable to attend the luncheon. Eunice reminded everyone that the spring "Who Works the Rivers" program will be held on April 16, 2015. It will host the Consortium for Public Education and the TFIM (the future is mine) group and total number of students is currently around 100. There is still opportunities for industry members to participate in this program.

As the program continues to grow, the Education Committee is seeking sponsorships to cover costs such as food and beverages that are provided aboard the Gateway Clipper. The Waterways Association thanks the Gateway Clipper Fleet for their continued sponsorship of the vessel for these programs.

Navigation Committee Report

Eunice Ratcliff provided the following report:

- Work on the Monongahela River (Maxwell Lock & Dam and Elizabeth) is not expected to cause any delays in navigation.
- A Memorandum of Agreement between the Waterways Association of Pittsburgh and the Huntington District Waterways Association has been executed. This document covers the development history of the Joint Marine Incident Summits and describes the purpose of such a meeting. These meetings provide an academic setting to discuss marine incidents.
- Priority Lockage Criteria will be sent out to the membership to explain this procedure.
- There is some outdated data in the Corp Chart Book regarding the Port Perry Bridge Pool should be 11 feet not 9 feet. Also, a vertical height is needed at center span on the Wheeling Suspension Bridge.

Legislative Committee Report

Richard Kreider provided the following report:

- We had a strong Association presence with 8 Members making the annual DC trip and I was once again encouraged as we found the majority of the members and staffers engaged and educated on the river issues. Some of the key points we stressed included:
- We stressed the need for funding to modernize the IW transportation system in FY2016. With the new revenue generated by the 9 cents a gallon fee the IWTF is expected to generate approx. \$360 million during FY16. The Administration's budget only reflects \$234 million for lock and dam modernization thus we are asking for a minimum of \$130 million increase which is consistent with progress made via WRDA2014, December's CROMMIBUS and the recent ABLE Act.
- We ask for Congress to continue or increase FY15 funding for the Corps O&M to clear the large backlog of unfunded or underfunded projects. We believe the Administration's \$2.7 billion FY16 budget is short by at least \$300 million and urged Members to increase funding to \$3.0 billion.
- We also ask Members to oppose the Administration's attempt to impose a user fee based on lockages. This effort has been repeatedly rejected

by Congress and needs to be rejected again as it is not equitable and unnecessary given the recent increase in funding via the 9 cent a gallon increase to the current user fee.

- The last point we stressed was to urge Members to remain vigilant re attacks on the Jones Act.
- AWO Barge In Visits - 4/15/15 - I should have a fresh update for our next luncheon as I will be participating in AWO's Barge In event next week. The Barge-In is very similar to the WCI event and will give us another chance to cover the Hill and stress our most critical issues to the Members. I will be leading a group targeted to hit as many Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio Members as possible.
- Congress is out of session until next week. FY 2015 appropriations work concluded prior to the current recess with the enactment of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill. Congress will be busy when the return as the will be commencing the FY '16 appropriations process, and will also need to address reauthorization of the highway program and will be working to extend the debt limit in the coming months.
- With the FY '16 appropriations process underway, we are working with WCI to urge that funding levels in the President's FY2016 budget request for navigation be increased to their most efficient levels. The President's budget proposed \$4.732 billion for the Corps of Engineers' Civil Works program which is a 13.25% cut from the \$5.454 billion FY'15 appropriation. Our areas of focus are on increasing the Construction account (down 28.5% form FY15), increasing the O&M funding by \$198.5 million to match the level Congress appropriated for the current fiscal year and to provide funds for Preliminary Engineering and Design (PED) for the Navigation Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP), authorized in WRDA 2007.

The budget did include \$180 million for the Olmsted Lock and Dam Project and \$52 million for the Lower Mon, with both to be cost-shared from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund. While this is encouraging, the Administration's request for IWTF projects is still more than \$100 million below what could be supported by revenues going into the Trust Fund.

To recap, our four specific requests to Congress for FY '16 appropriations are:

- Appropriate and, if possible, increase the Corps of Engineers' Operations & Maintenance (O&M) account funding level of \$2,908,500,000 that was provided in FY 2015 to \$3,000,000,000 in FY 2016 for the operations and maintenance activities of the Corps including those affecting inland and coastal navigation throughout the nation.
- Appropriate a level of construction funding for the Corps to ensure that the IWTF funds for the inland waterway modernization, replacement, rehabilitation, & expansion projects are maintained at the highest level (\$360 million) that can be supported by the

inland waterway diesel tax revenues expected to be received for FY 2016 by Treasury for the IWTF.

- Provide a total of \$10 million in FY 2016 from the Investigations account of the Corps of Engineers to continue pre-construction engineering and design (PED) for the Navigation & Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) as authorized in title VIII of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007.
- Support the "Hit the HMTF Target" campaign funding request of \$1.25 billion. We are seeing some progress on this request as Congressman Charles Boustany, Jr. (R-LA) and Congresswoman Janice Hahn (D-CA) spearheaded a March 17 "Dear Colleague" letter to House Appropriations Committee and to House Energy & Water Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, urging full use of Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) funds for FY '16 as outlined in WRRDA 2014. The letter was signed by 86 House Members.

Again, I hope to have additional updates regarding our progress after I return from our meetings next week in DC.

Other Comments

No other comments were made.

May Membership Meeting

The **next** membership meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2015 at Chartiers Country Club. Cost of the luncheon will be \$25. Registration will begin at 11:45 a.m. Please call, email or fax the response form below by Thursday, May 7, 2015 if you plan on attending the luncheon meeting.

**Waterways Association of Pittsburgh
Meeting Response Form**

Chartiers Country Club

May 13, 2015

Menu:

Fresh Fruit Cup w/Honey Cream

Chartiers Chicken/lightly breaded and stuffed w/herbed Boursin-style cheese

Rice Pilaf

Blueberry Pie w/vanilla ice cream

Cost: *\$25/per member*

_____ YES, I will be attending

_____ No, I will not be attending

****Special Dietary Requirements:** _____

NAME: _____
(Please print)

COMPANY: _____

Please respond **by Thursday, May 7, 2015** to:

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