

Minutes of Pilot Commission Port Freeport October 12, 2017

A Meeting of the Pilot Commission of Port Freeport was held October 12, 2017, beginning at 2:33 PM at the Port Freeport Administration Building, 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, Texas.

Commissioners present:

Mr. Paul Kresta, Chairman
Mr. John Hoss, Vice Chairman
Mr. Shane Pirtle, Secretary/Treasurer
Mr. Rudy Santos, Commissioner
Mr. Bill Terry, Commissioner
Mr. Ravi Singhanian, Commissioner

Staff Members present:

Mr. Jason Cordoba, Legal Counsel
Ms. Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO
Mr. Al Durel, Director of Operations
Mr. Jason Hull, Director of Engineering
Ms. Missy Bevers, Executive Assistant
Ms. Mary Campus, Controller
Mr. Brandon Robertson, Network Systems Manager
Mr. Cecil Booth, Project Engineer

Also present:

Captain Daniel Blanton, Brazos Pilots Association
Captain James Teeter, Brazos Pilots Association
Captain Billy Burns, Brazos Pilots Association
Mr. Chris Noble, Dole Fresh Fruit
Ms. Sarah Marsh, Dole Fresh Fruit
Mr. Bob Arroyave, Brown & Gay Engineer
Mr. Bobby Fuller, Texas Port Ministry
Ms. Citlalli Martinez, WGMA
Ms. Ann Poninski, P66

1. CONVENE OPEN SESSION in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:
2. Approval of transcription minutes from the Special Meeting held August 24, 2017.

A motion was made by Commissioner Pirtle to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Singhanian with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

3. Discuss and consider approval of Correction to Final Order on Application for Pilotage Rate Increase correcting dates of future rate increases from September 1, 2018 and September 1, 2019 to September 3, 2018 and September 3, 2019.

Mr. Cordoba explained the order before the Board only corrects the dates. When the order was approved August 24, the first rate increase could not take effect until September 3. Mr. Cordoba further stated that all other provisions of the order remain in force and effect, and all the Board is approving today is changing the dates from September 1 to September 3 for the two future rate increases.

A motion was made by Commissioner Singhanian to approve the correction to the Final Order. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Santos with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

4. Update from the Brazos Pilots regarding purchase of pilot boat, year-to-date vessel traffic and Hurricane Harvey.

Captain Blanton stated that the Brazos Pilots Association (BPA) signed paperwork with the bank September 25 for the pilot boat. BPA did negotiate an additional half percentage off both loans changing the rates to 6.53% and 6.25%. BPA is in the production cue for the pilot boat. Production time is estimated to take 12 months, plus or minus two. Vessel traffic as of September is at 670 ships which is 70 more than the previous year. The Hurricane Harvey traffic is caught up. The operating depth of the Freeport Channel is at 39 feet now. They will do 40 feet with a plus 1 foot tide; anything over needs a waiver. BPA continues to try to get information from the Corps surveys. The last survey was posted September 17 still showing significant sections of the channel at 40 feet. A new survey will be done this week but will not be published for another week. BPA needs to get better numbers from the Corps before going back to 42. From an operational standpoint, the Pilots were down for about 3-4 days for the initial wind and rain event. The Pilots worked continuously with the Coast Guard and participated on all PTC calls. The Freeport Channel was one of the first to reopen after the storm. Ms. Saathoff expressed her appreciation and partnership with the Pilots during events such as Hurricane Harvey.

Commissioner Hoss inquired about the lighting project. Captain Blanton stated the only lights done were in the Phillips Bend with the radar tower being lit. No lighting on the Dow side have been done and the lights at Seaway haven't been commissioned on a regular basis due to dredging.

5. Adjourn.

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 2:49 p.m.