



CONNECTICUT
Port Authority

Connecticut Pilot Commission Public Meeting

Tuesday, May 6, 2025
9:00am

Location:
CT Port Authority Office
455 Boston Post Road, Suite 204
Old Saybrook, CT 06475

DRAFT MINUTES

CPC Members in Attendance: Chair Bill Gash; Vice-Chair Mike Eisele; Dave Pohorylo; Joe Maco; Paul Liistro; Kyle Butler

CPC Members Absent: Wynne Bohannon; Chris Clark; Paul Whitescarver

CPA Staff: Michael O'Connor; Fayola Haynes; Jill Dowling-Moreno

Public: Richard Astles; Chris Murray; Arnold Skretta; Adam Richardson; DJ Toby; Matthew Butcka; Patrick Kennedy Sr.

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Bill Gash called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

2. **Approval of the April 1, 2025 meeting minutes**

Motion by Mike Eisele, seconded by Paul Liistro. So VOTED, with NO opposed and abstentions by Dave Pohorylo and Bill Gash.

3. **Public Comment – Public participation related to Agenda topics (limit to 5 minutes per person/topic)**

None

4. **U.S. Coast Guard Update**

Not in attendance

5. **CPA Executive Director Report**

Michael O'Connor provided updates including dredging in New Haven Harbor, a new Designee for the City of New Haven on the Connecticut Port Authority (CPA) Board, request to schedule a ride with the pilots, wind projects at State Pier, updates regarding Buckeye in Groton, and

employment opportunities with the CPA for a Community Liaison position and two Summer Interns.

6. Continuing Business

(a) CT Pilot Apprentice Progress Update (Interport)

Adam Richardson reported that Matthew Butcka continues to make good progress and is scheduled to ride with Captain Jonas later that day.

(b) Coastal Buoy Modernization Initiative Proposal

Adam Richardson summarized the Marine Safety Information Bulletin (MSIB) from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) regarding the Coastal Buoy Modernization Initiative. He noted that it entails the removal of physical buoys for replacement by electronic buoys which are visible on radar. He noted the pilots are opposed to this. Richard Astles and Adam Richardson noted that this is a cost-cutting effort due to lack of funds for maintaining the physical buoys. They noted issues with visibility and buoys in the channel in New Haven and increased risk and safety issues if buoys are removed. Joe Maco noted the research he was involved in with USCGA regarding running scenarios if buoys were removed and noted that the pilots look into risk management and that the risk and safety issues are not worth the money saved by removal of the buoys. Richard Astles and Adam Richardson noted that they met with the Commander to discuss.

It was noted that the due date for comments on the proposed changes is June 13, 2025 and that the email address for submission is provided on the MSIB. There was discussion regarding the Pilots and the Commission providing input to the CPA Executive Director to draft a letter for submission to the USCG. Michael O'Connor noted that he would share the letter with the North Atlantic Ports Association ahead of the June meeting that he will be attending. It was noted that Adam Richardson would send an email to Bill Gash regarding results of the meeting with USCG. There was additional discussion regarding visibility issues in New Haven Harbor and discussion regarding the strategic oil reserve.

(c) Formation of Association of Connecticut State Pilots

Bill Gash requested an update regarding the formation of the Association of Connecticut State Pilots. Arnold Skretta noted that the paperwork has been filed with the Secretary of State's Office as a non-incorporated association. He noted the annual meeting will be held in November per the articles. Bill Gash requested that a copy of the articles be provided to the Connecticut Pilot Commission (CPC) since they have been filed. He noted that once received, they would be distributed to the Commissioners and CPA would be copied.

(d) Proposed Revisions to Connecticut Port Authority Marine Pilot Procedures, Section III – Qualifications, Selection and Training for New Applicants for a License as a Connecticut State Marine Pilot

Mike Eisele noted that this is a long-term project and that the working group has not yet reconvened. The members of the working group are Mike Eisele, Joe Maco, Paul Whitescarver and Adam Richardson. He noted that the group will review Section III of the procedures regarding qualifications for pilot selection, refer to what other states do, and then bring a proposal to the Commission for discussion. There was discussion regarding timelines for the next year and potential needs for future apprentice pilot solicitations. The pilots noted stable ship calls and not anticipating a need for an additional apprentice in the near-term.

Mike Eisele noted to carry this item on the agenda and remove Item #6c for the next agenda.

Richard Astles asked about allocating funds to train pilots. Bill Gash requested that this be sent as a request for the next agenda and that a proposal with numbers be provided to the Commission.

7. **New Business**

None

8. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn by Mike Eisele, seconded by Paul Liistro. Meeting adjourned at 9:41am.

Next Meeting: June 3, 2025