



Connecticut Pilot Commission Public Meeting

Tuesday, June 3, 2025
9:00am

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

MINUTES

CPC Members in Attendance: Chair Bill Gash; Kyle Butler; Paul Liistro; Joe Maco; Paul Whitescarver

CPC Members Absent: Vice-Chair Mike Eisele; Wynne Bohannon; Chris Clark; Dave Pohorylo

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

Public: Richard Astles; Chris Murray; Arnold Skretta; Adam Richardson; Patrick Kennedy

1. **Call to Order**

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

2. **Approval of the May 6, 2025 meeting minutes**

Motion by Paul Liistro, seconded by Kyle Butler. So VOTED, with NO opposed and an abstention by Paul Whitescarver.

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 noted that he is awaiting input from the pilots regarding the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Coastal Buoy Modernization Initiative. He noted that he will be attending the North Atlantic Ports Association meeting this week in New Bedford, MA, and that he plans to submit comment from the Connecticut Port Authority (CPA) to USCG regarding the initiative prior to the June 13, 2025 deadline and requested their feedback before the deadline.

He noted increased ship activity in New London Harbor and noted that he is still interested in riding with the pilots. He also noted that CPA will be hiring two interns for the summer. Joe Maco suggested looking at the CMA internship program for next year through the CMA Education Foundation and also noted the sad passing of Jim Lawrence.

6. Continuing Business

(a) CT Pilot Apprentice Progress Update (Interport)

Adam Richardson noted that apprentice pilot Matthew Butcka continues to make good progress. He also noted that newly licensed pilot Robert McCollom is finishing up his current jobs and then will be full-time with the pilots.

(b) Coastal Buoy Modernization Initiative Proposal

Adam Richardson noted the draft comments that are currently circulating amongst the pilots regarding the USCG Coastal Buoy Modernization Initiative, and that he will provide them to Michael O'Connor tonight or tomorrow. It was also noted that CMA and New Haven Co-op members also plan to submit comments as a group and individually. Michael O'Connor noted that he will follow-up with Sally Kruse, Executive Director of the New Haven Port Authority.

Michael O'Connor asked about the New London Port Authority and Patrick Kennedy noted that they typically meet once a month. Rich Astles noted that the buoys in New Haven Harbor are subpar and not lit properly. He also noted that it is anticipated that New York and Rhode Island will submit comments as well. He noted that he will provide copies to the Connecticut Port Authority.

There was discussion regarding the issues and concerns with virtual aids, particularly when there is zero visibility. There was also brief discussion of navigational aids and CPA's MOA with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Paul Whitescarver noted that he will provide a point of contact for the Navy's Northeast Region to Michael O'Connor. Joe Maco asked if all ships have radar that show virtual buoys and there was additional discussion.

(c) 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

Bill Gash noted that the group has not yet reconvened and that Mike Eisele will coordinate with the group. He noted to keep this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

7. New Business

(a) Consideration of request by Captain Sean Meade for an extension-of-route for Bridgeport Harbor

Chair Bill Gash introduced the item and noted that he and Vice-Chair Mike Eisele had reviewed the documentation requesting an extension-of-route for Captain Sean Meade for Bridgeport Harbor and found the documentation to satisfy the statutory requirements. He noted that the documentation had been provided to the Commissioners for their review and entertained a motion to recommend to the Connecticut Port Authority Executive Director Michael O'Connor that Captain Meade be granted an extension-of-route for Bridgeport Harbor.

Motion by Joe Maco, seconded by Kyle Butler. So, VOTED with NO opposed and NO abstentions.

Michael O'Connor asked about quarterly updates from the pilots. There was a discussion and Block Island Pilots Rotation Administrator Capt. Chris Murray and CPA Finance Director Fayola Haynes provided clarification regarding the quarterly reports.

Bill Gash noted that Arnold Skretta, counsel to the Connecticut pilots and Interport, provided a copy of the paperwork submitted to the Office of the Secretary of the State establishing the Association of Connecticut State Pilots. He noted to include this as an item on the agenda for the next meeting.

Kyle Butler asked about funds for pilot training. Fayola Haynes noted the account balance and statements. Bill Gash requested that information be provided in advance of the next meeting for inclusion on the agenda. There was further discussion, and Rich Astles provided an overview of the training requirements that the pilots need to maintain, and the costs associated with the trainings. Bill Gash asked Rich Astles to provide information prior to the next meeting including information on what other states do. Chris Murray noted the general fund.

Joe Maco asked about the depth restriction in Bridgeport Harbor and Adam Richardson noted that it is currently 30 feet or less. Joe Maco noted the sad passing of Captain Donald Church who was the owner of Seaboats Inc.

8. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn by Paul Liistro, seconded by Kyle Butler. Meeting adjourned at 9:34am

Next Meeting: July 1, 2025