CONNECTICUT
Port Authority

Connecticut Pilot Commission Public Meeting

Tuesday, October 6, 2026
9:00am

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

MINUTES

Connecticut Pilot Commission (CPC) Members

Present: Chairman William C. Gash, Jr.; CPA Executive Director Michael J. O'Connor; K. Wynne Bohonnon; Captain Kyle S. Butler; Christopher P. Clark; Paul Liistro; Captain Joseph Maco

Absent: Vice-Chairman Michael J. Eisele, Esq.; David E. Pohorylo

Connecticut Port Authority (CPA) Staff: Jill Dowling-Moreno

Public: CDR David Bourbeau, LT Joel Chapman and Scott Howell (USCG); Chris Murray; Adam Richardson; Arnold Skretta; Robert McCollom

1. **Call to Order**

   Chairman Bill Gash called the meeting to order at 9:01am and lead a round of introductions.

2. **Approval of the September 1, 2026 meeting minutes**

   Motion by Wynne Bohonnon, seconded by Chris Clark. So, VOTED with NO abstentions.

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

   None

4. **U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Update**

   CDR David Bourbeau introduced himself as he is now serving as Chief, Prevention Department at USCG Sector Long Island Sound (LIS) in New Haven after Eric Hanson's retirement. He noted that there is a new Sector LIS CDR Paul Mangini following Elisa Garrity's retirement. LT Joel Chapman, Chief, Waterways Management Division and Scott Howell, Port Security Specialist, also from Sector LIS, introduced themselves.

   LT Chapman noted that it is a heavy transfer season. He noted the uptick in Abandoned and Derelict Vessels (ADV) in Connecticut, and the USCG priority to identify ADV in their area of responsibility in Connecticut and New York. He noted that if there are known ADV in the area, to inform CPA or USCG directly, and include ID #, name, vessel type, and geo location of the vessel

in the water or beach (not on land). He noted that USCG will log them and create a list of known ADV.

CDR Bourbeau noted that there will be a public awareness campaign to raise awareness of marinas, local municipalities, harbor masters, and fire departments of the steps to take when an ADV issue arises. He noted the mandates established by congress regarding ADV and that USCG will lead the effort for the tracking of ADV. There was discussion regarding reporting, timelines and responsibility/liability for ADV in the community.

Michael O'Connor noted that CPA has convened an ADV working group which meets approximately every three weeks. There was discussion regarding safety, hazards to navigation, marinas, the role of and communication with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT-DEEP), the role of USCG in dealing with pollution from ADV, and a potential for changes needed to state statues to effectively deal with the issue. There was additional discussion regarding towing, commercial salvage and pilots calling USCG if a vessel becomes disabled.

LT Chapman provided an update regarding timing of the dredging for the New Haven Harbor Improvement Project (NHHIP). He noted a meeting scheduled for later that day and there was discussion regarding attendance with a request to include CPA and the pilots in weekly meetings or communications. LT Chapman noted that he will get clarification regarding future meetings, CDR Bourbeau noted that he will contact Craig Martin at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to schedule a meeting with the pilots and Michael O'Connor noted that he will follow-up with Craig Martin to attend today's meeting. Pilots requested a dedicated cell phone to call on the dredge that doesn't change with a change of rotation for entire project duration for pilot contact when needed.

Bill Gash noted USCG update as a standing item on the agenda and thanked the Coast Guard attendees for their updates and participation.

5. **Pilot Report**

(a) Challenges to safety, near misses, lessons learned

Kyle Butler noted nothing to report.

(b) Harbor or equipment issues

Kyle Butler noted nothing to report.

(c) Activity in the previous calendar month – Connecticut Pilot support of marine traffic to/from which ports

Kyle Butler noted activity last month with a total of 16 vessels, including 8 tankers to New Haven and 1 tanker to Riverhead, 4 bulk carriers to New London, 1 installation vessel to New London and 2 bulk carriers to New Haven.

(d) Upcoming training status and needs

Kyle Butler noted that the pilots will renew their Bridge Resource Management (BRM) training in November.

(e) CT Pilot Apprentice Update

Kyle Butler noted that there are no apprentices.

6. CPA Executive Director Report

Michael O'Connor noted that he attended the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) Convention in New Orleans last week and noted the high interest for shipbuilding in Connecticut. He noted the continued advocacy for removing freight traffic from the state's highways and that he is serving as the Chair of the Freight Rail & Port Working Group to gather input from stakeholders and make recommendations to the legislature in January for any modifications to state policies. He encouraged additional participation and feedback for the upcoming meeting in October. There was additional discussion regarding Bridgeport and potential high-speed ferries to Manhattan, and the real estate surrounding Bridgeport harbor and the ferry terminal.

Joe Maco provided information regarding the Maritime Transportation Strategy Board that he and Bill Gash served on in the early 2000s. Michael O'Connor noted the current ferry services in Bridgeport and New London, and the need for ferries to transport workers between Groton and New London.

7. Pilotage Rates

Michael O'Connor noted that this item is on hold while awaiting action on any updates to pilotage rates in New York.

8. Continuing Business

(a) 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 Michael Eisele is not in attendance and asked to carry this item on the agenda to the next meeting.

9. New Business

(a) Master-Pilot Exchange

Kyle Butler provided an example of a Master-Pilot Exchange as requested at the last meeting. He provided an overview of the exchange example and provided additional details regarding the typical steps pilots take when they first board a ship including their communication with the captain, checks to ensure radar is working properly or if there are any deficiencies, ship engines, and speed. He noted that if there are issues, such as with the gyro, that it is reported to USCG either by the pilot or agent for permission to come in with a letter of deviation to be issued by USCG. Michael O'Connor asked if they often get repeat vessels that call, and Kyle Butler noted there are some.

Joe Maco noted the Baltimore incident and there was discussion regarding the bridge collision, electrical issue, responsibility, liability and the importance of the Master-Pilot exchange document. There was additional discussion about navigation under bridges in Connecticut and Rhode Island, cost to the shipping community that would be associated with an increase in regulations, USCG risk management survey and tools, and reporting of the issue. CDR Bourbeau noted that he would provide a copy of the report to Michael O'Connor to distribute to the Pilot Commission. Adam Richardson noted that there are issues to coming in with and without a tug including speed, winds and other variables.

(b) Q3 Fuel Surcharge

Capt. Chris Murray, Rotation Administrator, Block Island Pilots provided the Q3 Fuel Surcharge report to the Pilot Commissioners for their review prior to the meeting and provided an overview of the report. He noted the average price of $3.04 per gallon with a

fuel surcharge of $200. He noted that he collects information each month from the CT and NY pilots. He noted that it is a transparent system with a flat fee that is stated in the regulations, and that he provides the quarterly reports to Michael O'Connor and Fayola Haynes at CPA.

Joe Maco noted error chain for discussion, and Bill Gash asked that this item be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

(c) Pilot License Renewals

Michael O'Connor noted the change in legislation that removed the fee for renewal of pilot licenses this year. He noted that the renewal paperwork will be provided and the deadline for submission of December 1, 2026. He noted verification that the licenses meet regulations to pilot another year in the approved waters for licenses to renew on January 1, 2027.

10. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn made by Wynne Bohonnon, seconded by Paul Liistro. Meeting adjourned at 10:02am

Next Meeting: November 3, 2026