

**BOARD FOR BRANCH PILOTS MEETING
MINUTES**

The Virginia Board for Branch Pilots met on June 12, 2013, at the Virginia Port Authority, 600 World Trade Center, Norfolk, Virginia, with the following members present:

Charles R. Amory, Jr.
Captain Robert H. Callis, III
Captain J. William Cofer
Captain Milton B. Edmunds
Patrick B. McDermott
Captain John A. Morgan, Jr.
Christine N. Piersall
Meade G. Stone, Jr.

Board member Thomas P. Host, III, was not present for the meeting.

Staff present for the meeting was:

Kathleen R. (Kate) Nosbisch, Executive Director

There was no representative from the Office of the Attorney General present.

Finding a quorum of the Board present, Mr. Stone, President, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Call to Order

Mr. McDermott moved to approve the agenda. Captain Morgan seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Amory, Callis, Cofer, Edmunds, McDermott, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

**Approval of
Agenda**

Captain Callis moved to approve the minutes from the April 30, 2013, board meeting. Mr. Amory seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Amory, Callis, Cofer, Edmunds, McDermott, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

**Approval of
Minutes**

There were no public comments.

**Public Comment
Period**

The Board reviewed a letter from Captain Torrence A. Rogers, regarding an incident on May 23, 2013, involving the M/V HEBEI KING.

**Captain Torrence
A. Rogers – M/V
HEBEI KING**

Captain Rogers was ordered to sail the vessel at 0330 from Newport News Pier 9, to take the vessel to sea. The ship has a length of 968' and a breadth of 151' and at the time was drawing 49'6" fwd, 50' 0" amidships, and 49'9" aft. The ship starting taking in lines at 0330 and was underway at approximately 0400. Captain Rogers gradually brought the ship's speed up to approximately 10 knots. At roughly 0530, soon after passing through buoys 15 and 16 in

Thimble Shoals Channel, the ship's speed dramatically decreased from 10 kts to 0 kts.. The ship did not roll or give any other indication of grounding other than the speed dropping to zero with the engine running ahead. Captain Rogers ordered the engine stopped and the ship laid in the center of the channel holding its outbound course heading of 108 degrees. At this moment the real time tide indicators at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel were showing approximately 2' above MLLW and the current was in its flood stage. The shipboard depth sounders showed 1 meter below the keel fwd and aft. The order was given to inspect the internals of the ship for possible damage/breaches in the hull. No damage was found. The USCG and JHOC were immediately notified.

The captain of the M/V HEBEI KING and Captain Rogers discussed the situation, and decided to back the ship to try and free it. At approximately 0600 the ship gained 1 kt of sternway. After a few minutes of sternway they stopped the engine. After determining the ship had moved far enough back to be clear of the mound, Captain Rogers ordered the rudder hard to starboard and slow ahead to avoid the center of the channel. The ship gained headway and continued outbound to Lynnhaven Anchorage without further incident.

Mr. Amory inquired about Coast Guard and Army Corps issues in the area in which the incident occurred. Captain Cofer stated that the area has been dredged and new surveys done. He stated that in lieu of the shoaling, pilots have been reducing their speed in that area. The next dredging is scheduled for November.

After review and discussion, Mr. Amory moved that the letter be filed and that the Board take no action as there appears to be no violation of the Board's regulations or statutes. Ms. Piersall seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Amory, Callis, Cofer, Edmunds, McDermott, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

Captain Callis provided the Board with a report of the examinations conducted by the Examination Administrators on June 12, 2013. The following report was made:

Exam
Administrators
Report

Joseph M. Schacherer III

Joseph M. Schacherer III answered oral questions related to the raise in grade. The subjects included: safe anchoring positions in Lynnhaven and Sewell's Point, anchoring deep draft vessels, overtaking situations, limitations of navigation equipment, usage of the deep water route in the southeast sealanes, vessel squat, under keel clearance and safe vessel speed. Captain Schacherer stood a good examination and was found to be qualified. Captain Callis moved that Captain Schacherer be raised from a Golf classification (55,000 gross tons and 42 feet maximum draft) to a Hotel classification (64,000 gross tons and 46 feet maximum draft). Mr. Amory

seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Amory, Callis, Cofer, Edmunds, McDermott, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

Captain Cofer reported that two candidates will begin the two year Virginia Pilot Association apprenticeship program September 15, 2013. The candidates will also be attending a pre-apprenticeship basic seamanship training, August 1- September 14.

Other Business

Discussion was held on upcoming meetings. Captain Cofer stated that the Virginia Pilot Association will make a presentation to the Board at a future meeting, regarding possible changes to the apprenticeship program.

Conflict of Interest forms and travel vouchers were completed by all members present.

Conflict of Interest Forms

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

Adjourn

Meade G. Stone, Jr., President

Gordon N. Dixon, Secretary