

## BOARD FOR BRANCH PILOTS MEETING

### MINUTES

The Virginia Board for Branch Pilots met on Monday, May 3, 2004, at the Virginia Port Authority, 600 World Trade Center, Norfolk, Virginia, with the following members present:

Captain Robert H. Callis, III  
Bruce R. Cherry  
Captain J. William Cofer  
Captain Milton B. Edmunds  
Robert T. Hasler  
Judge Edgar A. Massenburg  
Captain W. Hugh McCrory, Jr.  
P. Warren Spratley, Jr.  
Meade G. Stone

Staff present for the meeting were:

Louise Fontaine Ware, Director  
Mark N. Courtney, Executive Director

Ellen E. Coates, Senior Assistant Attorney General, was present at the meeting.

Finding a quorum of the Board present, Mr. Hasler, President, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Call to Order

Mr. Cherry moved to approve the agenda as written. Captain Callis seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Callis, Cherry, Cofer, Edmunds, Hasler, Massenburg, McCrory, Spratley, and Stone.

Approval of  
Agenda

Captain Callis moved to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2004, Board meeting as amended. Mr. Cherry seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Callis, Cherry, Cofer, Edmunds, Hasler, Massenburg, McCrory, Spratley, and Stone.

Approval of  
Minutes

Captain Callis provided the Board with a report of the examinations conducted by the Examination Administrators on the morning of May 3, 2004. The following report was made:

Examinations  
Administrators  
Report

Frank M. Rabena

Captain Rabena answered several oral questions related to the raise in grade. The subjects included safe anchoring techniques, safe vessel speed in Norfolk Harbor Reach and Craney Island Reach, anchoring deep draft vessels, and overtaking situations. Captain Rabena stood a good examination and was found to be qualified. Captain Callis moved that Captain Rabena be raised from the Golf classification (625 ship units and 38 feet maximum draft or 450 ship units and 42 feet maximum draft) to the Hotel classification (725 ship units and 41 feet maximum draft or 550 ship units and 45 feet maximum draft). Mr. Cherry seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Callis, Cherry, Cofer, Edmunds, Hasler, Massenburg, McCrory, Spratley, and Stone.

The Board reviewed a letter from Captain Frank M. Rabena, dated February 4, 2004, regarding an incident involving the M/V SEALAND EXPRESS.

Captain Frank M.  
Rabena, M/V  
SEALAND  
EXPRESS

On January 31, 2004 at 2130 hours, Captain Rabena boarded the M/V SEALAND EXPRESS. Captain Rabena reported to the bridge of the ship where he met Captain Willers, Master. Captain Rabena conducted a Master/Pilot exchange of information. According to the Master, all of the ship's gear was working properly. The vessel was set to sail at 2200 hours from the north side of Newport News Marine Terminal pier C to Cape Henry. Captain Rabena contacted the Joint Harbor Operations Center (JHOC) tower and received permission to transit. Captain Rabena conducted a security call over the ship's VHF radio. The docking master for the McAllister tugs, Tyler Moore, boarded the ship at 2146 hours. The ship was moored starboard side to the pier with the bow inshore.

The wind was light, coming from the northwest at approximately 10 knots. The weather conditions and visibility were good. Maximum ebb current was predicted to occur at 2231 with a velocity of 1.2 knots and a direction of 140 degrees true. The ship was fitted with a right handed turning, fixed pitch propeller. The ship was equipped with a 27,135 horsepower main engine. The ship was not equipped with a bow thruster. The ship's length overall was 845 feet and 11 inches; moulded breadth was 100 feet and 4 inches; moulded depth was 54 feet and 1 inch; draft at time of departure was 30 feet and 7 inches; and the deadweight tonnage was 35,873 long tons. In a loaded condition, dead slow ahead was equivalent to 30 r.p.m. and 5.5 knots, slow ahead was equivalent to 40 r.p.m. and 7 knots, half ahead was equivalent to 50 r.p.m. and 9 knots, and full ahead was equivalent to 65 r.p.m. and 12 knots. Astern r.p.m. were equivalent to

ahead r.p.m. Full astern power was 90 percent of full ahead power.

At 2200 hours, Docking Master Moore took the conn to carry out the undocking maneuver. The single screw, 2000 horsepower, conventional style tugboat ELLEN MCALLISTER was pushing slightly aft of the port bow. The single screw, 2000 horsepower, conventional style tugboat DANIEL MCALLISTER was pushing on the port quarter. The twin screw, 6000 horsepower, conventional style tugboat MARK MCALLISTER was maintaining its position at the face of the pier, astern of the ship. Both the Master and the relief Master, Captain Moore, and Captain Rabena were on the starboard bridge wing. Captain Moore gave the order to single up the mooring lines. At 2203, the last mooring line was cast off. Captain Moore ordered the engine dead slow astern. The ship began to move astern while maintaining contact with the pier. At approximately 2207, when the ship's stern was approximately 200 feet past the end of the pier, the tugboat MARK MCALLISTER began pushing on the ship's starboard quarter, approximately 150 feet from the stern. Captain Moore ordered the engine stopped. The ship continued to drift astern at approximately 2 knots. At approximately 2210, the tugboat DANIEL MCALLISTER shifted around to the starboard side and began pushing on the ship, approximately 200 feet forward of the MARK MCALLISTER. Captain Moore ordered the engine dead slow astern. At approximately 2212, the third tugboat, ELLEN MCALLISTER, shifted around to the starboard side and began pushing on the ship, approximately 100 feet forward of the DANIEL MCALLISTER.

As the ship continued to move astern at approximately 2 knots, it was no longer sheltered by Pier B from the ebb current. The ship was being set slowly toward the south with all three McAllister tugs in position on the starboard side. The ship's flat starboard side was still in contact with the pier. This maneuver had been performed when undocking larger ships from this location during periods of ebb current. The fendered corner of the pier was utilized to allow the ship to pivot to port. At approximately 2213, the mate on the bow indicated that the starboard bow was very close to the offshore container crane. As the ship continued to move astern, the flare of the bow extended over the pier and was approaching the offshore crane. At approximately 2214, the starboard bow contacted the offshore container crane. No other commands were given to the ship by Captain Moore. The ship continued to move astern and toward the south by the current. The mate on the bow reported that the offshore container crane was badly damaged, and that the ship sustained minor damages. The Captain of the ship stopped the engine. Captain Rabena took over the conn of the ship, turned the ship to starboard and proceeded outbound in the James River. Captain Rabena notified the U.S. Coast Guard Marine

Safety Office immediately, and they ordered the ship to anchor in the nearest anchorage possible. Captain Rabena notified the Virginia Pilot Association dispatcher and then proceeded toward Sewell's Point anchorage F-1, where the vessel anchored.

After discussion, Judge Massenburg moved that the letter be filed and that the Board take no action as there appears to be no violation of the Board's rules, regulations, or statutes. Mr. Stone seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Callis, Cherry, Cofer, Edmunds, Hasler, Massenburg, McCrory, Spratley, and Stone.

The Board members reviewed a memorandum that was prepared and distributed to all licensed branch pilots. The memorandum indicated that the Board does not find the requirements of regulation 18 VAC 45-20-20.C.3 burdensome or unreasonable; finds that recency of transit is an integral part of the renewal process; and states that all waiver requests will be closely scrutinized by the Board.

Other Business

The Board members agreed by consensus to reschedule the next Board meeting for July 30, 2004, and the next examination administration to July 29, 2004.

Conflict of Interest forms were completed by all members present.

Conflict of Interest  
Forms

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Adjourn



Robert T. Hasler, Jr., President



Louise Fontaine Ware, Secretary