

**BOARD FOR BRANCH PILOTS MEETING
MINUTES**

The Virginia Board for Branch Pilots met on July 31, 2013, at the Virginia Port Authority, 600 World Trade Center, Norfolk, Virginia, with the following members present:

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

Board member Charles R. Amory, Jr., was not present for the meeting.

Staff present for the meeting was:

Gordon Dixon, Director
Marian Brooks, Board Administrator

Joshua N. Lief, Senior Assistant Attorney General, was present from the Office of the Attorney General.

Finding a quorum of the Board present, Mr. Stone, President, called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

Call to Order

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

Approval of Agenda

Captain Callis moved to approve the minutes from the June 12, 2013, board meeting. Mr. McDermott seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Callis, Cofer, Edmunds, Host, McDermott, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Leif introduced Kate Maxwell. Ms. Maxwell is a third year law student and is serving as an intern in the office of the Attorney General.

Introduction

There were no public comments.

Public Comment Period

Captain Callis provided the Board with a report of the examinations conducted by the Examination Administrators on July 30, 2013. The following report was made:

Exam Administrators Report

William G. Saunders, Jr.

William G. Saunders, Jr. has successfully completed the Virginia Pilot Association Apprenticeship Training Program. Captain Saunders provided a chart sketch of the sealanes and answered oral questions related to the raise in grade. The subjects included safe anchoring positions in Lynnhaven and Sewell's Point, anchoring deep vessels, tidal sailings and arrivals, under keel clearance, deep-water route, naval nomenclature and chain of command, and safe vessel speed. Captain Saunders stood a good examination and was found to be qualified. Captain Callis moved that Captain Saunders be raised from a Hotel classification (64,000 gross tons and 46 feet maximum draft) to a Branch Pilot. Mr. Host seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Callis, Cofer, Edmunds, Host, McDermott, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

Mr. Stone congratulated Captain Saunders and presented him with his unlimited branch pilot license.

Christopher H. Behm

Christopher H. Behm answered oral questions related to the raise in grade. The subjects included safe anchoring positions in Lynnhaven, Sewell's Point and Newport News, proper monitoring of VHF radio channels, security broadcasts, small boat traffic, use of auxiliary channels, port security, hazards of marine construction and dredging operations, and safe vessel speed. Captain Behm stood a good examination and was found to be qualified. Captain Callis moved that Captain Behm be raised from a Charlie classification (32,000 gross tons and 32 feet maximum draft) to a Delta classification (38,000 gross tons and 34 feet maximum draft). Ms. Piersall seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Callis, Cofer, Edmunds, Host, McDermott, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

Gregory R. Willson

Gregory R. Willson answered oral questions related to the raise in grade. The subjects included safe anchoring positions in Lynnhaven, Sewell's Point and Newport News, proper monitoring of VHF radio channels, security broadcasts, small boat traffic, use of auxiliary channels, port security, hazards of marine construction and dredging operations, and safe vessel speed. Captain Willson stood a good examination and was found to be qualified. Captain Callis moved that Captain Willson be raised from a Charlie classification (32,000 gross tons and 32 feet maximum draft) to a Delta classification (38,000 gross tons and 34 feet maximum draft). Mr. Host seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Callis, Cofer, Edmunds, Host, McDermott, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

Adam L. Halstead

Captain Halstead answered oral questions related to the extension of route. The subjects included courses and distances from Cape Henry to Pages Rock and to Cape Charles, safe anchoring positions in the York River and Cape Charles, local traffic, high water arrival and sailing times, transit issues with deep draft vessels, under keel clearance, George P. Coleman Bridge restrictions and characteristics, fixed aids to navigation and safe vessel speed.

Captain Halstead stood a good examination and was found to be qualified. Captain Callis moved that Captain Halstead be granted an extension of route from the Cape Henry to Pages Rock, upon the York River. Captain Morgan seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Callis, Cofer, Edmunds, Host, McDermott, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

As requested by the Board at its April 30 meeting, Mr. Lief provided comment on his review of the regulations and presented areas for possible revision specifically regulation 18VAC45-20-40. The Board discussed information presented by counsel, in addition to how public health, safety, and welfare are addressed in the regulations. By consensus, the Board agreed to consider comments provided by counsel and prepare for future dialogue at the next meeting. Mr. Lief will be the point of contact for suggested language or revisions to the regulations.

Regulatory Update

Captain Cofer provided a brief presentation on tractor tugs. Captain Cofer explained that as container ships have gotten larger, there is a need for more powerful tugs to assist ships when maneuvering into port. Tractor tugs provide more power to control the ships.

Presentation by Captain Cofer – Tractor Tugs

Captain Cofer provided information from the Maritime Pilots Institute in Louisiana which offers training courses on tractor tugs; he further reported that all the branch pilots were able to attend one of their courses. Captain Cofer stated that the Board may want to consider regulatory language in the future regarding this training.

There was no other business.

Other Business

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 12:06 p.m.

Adjourn

Meade G. Stone, Jr., President

Gordon N. Dixon, Secretary