

**BOARD FOR BRANCH PILOTS MEETING  
MINUTES**

The Virginia Board for Branch Pilots met on December 12, 2024, at the Virginia Port Authority, 600 World Trade Center, Norfolk, Virginia, with the following members present:

Aaron Anseeuw  
Captain E. Waightstill Avery  
I. Vincent Behm, Jr  
Captain J.W. Whiting Chisman, III  
Michael W. Coleman  
Captain January N. Collins  
Patrick B. McDermott  
Christine N. Piersall  
Captain Clarence M. Young

Staff present for all, or part of the meeting were:

Brian P. Wolford, Director  
Jeb Wilkinson, Chief Deputy Director  
Steve Kirschner, LRPD Deputy Director  
Kate Nosbisch, Executive Director  
Ecila Williams, Licensing Operations Administrator  
Jhustyna McBride-Dunn, Regulatory Operations Administrator  
Joe Haughwout, Regulatory Affairs Manager  
Ernie Atkins, DPOR Investigator

Elizabeth Peay, Senior Assistant Attorney General with the Office of the Attorney General, was present.

Enid Candalaria-Vega, BPOR Liaison, was not present at the meeting with regrets.

Member of the Audience included:

Mark Coberly, Manager, Maritime Law Department, Representative from Wood Rogers Vandeventer Black PLC

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

**Call to Order**

Ms. Nosbisch advised the Board of the emergency evacuation procedures.

**Emergency  
Evacuation  
Procedures**

Ms. Piersall moved to approve the agenda. Mr. McDermott seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

**Approval of  
Agenda**

Mr. Behm moved to approve the minutes from the September 12, 2024, Board meeting. Captain Avery seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

**Approval of  
Minutes**

Captain Chisman moved to approve the minutes from the September 12, 2024, Bylaws Committee meeting with an amendment. Mr. Behm seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Director Wolford introduced and welcomed Jeb Wilkinson as the new Chief Deputy Director. Ms. Nosbisch introduced and welcomes Jhustyna McBride-Dunn as the new Regulatory Operations Administrator and Mr. Haughwout as the Regulatory Affairs Manager. Ms. Nosbisch informed the Board that Karen Reid, former Administrative Coordinator, transferred to another Agency and has been replaced by Donna Divers.

**Welcome/Intro  
ductions**

There was no public comment.

**Public  
Comment  
Period**

The Board reviewed a letter from Captain Gray, regarding an incident on November 6, 2024, involving the M/V YO XIAO FENG.

Captain Gray was ordered to Perdue Terminal for a 1900 sailing of the FENG to undock and go to sea. Captain Gray arrived on board at 1830 and went to the bridge where Captain Gray conducted a master /pilot exchange which took place. Captain Gray reviewed the pilot card, and the master advised that all systems were operational. The Moran Tugs PATRICIA MORGAN and JAN MORGAN arrived and came alongside, and docking master Dave Clark boarded to undock the ship and take it through the bridges to Towne Point. The docking master placed the PATRICIA forward with a line, and the JAN aft with a line.

**Notification  
Letter-  
Captain Gray-  
M/V YO  
XIAO FENG**

The FENG is 738.2 feet long and was drawing 39'06". The weather was clear with light and a variable wind. The current was negligible with high water at 2006 hrs.

The undocking from Perdue took place without incident and FENG proceeded

downstream with the assist tugs alongside. Its passage down the Southern Branch and subsequently out of sea proceeded without incident as far as anyone on the ship was aware at the time. The docking master had the conn throughout the Southern Branch including during the transit past Titan Cement. He was generally standing centerline of the bridge, while Captain Gray was standing over on the port side monitoring speed and traffic. The JAN was made fast on the starboard bow and the JAN was following astern.

On November 11, 2024, Titan Cement advised the pilot office that they had a vessel surge at their dock with some resulting damage when the FENG passed their facility. This was the first time Captain Gray became aware of any incident. Titan moors ships at its facility to an unloading barge, which in turn is moored to a small dock and mooring dolphins. These are positioned parallel to the channel and are so close to the navigable channel that larger ships will actually extend into the channel.

The M/S AMIS WISDOM apparently was the ship alongside the Titan unloading barge at the time. Captain Gray have reviewed his PPU and confirmed that the transit of the FENG past Tital Cement occurred at about 2005, and at a speed 4.3 kts. which is a minimum amount of headway to maintain vessel control. The survey report forwarded to the pilot office by Titan, states that the "fore and aft mooring lines were very slack", which can explain the surging of the AMIS WISDOM.

Captain Gray was unaware of this event for 5 days and did not have a drug or alcohol test.

The File Review Committee and DPOR Staff made a recommendation that the letter be filed, and the Board take no action, as there appears to be no violation of the Board's regulations or statutes. The Board moved to accept the recommendation, and it was approved by Messrs., Mme., and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Captain Robert H. Callis, III and Captain William G. Diggs, both with over 30 years of service, retired in 2024. Captain Chisman congratulated Captain Callis and Captain Diggs on their career accomplishments and wished them both a well-deserved retirement.

**Branch Pilot  
Retirement  
Announcement**

Captain Avery stated that the members of the Board for Branch Pilots License Renewal Committee have reviewed the renewal applications for the 2025 calendar year and present the following report:

**Consideration  
of Renewal and  
Licenses-  
December 9 &  
10, 2024**

E. Waightstill Avery; Christopher H. Behm; Charles I. Boggs, Jr.; Julian Wythe Whiting Chisman, III; January N. Collins; William G. Diggs; Ernest W. Dodson, Jr.; Zachary S. Dodson; Michael S. Eubanks; Mark S. Evans;

Tazewell Fitzgerald; N. Turner Gray, Jr.; Herbert R. Green, III; Adam L. Halstead; Kevin D. Hartz; David H. Heath; C. Howard Hoffman; Richard Keith Hope; Charles A. Huffman; Chadwick M. Jamison; Jacob R. Johnson; Richard A. Lyons; Joseph R. McKnew; Ryan R. Nienstedt; Timothy D. Oksman; Frank M. Rabena, Jr.; Torrence A. Rogers; William G. Saunders, Jr.; Joseph M. Schacherer, III; G. Benjamin Schill, Jr.; Benjamin L. Speckhart; David B. Ware; Gregory R. Willson; Jonathan D. Worth; and Clarence M. Young.

The members of the Board for Branch Pilots License Renewal Committee reviewed the renewal application paperwork and deemed the individuals qualified pursuant to § 54.1-906 of the *Code of Virginia*. Captain Avery moved to approve the renewal applications of the above-listed unlimited licensees. Captain Chisman seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young. Captains Avery, Chisman, Collins, and Young abstained from voting on their respective licenses. Mr. Behm abstained from voting on Christopher H. Behm's license. Ms. Piersall abstained from voting on Charles A. Huffman's license.

The following limited branch pilot licenses was also presented for renewal: Austin C. Capps and Matthew C. Morse.

The members of the License Renewal Committee reviewed the renewal application paperwork and deemed these individuals qualified pursuant to § 54.1-906 of the *Code of Virginia*. Captain Avery moved to approve the renewal application of the above-listed limited licensee at the respective limitations as of December 31, 2024. Mr. Behm seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Board members reviewed the VPA Apprenticeship Training Program.

Captain Chisman stated the Apprentice Committee is responsible for the stewardship of the Virginia Board for Branch Pilots Apprenticeship Program. Each year the committee evaluates the duties, curriculum and professional schooling that are required during the apprenticeship with the goal of providing the Commonwealth of Virginia with the most accomplished pilots available.

**Review and  
Renewal of  
Virginia Pilot  
Association's  
Apprenticeship  
Training  
Program**

Board members reviewed proposed revisions to certain objectives in the VPA Apprenticeship Training Program. Revisions include updating some language in objective titles.

Captain Chisman moved to renew the apprenticeship program for 2025 with

learning resource modifications. Ms. Piersall seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Ms. Nosbisch informed the Board that pursuant to § 54.1-100 of the *Code of Virginia*, an annual review by counsel had been conducted of the Board's regulations and there were no conflicts in their regulations with the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of Virginia, the laws of the United States, or the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**Review of Regulations Pursuant to §54.1-100 of the Code of Virginia**

Ms. Peay arrived at 10:44 a.m.

**Arrival of Senior Assistant Attorney General**

Ms. Peay affirmed Ms. Nosbisch's report.

Mr. Kirschner provided the Board with background information regarding the final fee adjustment with amendments. The Board will vote on the final fee adjustment at the March 13, 2025, board meeting.

**Regulatory Update**

Ms. McBride-Dunn informed the Board that general review action for the Branch Pilots regulations is at the Proposed stage in Executive Branch review. Ms. McBride-Dunn informed the Board that the final stage for the Marijuana Amend Reporting Requirements action has been completed and the final regulation went into effect as of November 1, 2024.

Mr. Haughwout informed the Board that during Executive Branch review of the proposed amendments for the Branch Pilots regulations feedback was received from the Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) regarding the proposed regulation. The Board reviewed the proposed regulation and considered possible revisions. After a discussion, Captain Collins moved to adopt one of the revisions to the proposed regulation and re-adopt the proposed regulation. Captain Collins seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

The Board asked staff to revisit the other revision with DPB.

Ms. Nosbisch reminded the Board that Financial Disclosure statements are due by February 1, 2025.

**Financial Disclosure**

Ms. Nosbisch provided an update on the Board Member Training Conference that occurred on October 10-11, 2024, for informational purpose.

**Board  
Member  
Training  
Conference  
Update**

Ms. Nosbisch stated the financial statements were provided for informational purposes.

**Financial  
Statements**

Ms. Nosbisch informed the Board that beginning in 2025, Board Member Training on various topics will be provided at the closing of board meetings and provided types of training and asked for suggestions.

**Board  
Member  
Training**

Captain Chisman informed the Board that the Bylaws are currently in progress and will be presented to the Board at the March 13, 2025, board meeting.

**Bylaws  
Committee  
Update**

Ms. Nosbisch congratulated Mr. Coleman for his recognition in the Virginia 500 2024-2025 Power List for Transportation in the *Virginia Business* magazine.

**Other Business**

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

**Conflict of  
Interest Forms  
and Travel  
Vouchers**

The meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

**Adjourn**

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Michael Coleman, President

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Brian P. Wolford, Secretary