

**BOARD FOR BRANCH PILOTS MEETING  
MINUTES**

The Virginia Board for Branch Pilots met on Thursday, April 30, 2015, at the Virginia Port Authority, 600 World Trade Center, Norfolk, Virginia, with the following members present:

Charles R. Amory, Jr. (arrived 10:35 a.m.)  
Captain Robert H. Callis III  
Captain J.W. Whiting Chisman III  
Captain J. William Cofer  
Thomas P. Host, III  
Captain John A. Morgan, Jr.  
Christine N. Piersall  
Meade G. Stone, Jr.

Board member Patrick B. McDermott was not present for the meeting.

Staff present for the meeting was:

Jay DeBoer, Director  
Kathleen R. Nosbisch, Executive Director

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

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

**Call to Order**

Ms. Nosbisch informed the Board that Elizabeth Peay, Assistant Attorney General, would be serving as Board Counsel. James Flaherty, former Board Counsel, left the Attorney General's office to return to private practice. Ms. Peay was unable to attend the meeting.

**New Board  
Counsel**

Ms. Nosbisch stated that Ms. Peay has worked in the Attorney General's office for nine years and prior to that, she clerked for the Henrico Circuit Court judges. Ms. Peay received her law degree from the University of Richmond, and undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia. Ms. Peay grew up in Richmond.

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

**Approval of  
Agenda**

Captain Cofer moved to approve the minutes from the January 29, 2015, board meeting as amended. Captain Callis seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Callis, Chisman, Cofer, Host, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

**Approval of  
Minutes**

There were no public comments.

**Public Comment  
Period**

Mr. Amory arrived at 10:35 a.m.

**Arrival of Board  
Member**

Captain Callis provided the Board with a report of the examinations conducted by the Examination Administrators on April 30, 2015. The following report was made:

**Exam  
Administrators  
Report**

**Charles A. Huffman**

Charles A. Huffman V answered oral questions related to the extension of route. The subjects included safe anchoring positions in the river, cable and pipeline areas, jetty and pier locations and descriptions, freshets, bank suction and cushion, and safe vessel speed.

Captain Huffman stood a good examination and was found to be qualified. Captain Callis moved that Captain Huffman be granted an extension of route from City Point, Virginia to Richmond, Virginia, upon the James River. Ms. Piersall seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Amory, Callis, Chisman, Cofer, Host, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

**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 Cape Charles, anchoring deep draft vessels, overtaking situations, limitations of navigation equipment, usage of the deep water route in the southeast sea-lanes, vessel squat, under keel clearance 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 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. Host seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Amory, Callis, Chisman, Cofer, Host, 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 Cape Charles, anchoring deep draft vessels, overtaking situations, limitations of navigation equipment, usage of the deep water route in the southeast sea-

lanes, vessel squat, under keel clearance 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 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, Chisman, Cofer, Host, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

On February 7, 2015, Captain Huffman boarded the inbound M/V TAMINA at approximately 1000 near Cape Henry. The container vessel was bound for Norfolk International Terminals (NIT), north berth #2, starboard side alongside. The weather was sunny with South winds at 10 to 15 knots. The max flood current at Cape Henry was predicted to be at 1012. Captain Huffman conducted a master/pilot exchange with the ship's master, where they discussed all necessary aspects of the vessel, safety precautions, and their transit into the harbor. The M/V TAMINA had a length overall of 276.2 Meters (906 feet) and a breadth of 40 meters (131 feet). Her draft forward was 9.75 meters (32 feet) and 9.95 meters (32'7") aft. The Pilot card indicated an air draft of 162 feet. Taking into account the trim of the vessel as well as the longitudinal distance from the after draft marks to the bridge position; Captain Huffman determined the true air draft to be approximately 162'6". She had a right-hand turning fixed pitch propeller and a working bow thruster of 2,600 horsepower.

**Captain Charles  
Huffman V –  
M/V TAMINA**

Captain Huffman safely piloted the M/V TAMINA into Hampton Roads and at approximately 1145 a docking master from Moran Towing boarded the ship near the north end of Norfolk Harbor Reach. One tugboat was made fast to the port quarter of the vessel. A second tugboat was assisting on the port bow. Captain Huffman reduced the speed of the ship and informed the docking master of her particulars, including drafts, handling characteristics, berth assignment, speed and heading. At this time, Captain Huffman relinquished the conn of the M/V TAMINA, and the Master turned it over to the docking master who conned the vessel for the remainder of the docking. The ship's Master and Captain Huffman both monitored the entire maneuver. During the docking, tidal predictions indicated a slack for ebb current time of 1211 at Sewell's Point; however it was apparent that the ebb current had already begun. The height of tide was 2.1 feet. The crane heights at Mean High Water with the crane boom down, or in the horizontal position is 144 feet. All of the loading cranes at berth #2 were in the normal upright position; therefore the height of the boom is different for every point along the length of the boom.

The docking master backed the ship into the turning basin and used the tugboats to push the ship alongside the berth. Captain Huffman observed the approach, visually checking the proximity of the ship's masthead with the crane boom. The Master and docking master visually observed the same from

the starboard bridge wing where they conned the ship. They simultaneously looked over the side of the bridge wing to judge the distance from the ship to the berth. It appeared that there was sufficient vertical clearance between the starboard side auxiliary masthead and the crane boom as the ship neared the berth. Moments later, when the ship was approximately one foot away from being alongside the dock, the highest Suez canal light on the starboard side auxiliary mast made contact with the flat underside of the crane boom, still in the upright position. The position of the ship alongside the berth was slightly adjusted and no further contact occurred. Neither the crane nor the ship's masthead sustained any structural damage. The ship was made fast at approximately 1245. The Master reported that the only damage to the vessel was the housing for the highest Suez canal light.

After review and discussion, Captain Cofer 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; the letter was informational in nature. Captain Morgan seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Amory, Callis, Chisman, Cofer, Host, Morgan, Piersall and Stone.

Captain Morgan recused himself from the meeting for discussion of his notification letter. Mr. Host recused himself as his company T. Parker Host, Inc., was the agent for the ship involved in the letter from Captain Morgan.

**Recusal of Board Members**

On March 28, 2015 Captain Morgan boarded the M/V ROBERTO RIZZO, a bulk carrier at Cape Charles Anchorage to make the transit to Lambert's Point Coal Pier. The wind was from the Northwest at about 20-25 knots and the visibility was clear. A master/pilot exchange was conducted and Captain Morgan reviewed the ship's Pilot Card and ship's particulars. The M/V ROBERTO RIZZO has a deadweight metric tonnage of 171,599, an overall length of 957.35 feet, a breadth of 147.64 feet. The maximum draft at the time was 39.7 feet.

**Captain John Morgan, Jr. – M/V ROBERTO RIZZO**

At approximately 8:30 p.m. on March 28 the M/V ROBERTO RIZZO got underway from Cape Charles Anchorage and proceeded to Lambert's Point Coal Pier. At approximately 1:15 a.m. on the morning of March 29, after making the turn down Craney Island Reach the Moran docking pilot, Captain John Hanna boarded the vessel. The pilot exchange between Capt. Hanna and Captain Morgan was made. The ship's Captain agreed that Captain Hanna could take the conn and he did. Captain Hanna immediately made his two tugs fast to the ship. He positioned one of his tugs in the center lead aft and the other on the port side forward. At approximately 0131 a.m. while approaching the pier at Lambert's Point Coal Pier, the ship suffered a major blackout of the engines and electrical system.

Captain Hanna having the speed of the ship down to bear steerage was able to use his tugs to safely stop the movement of the ship and bring her safely alongside the berth without any damage to the ship or pier. Captain Morgan

informed the Master of the ship and telephoned the ship's agent that a report of the situation needed to be made to the U.S. Coast Guard. The ship's agent assured me that he would make the report for the Captain. Captain Morgan again called the ship's agent approximately ten minutes later and he informed Captain Morgan he had contacted the U.S. Coast Guard concerning the ship's blackout.

After review and discussion, Ms. Piersall 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; the letter was informational in nature. Captain Callis seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Amory, Callis, Chisman, Cofer, Piersall and Stone.

Captain Morgan and Mr. Host returned to the meeting.

**Return of Board Members**

On April 9, 2015 at 0600 Captain Behm was ordered to pilot the USNS LAWRENCE H. GIANELLA from Sea to Craney Island. The USNS LAWRENCE H. GIANELLA is a tanker, 615 feet long, 90 feet in breadth and on this day the draft was 37 feet 6 inches. Upon boarding the vessel at Cape Henry, the ship's captain and Captain Behm performed a master/pilot exchange. Captain Behm reviewed the pilot card and the captain confirmed that everything was in good working condition. Captain Behm informed him they needed both anchors ready to let go in case of an emergency and men standing by forward.

**Captain Christopher Behm – USNS LAWRENCE H. GIANELLA**

The transit from Cape Henry to Craney Island Reach was safe and uneventful. At approximately 0800 the McAllister dockmaster boarded the vessel off Norfolk International Terminals. After he reviewed the pilot card and spoke to the ship's captain and Captain Behm, the dockmaster was given the con, and Captain Behm was relieved of the con by the captain. The dockmaster commenced the docking maneuver with the help of the assist tugs AJ MCALLISTER and CAPE ROMAIN. The ship was docking at Craney Island, Pier Delta, starboard side to.

At approximately 0830 as the dockmaster was bringing ship slowly alongside the pier, the stern was brought in slightly ahead of the bow causing the starboard quarter to make contact with the fender first. At this time the flair of the starboard quarter also made contact with the concrete top section of the pier which was not protected by the fender. The concrete on the pier was damaged and a few minutes later the crew reported to the captain some damage to the vessel. At the time of the incident, the wind was from the North East at 10 to 12 knots and the current was almost slack (Slack for Flood was 0854 at Craney Island). No injuries were reported and the ship was tied up safely. To the best of his knowledge, all regulatory reporting requirements set forth in Board for Branch Pilots regulations were met.

After review and discussion, Ms. Piersall 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; the letter was informational in nature. Captain Chisman seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Amory, Callis, Chisman, Cofer, Host, Piersall and Stone.

Board members were provided financial statements for informational purposes.

**Review Financial Statements**

Ms. Nosbisch informed the Board that Mr. Stone and Mr. McDermott would be attending the Virginia Maritime International Trade Symposium May 14.

**Virginia Maritime Association International Trade Symposium**

Ms. Nosbisch reminded the Board that the December meeting had been rescheduled to Friday, December 11.

**Other Business**

Captain Cofer informed the Board that Paul Kirchner, Executive Director, American Pilot Association, will be attending the July 30 meeting.

Discussion was held on new restrictions being placed on commercial ships at the Lynnhaven anchorage because of Navy ships performing training exercises and the space needed for naval as well as commercial ships. There are also concerns for both naval and commercial crew and vessel safety. Commercial ships are being forced to anchorage at Cape Charles. Captain Callis stated that the Pilot Association is encouraging pilots to acquire their Cape Charles license.

Captain Cofer reported that Captain Ben Lee retired April 8 and Captain Wallace Harwood retired March 23. Captain Lee served as a pilot for 42 years and Captain Harwood served as a pilot for 34 years.

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 11:02 a.m.

**Adjourn**

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Meade G. Stone, Jr., President

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Jay W. DeBoer, Secretary