



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
CONNECTICUT PILOT COMMISSION



Minutes of January 10, 2008 Connecticut Pilot Commission
Public Meeting
State Pier Administration Building
New London, CT

The public meeting was called to Order at 8:05 a.m. Pilot Commission members Captain Charles Beck, Captain Vince Cashin, William Gash, John Love and Dave Shuda were present along with CDOT staff members Dave Rossiter. Also attending were LCDR Kevin Oditt, U.S.C.G., Captain Phil Gaughran, Captain Joe Maco, Captain Ken Warner, Mr. Keith Colwell, Mr. John Jamrora and Mr. Mike Quinn.

The minutes of the New York Board of Commissioners of Pilots for the month of November were distributed.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of Captain Lawrence Palmer. It was pointed out that a copy of Captain Palmer's obituary was contained in the handout package.

On the motion of Captain Cashin, second by Mr. Love, the minutes of the Commission's December 13, 2007 public meeting were approved as drafted by a vote of 4 affirmative and 1 abstention.

Captain Beck reported that the Legislative Regulation Review Committee is scheduled to meet on Tuesday January 22, 2008 in room 1E of the Legislative Office Building in Hartford to act upon the pilotage rate regulation change. Barring adverse action by the Committee, the rate increase is expected to be implemented within a week or two after the meeting. Captain Beck also reported that he and the CDOT legislative liaison will be meeting with members of the Committee in advance of the January 22 meeting.

Captain Beck reported to date no comments have been received regarding the extension of the temporary fuel surcharge from February 1, 2008 to July 31, 2008. A Solicitation of Comments was issued on December 5th and comments are due by January 15, 2008. The New York Board of Commissioners of Pilots approved the six month extension of the temporary fuel surcharge at their December 4, 2007 meeting.

As reported at the December meeting, the New York Board asked for further information about the location of the proposed station and the weather conditions under which it would be used. Captain Cashin provided anecdotal information relative to the need to create an alternate heavy weather pilot transfer station within Block Island Sound. It is difficult to define specific weather parameters due to the myriad of combinations and permutations of conditions that would make boarding a vessel at the Montauk Point boarding station unsafe. The Connecticut Pilot Commission has made a recommendation to establish a heavy weather pilot transfer station to the CDOT Commissioner. It is up to CDOT to act upon the recommendation at this point. The issue will be continued on the agenda.

Captain Beck reported that the CDOT has completed its investigation of alleged boarding/disembarkation violations involving nine Connecticut-licensed pilots. One allegation was found to be baseless. The remaining eight pilots were sent letters that proposed a resolution in lieu of a hearing. The proposal is an imposition of a one day license suspension for each alleged violation, with the suspension to be held in abeyance for a one year period. If no additional violations occur in the one-year period, the suspension would not be imposed. Two of the pilots have rejected the proposal and opted for adjudication at a hearing. CDOT is negotiating specific

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terms of the proposal with counsel representing the remaining six of the pilots.

A revised CT Apprentice Pilot Certification & Training document was reviewed and discussed. Captain Beck reported that establishing a minimum and maximum age requirement would most likely violate the age discrimination laws. It was pointed out that other experience and educational requirements being considered would automatically establish a natural minimum age to be considered. It was decided to delete the age requirement. Additional edits were made to the document based on discussion and clarification of terms. There was a discussion on whether or not the Interview section and the Written Exam section of selection process were properly weighted. It was decided to defer action to the February meeting. All agreed that the Commission needed to establish the criteria and a score sheet to facilitate the practical evaluation of selected applicants during the training program. Information will be gathered from other pilot organizations/states to be discussed at the February meeting. Information will be gathered with respect to how other entities handle progress reports during the training program.

The Commission discussed the use of diesel fuel index. Discussion revolved around how pilot boats procured fuel. It was also stated that a number of tug operators impose a variable fuel surcharge which is pegged to fuel prices. Mr. Love will investigate an index or other mechanism used to measure fuel prices and report to the Commission at the February meeting.

Pursuit of a legislative initiative to create a pilot training and safety equipment fund was discussed. A draft letter was presented and discussed. The letter would seek support from CT state legislators who appoint members to the Commission. The Commission discussed means to pay for training and equipment, ranging from persuading OPM to permit the 6% fee currently diverted into the general fund to be used for training and certification purposes to legislatively creating such a fund. A motion was made to finalize the letter, sign it and send it but only after the pilotage rate increase was implemented. The motion was seconded and approved by unanimous vote.

Setting Pilot Commission objectives and priorities for 2008 was deferred to the February meeting.

Captain Beck reported that all calendar year 2008 pilot license renewal letters had been mailed on 28 December 2007. He also reported that he listened in on a TWIC telephone conference on Tuesday January 8. He deferred to LCDR Oditt to make further comment. Mr. Rossiter raised a long standing issue that should be considered by the Commission for 2008; the need for guidelines relative to accident investigation. Questions about responsibility, authority, ability and coordination are among some of the issues. Further discussion was deferred to the February meeting.

LCDR Oditt thanked the pilots for continuing to make reports on the operational status of navigation equipment observed upon boarding a vessel. LCDR Oditt, Captain Beck and Captain Cashin provided information on TWIC availability and implementation. The TWIC regulation requires that all pilots obtain a TWIC card in order to have access to "secure" within a port facility. A TWIC center will be established in New London

The Commission did not meet in Executive Session.

The public meeting was adjourned at 9:57 a.m. The Commission's next public meeting is scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 14, 2008 at the Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound office in New Haven, CT.

Michael J. Eisele
Chairman, Connecticut Pilot Commission