

Connecticut Maritime Commission Annual Report 2010

The Connecticut Maritime Commission (CTMC) was established in July 2004 by State Statute (TITLE 13b CHAPTER 242* Section 13b-51a) as the successor agency to the Connecticut Port Authority. The CTMC consists of fifteen members representing five State agencies, the maritime business industry, local port authorities, port operators, marine passenger services, port labor unions, recreational marine services and the coastal communities. The State agencies are represented by the Commissioners of the Departments of Transportation (DOT), Economic and Community Development (DECD) and Environmental Protection (DEP), the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and the Chairman of the Transportation Strategy Board (TSB) or their respective designees. The remaining members of the CTMC are appointed as follows: four members appointed by the Governor; one member each appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the majority leader of the House of Representatives and the minority leader of the House of Representatives. All appointed members serve for terms coterminous with their appointing authority and until their successor is appointed and has qualified. Vacancies on the CTMC are filled for the remainder of the term in the same manner as original appointments. The chairman of the CTMC is selected by the Governor from among the appointed members of the Commission. The commission may elect a vice chairman, secretary and such other officers as it deems proper. Members receive no compensation for the performance of their duties.

In accordance with TITLE 13b CHAPTER 242* Section 13b-51a.(f) of the Connecticut General Statutes, on or before January 1st, the CTMC is to submit an annual report to the Commissioner of Transportation, the Governor and the Transportation Strategy Board. The report is to provide: (1) a list of projects which, if undertaken by the state, would support the state's maritime policy and encourage maritime commerce and industry; (2) recommendations for improvements to existing maritime policies, programs and facilities; and (3) such other recommendations as it considers appropriate. Copies of the report are to be submitted to the General Assembly as well.

During calendar year 2010, the CTMC met monthly on the third Wednesday of each month at four different locations throughout the State on a rotating basis (Newington, New London, New Haven and Bridgeport). The annual schedule of the CTMC meetings and the minutes of meetings held were made available to the general public by being posted on the CONNDOT webpage (www.ct.gov/dot) under "About Us" and then "Commissions" or at <http://www.ct.gov/dot/cwp/view.asp?a=2314&q=307038>.

There were several changes to the membership of the CTMC during the year. Ms Brenda Sisco replaced Mr. Robert Genuario as the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management. Mr. Bruce Alexander replaced Mr. Kevin Kelleher as the Chairman of the Transportation Strategy Board. Mr. Jeffrey Parker replaced Mr. Joseph Marie as the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation. In October, Mr. Ronald Angelo was appointed by Governor Rell to replace Ms. Linda Krause and Mr. Parker Wise was appointed by the House Majority Leader Denise Merrill to replace Mr. John Wronowski.

The Maritime Policy for the State of Connecticut developed in December 2005 and approved by the Governor's office in 2006 without comment continued to serve as the cornerstone of issues addressed by the CTMC during calendar year 2010. Maintenance dredging of the state's waterways and the associated economic impact remained the top issues throughout 2010. The failed attempt to pass legislation introduced by the CT Departments of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Environmental Protection (DEP), Transportation (DOT) and the Office to Policy and Management (OPM) in 2008 that would have provided funding for a Deep Draft Port Study was not re-introduced during the 2010 legislative session. The need to develop a CT Deep Draft Port Study/Strategy is driven by predictions of both a doubling in container cargo by the year 2020 as well as moves to create freight corridors including use of the northeast corridor of the Maritime Administration's Marine Highway.

As a means of keeping current on maritime issues around the state, the CTMC entertained presentations from state agencies, harbor management commissions, port authorities, developers and maritime organizations during the year. Presentations were made by the following: City of New London, New Haven Port Authority, Connecticut Maritime Coalition, Nature Conservancy, Bridgeport Port Authority, the Bridgeport-Port Jefferson Steamship Company, the Cruise Ship Task Force, Transmission Developers Inc., Department of Environmental Protection, City of Bridgeport and the Department of Economic and Community Development. Additionally, updates on the Long Island Sound Area Maritime Security Committee (LIS AMSC) and the Long Island Sound Harbor Safety Committee (LIS HSC) were routinely provided by representatives from U.S. Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound. Issues presented included port security grants, the Transportation Workers Identification Credential (TWIC) card project, heavy weather plans and the establishment of anchorage and lightering zones off of New London, New Haven and Bridgeport

Throughout the year, the CTMC continued to press for federal and state funding for maritime infrastructure improvement projects, specifically dredging projects. Although the CTMC leadership did not meet with the local staff members of the Connecticut Congressional Delegation (CODEL) this year, the Department of Transportation's Dredging Project Coordinator routinely corresponded with the staff on dredging project funding needs. The Department of Transportation sent a letter on February 24, 2010 to the CT Congressional delegation in support of FY 2011 funding for the New England District of the ACOE to complete maintenance dredging projects in the state. The CTMC made inquiries to various state legislators about funding the Harbor Improvement Account that was established by legislative action during the 2008 legislative session. The CTMC continued to seek clarification on the State of New York's rights to intervene on CT dredging projects. However, a response from the CT Attorney General to either of the two letters (November 2006 and September 2008) that had been sent to him requesting assistance in determining if the State of NY was overreaching its authority to conduct a Coastal Zone Consistency review of CT dredging projects was not received in 2010.

The New England Division of the Army Corps of Engineers routinely provided updates on the development of the Long Island Sound Dredge Material Management Plan (LIS DMMP) as well as on Connecticut dredging projects such as; Bridgeport Harbor, Patchogue River, Clinton Harbor, Greenwich Harbor, Mianus River, Housatonic River and Norwalk Harbor Phase III. If an LIS DMMP is not in place by June 2013, both the Western LIS and Central LIS disposal sites could be closed. Congress provided \$3.25M towards the LIS DMMP development to the ACOE in FY 2008, \$1M in FY 2009 and \$2.89M in the FY 2010. The total estimated cost of the LIS DMMP is approximately

\$12M. In conjunction with determining Connecticut's dredging needs, the Connecticut Maritime Coalition (CMC) engaged a consultant to determine the economic impact of the marine related industries on the state's gross state product. The study found that in 2007 Connecticut's maritime-dependent industries, their suppliers and related economic activity accounted for over \$5 billion in business output within the State. Additionally the maritime industries accounted for more than 30,000 jobs; approximately \$1.7 billion in household income; and \$2.7 billion in State GDP. As a consequence of these direct, indirect, and induced economic effects within the statewide economy, maritime industries annually accounted for over \$56 million in taxes paid to local communities, \$54 million in State tax revenues, and over \$224 million in Federal tax revenues.

In January 2010, the ACOE introduced the possible use of the government owned vessel CURRITUCK for the Patchogue River and Clinton Harbor dredging projects using appropriated funds for Patchogue and "overhead" funds for Clinton. The end result is that approximately 30,000 cubic yards of material was dredged by the CURRITUCK and relocated at a near shore disposal area off of Hammonasset Beach for beach nourishment. The CTDEP Inland Fisheries unit provided information related to why and how dredging windows were established.

In February, the CTMC initiated a discussion on the need for a state port authority as was recommended by the State Economic Strategic Plan. CTDEP Office of Long Island Sound Programs provided information on how water quality standards were established and reviewed. A similar presentation on the regulatory process was delivered to the Environmental Committee of the CT Legislature. It was reported that the LIS DMMP had been presented by the ACOE to the LIS DMMP Steering Committee of the Regional Dredge Team (RDT) and Project Delivery Team (PDT) at a meeting held on February 8, 2010 at CTDOT Headquarters.

In March, the ACOE made a Public Announcement on the Bridgeport Dredge Material Management Plan. The proposed plan included creating a Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) cell within Bridgeport Harbor as well as use of the pre-existing "borrow pit" in the Morris Cove area of New Haven Harbor. The CTMC was advised that the CTDOT forwarded requests for federal funding for 8 dredging projects in CT to the CT Congressional delegation. A committee was formed to develop alternatives to the statewide port authority concept for consideration by the CTMC.

In April 2010, the CTMC was updated on the Public Information Meeting held in New Haven by the ACOE on the Bridgeport Dredge Material Management Plan (DMMP). The meeting was intended to inform all concerned and seek comments on the proposed disposal plan for the Bridgeport materials. One of the proposed disposal plans includes creating a Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) cell within Bridgeport Harbor as well as use of the "borrow pit" in New Haven Harbor's Morris Cove area. The CTMC was provided an update on the initial planning efforts of a group of people to bring some of the America's Cup Challenge Races to the New London area. The New London City Council committed to some financial support for planning. The New London group had met with representatives from Newport and New Bedford. The effort to bring the America's Cup races to the area was intended to be a joint effort by people from New London, New Bedford, MA and Newport, RI. The concept would be that the tri-state/tri city areas would host parts of the run-up or challenge races with Newport most likely hosting the final race between the current holder of the Cup and the foreign challengers. Surveys were electronically distributed to the CTMC Commissioners and the interested parties relative to the need for a state port authority. CTMC sent a letter to the CT Congressional delegation asking for their collective support for the Levin-Stabenow Bill.

If enacted, the Bill would ensure that all of the revenue collected by the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) would be used for its intended purpose: to properly maintain and operate the nation's harbors and ports. Only Congressman Courtney responded by letter that he had signed on as a co-sponsor to H.R. 4844.

In May, CTDEP addressed the CTMC on the Supplemental Environmental Impact Study (SEIS) needed for eastern Long Island Sound (LIS). It was reported that a meeting was held in Washington by Senator Lieberman, Congressman Courtney, with a deputy EPA official to express concern with the lack of progress on the SEIS. EPA committed to work with CT to move forward on the SEIS. EPA indicated that they can only move forward if funded and then not before the fall of 2010, so that critical information can be delivered from several of the LIS DMMP study tasks. The ACOE anticipated conducting sampling and testing of New Haven Harbor on or about the middle of June 2010 as a step towards a maintenance dredging project.

In June Mr. Donald Jessome, President of Transmission Developers, Inc (TDI) provided an in depth presentation on his company's plan to establish new transmission lines to provide electricity from Canada to the New York and Connecticut market. The \$3.8 billion Champlain Hudson Power Express project will bring up to 2,000 megawatts (MW) of clean, renewable wind and hydro power to New York and New England. The project is intended to help New York and New England meet renewable energy goals using electrical power derived from carbon-free generation sources. The Connecticut portion of the project was subsequently dropped. A summary of the North Atlantic Ports Association meeting that was held at the Mystic Marriott June 2-4, 2010 was provided. The NAPA meeting in Mystic was the first time that any of the semi-annual meetings had been held in CT and was reportedly the most highly attended meetings ever. Much of the success for the meeting was credited to the event sponsors from CT such as the CT Maritime Association, the CT Maritime Coalition, Gateway Terminals, New Haven Terminal, New England Shipping and Parson-Brinkerhoff. One noteworthy session at the NAPA meeting was a panel discussion on port governance moderated by Chairman Joseph Riccio. Panel members were Mary Jane Norris from the Baltimore Port Administration, Mike Leone of MASSPORT and CTDECD Commissioner Joan McDonald. Three items were identified as important to a successful port authority: independence, a professional staff and a funding stream.

In July, there was considerable discussion on the potential move of the Bridgeport-Port Jefferson Ferry from the current ferry terminal owned by the Bridgeport Port Authority across the harbor to the Coastline Terminal property. The focus of the discussion was whether or not the CTMC should send a letter to the Governor asking for a state review and possible mediation in a dispute between the Bridgeport Port Jefferson Ferry Company and the City of Bridgeport. Driving the discussion was the recent Chapter 11 filing of Coastline Terminals in Bridgeport. It appeared that attention was warranted as a matter of policy not only for the Port of Bridgeport but all of CT's ports. The discussion was preceded by comments made by Attorney Rizio, representing the Bridgeport Port Jefferson Ferry and Ms Nancy Hadley, member of the Bridgeport Downtown Task Force. Mention was made that the ferry terminal was an integral part of the Intermodal Transportation Center in Bridgeport and key to the revitalization of the downtown area. It was determined during the discussion that the Ferry Company had not taken the potential relocation of the ferry operations issue to CT's Transportation Strategy Board. Nor had the Ferry Company obtained approval from the Bridgeport Port Authority, the Bridgeport P&Z Commission or the Bridgeport Harbor Management Commission. Comments were made relative to the loss of business at the Coastline

Terminal and the challenges to advertise Bridgeport as a deep draft port due to channel depth restrictions. The discussion concluded with a decision not to send a letter.

A meeting was not scheduled in August due to traditional problems obtaining a quorum caused by summer vacations.

In September the focus of the discussions were on the proposed state port authority. Some felt that CT needed a strategy for its ports and that the strategy should be collaboratively developed among the stakeholders (state, local, private, etc). Without a strategy and a lead agency to implement the strategy, local governments would be able to "gentrify" the port areas with non-water dependent uses as a way to improve the grand list. Various forms of state leadership were discussed ranging from status quo to a new Department of Maritime Affairs (DMA) to an independent state port authority. The CTMC had been specifically asked by DECD to provide recommendations on the need for or organization of a state port authority, The CTMC formed a committee, but had failed to produce any recommendations. The discussion concluded with an approved motion that the CTMC send a letter to the Commissioner of DECD requesting that DECD take no legislative action to create a state port authority during the 2011 legislative session. A summary of the Marine Highway grant program being offered by the Maritime Administration (MARAD) and the success thus far of an application for part of the grant on a CT project was provided. An application to retro fit three Cross Sound Ferry vessels was submitted and had made the first cut to be one of eight in contention for part or all of a \$7M grant. MARAD was to make the final selections by the end of September. (Subsequently, the CSF projects did not make the final cut.) There was some discussion comparing the project to the former feeder barge project in Bridgeport and questions concerning why Bridgeport had not applied for the Marine Highway grant. The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) is pressing Congress for a freight study and federal funding for projects that will relieve current and anticipated freight choke points (such as CT) along identified freight corridors. Better cooperation among the New England states relative to the movement of freight has been identified as an issue. In June 2009, the CTMC provided a letter to the Maritime Corridor docket recommending that Connecticut ports be considered as part of the Northeast Marine Corridor of the Maritime Highway. A second Bridgeport Harbor DMMP public meeting was held at the University of Bridgeport on September 30, 2010.

CTMC did not hold a meeting in October due to a lack of a quorum. The CTMC leadership did not meet with staff members of the CT Congressional Delegation (CODEL) as had been done in years past. However, correspondence to the CODEL presented a list of priority dredging projects that needed federal funding. A third and final Bridgeport Harbor DMMP public meeting was held in New Haven on October 25, 2010.

In November there was considerable discussion on a dredging seminar sponsored by the Connecticut Harbor Management Association (CHMA). The seminar was held on July 19, 2010. A summary report was issued on November 4, 2010. A CHMA representative distributed handouts to the Commissioners and talked about the content of three documents. One document was a Summary of Findings and Recommendations from a study by the CHMA of the Federal Maintenance Dredging Process dated March 21, 2005. The document contained 27 findings and 10 multi-tiered recommendations. Several of the recommendations have been implemented during the intervening years. Another document dated November 4, 2010 was the Highlights and Recommendations from the July 19, 2010 Dredging Seminar. The focus of the seminar was on special purpose dredging equipment like the ACOE Dredge Vessel

CURRITUCK. Presentations were made by representatives from the ACOE, CT, MA and RI as well as local officials from Stratford and the CHMA. The Highlights and Recommendations document stated that unlike in CT, officials in MA and RI do not see a conflict between advocating for dredging projects and regulating the process. It also recommended better use of the Regional Dredging Team (RDT). The CHMA has made a request to the ACOE for funds for a Low Use Navigation project. A key to a Low Use Navigation Project is to identify alternative dredging strategies which may include a near shore disposal site. The third document provided was a letter from CHMA dated Nov 14, 2010 to CTDEP. The letter was submitted as a response/input to the October 01, 2010 DEP Public Notice soliciting comments concerning "Updated Assessment and Strategy of the CT Coastal Management Program". The recommendations contained in the letter were consistent with those in the previous two documents.

Clarification on the tasking recommended for the dredging project coordinator contained in the Dredging Seminar Summary document was requested and opened discussion. Most of the recommended tasks were things already being accomplished by the dredging project coordinator. It was stated by the CHMA representative that Greenwich had to create their own dredge disposal alternatives analysis in order to move their federal project along. The example failed to note that the dredging project coordinator had provided information to the Greenwich officials to get them started. Additionally, it was pointed out that once the LIS DMMP is completed, it will include a list of feasible disposal options. It was emphasized that generating dredge material disposal plans for federal channels was the responsibility of the ACOE and Greenwich was not required to conduct the analysis, but chose to do so. The purpose of the Low Use Navigation Program was clarified. The program offers a minimum amount of funding by the ACOE for planning purposes only. The planning is to be directed at small harbor dredging projects with an expectation that some entity other than the ACOE will find an "alternate" (i.e. non-federal) funding source for the actual dredging. Commissioner Miller pointed out that unlike CT, RI and MA do not have to deal with opposition to dredging projects from NY. In general, the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Highlights and Recommendations document on the July 19, 2010 Dredging Seminar were challenged since the information contained in the document differed greatly from what was actually discussed during the Seminar. Most significantly, comments made at the end of the Seminar relative to the major difference among the New England states were not recorded in the Summary. The state CT, RI, & MA agencies that deal with dredging issues are organized slightly different, but the most important difference was that RI and MA get federal funding through earmarks for dredging projects every year. It's the earmarks that cover the costs of the CURRITUCK's annual dredging tour of the smaller ports in RI and MA.

Information was provided on an invitation by the national OPSAIL organization for New London to participate in OPSAIL 2012. The 2012 event might not be as large as the 2000 OPSAIL event. The general theme of OPSAIL 2012 is to commemorate the bicentennial of War of 1812. The Governor, through DECD, has provided \$50K for the planning phase of the event.

Although all of the CTMC meetings are open to the public, the 2010 Annual Meeting of the CTMC required to be held in accordance with CGS Sec. 13b-51a (e) was held on December 15, 2010. With the exception of DECD Commissioner Joan McDonald, none of the state agency leaders or the legislative leaders was in attendance, primarily due to an unresolved conflict in scheduling between the CTMC and the Transportation Strategy Board.

A review of the ongoing dredging projects in the state and the status of the LIS DMMP were provided by the CTDOT's dredge project coordinator. The total cost for all of the outstanding Connecticut dredging projects being carried by the ACOE is approximately \$104.3M.

Commissioner McDonald provided an update on the Statewide Economic Strategic Plan (ESP), specifically on the creation of a state port authority. The new administration's proposed Port Development Plan was the center of the discussion. Governor Elect Malloy has formed a Transition Team that has a Transportation Policy Working Group. The co-chairs of the Working Group have been seeking comments on various transportation related topics, two of which are of interest to the CTMC and interested parties: creation of a state port authority and elevating port development to the status of a strategic transportation /economic development priority.

An update of the financial difficulties of the Cruise Ship Task Force (CSTF) was provided. Details on grants previously received from various state agencies such as DECD, CCCT, OPM as well as the City of New London and private organizations were discussed. An explanation was given on how the grants were spent: primarily to hire motor coaches to transport cruise ship passengers and crew to downtown locations and other regional attractions. It was reported that the cruise ship industry advertizes that each passenger spends approximately \$150 per port visit. The CROWN PRINCESS visited New London in September with 3050 passengers and in October with 3075 passengers plus a crew of about 1400. It was reported that the State's Office of Policy and Management had recently sent a letter to the CSTF recalling any unspent funds previously provided by any and all state agencies. The CSTF has a meeting with OPM on December 21, 2010 to discuss the issue. Returning the funds would essentially close the doors of the CSTF. After further discussion, a motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved for the CTMC to write a letter to OPM Secretary Sisco respectfully requesting she reconsider the recall of the CSTF funds (\$43,083.33).

The CTMC calendar year 2011 meeting schedule was established and posted on the CONNDOT web page (<http://www.ct.gov/dot/cwp/view.asp?a=2314&q=307038>). The 2011 monthly meetings will be held at 0930 on the third Wednesday of each month at four different locations around the state (Newington, New London, New Haven and Bridgeport) on a rotational basis to better facilitate public participation.

