

**MARITIME EXCHANGE FOR THE DELAWARE RIVER AND BAY
MARITIME OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
October 8, 2024**

MINUTES

Maritime Exchange President Lisa Hember welcomed everyone and thanked members for participating. Ms. Hember stated this will be her last Maritime Operations Committee meeting before retiring and introduced her successor, George McCarthy.

I. Attendance

The attendees list is attached.

II. U.S. Coast Guard

Expressing the regrets of CAPT Higgins-Bloom, Chief of Prevention CDR Frank Strom gave the following updates:

- A. Cybersecurity** – Although the U.S. Coast Guard does not yet have regulations for cybersecurity, the White House has been pushing cybersecurity professionals in all 17 U.S. infrastructure sectors to follow Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency guidance. This set of 10 cyber hygiene practices when implemented will help strengthen cybersecurity in the marine transportation system. The U.S. Coast Guard urges members to reach out if interested.

Ms. Hember asked whether there is a component in the Maritime Transportation Security Act, MTSA, regulations for vessel and facility cybersecurity. CDR Strom responded yes, in current MTSA regulations are sections that speak to networks and communication systems.

The notice of proposed rulemaking for prescriptive cybersecurity measures has not yet been finalized yet by the Coast Guard.

- B. Intermodal Containers** – Mr. Bill McGinnis of Greenwich Terminals presented an illegible carbon copy form and stated he sent three follow-up emails regarding the form with no response. CDR Strom said that not responding is unacceptable, and if the form is illegible, the Coast Guard processes the form in an electric format to send back for use. He will follow up on the matter.

Ms. Hember asked why carbon copies are still in use. The short answer is the regulations still require paper copies. The Coast Guard is moving into the 21st century and tries to follow up with a digital format, and officers are beginning to use handheld devices that allow them to update in real time. Ms. Hember questioned whether creating a pilot program to eliminate paper might be possible. CDR Strom mentioned everyone will not have a device to go out in the field yet, but per the regulations, a paper copy will be sent.

[Follow-up: Sector Delaware Bay has followed up with Greenwich Terminals to remedy the issue presented by Mr. McGinnis. To prevent this from happening in the future, the Coast Guard will now hand off the original form for signature at the conclusion of the

inspection and request a copy. Additionally, all forms moving forward will include the correct email address, FacSecDelBay@uscg.mil.

Coast Guard are also actively working on modernizing our processes to better serve our stakeholders. While regulations still require us to provide paper copies, we are gradually transitioning to a digital format. The officers are starting to use handheld devices that allow real-time updates, although not all officers have these devices yet. The Coast Guard appreciates your patience as we move toward a more efficient system.]

- C. **Hurricane Response** – The U.S. Coast Guard is ramping up operations anticipating assisting in hurricane recovery. The hurricane season seems fairly active and will require significant Coast Guard involvement to assist FEMA and other government agencies responding to all affected areas.

III. U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Assistant Area Port Director Donald Josey reported on the following:

- A. **Crew Guard Issue** – CBP has tightened approval of security plans on vessels due to issues with deserters. The new requirements are effective January 1, 2025 and will include three parts:
- Security guards will be required to have some type of outside training other than their employers; armed guards will have to produce state certificates to guard crews.
 - CBP will work security companies to tighten contract language;
 - CBP will offer a mandatory class for every guard, hopefully three times per year.
- B. **CBP Going Cashless** – CBP entered into a pilot program in Philadelphia to shift payments in the maritime environment to cashless. The goal is to be completely cashless by the end of 2025. Chief Sean Butler and Supervisory Officer Josh Mason will contact stakeholders to get started, and CBP plans to offer training.
- C. **Arrival Times** – CBP has been seeing submitted vessel arrival times off by a couple hours and stressed the importance of providing accurate times. Due to limited staff, incorrect times can cause issues with boarding's and cargo delays.

Mr. Michael Fink of the Maritime Exchange noted that arrival times are a reoccurring topic at the national level. CBP inspectors sometimes enter arrival dates as do vessel agents, resulting in different times being entered. Carriers do not often know they are receiving fines based on CBP's entered date. CBP has not seen the issue locally but will not issue any fines without speaking to the offender first.

Mr. Kevin Chambliss with Host Agency raised an ongoing issue with the date field in the VECS system. When entering an actual date in the past and clicking out of the field, the date resets to the current day. Mr. Butler asked him to send an email detailing the issue, and CBP will work with the programmers to resolve it.

- D. **Area Port Director** – Mr. Cleatus Hunt Jr. is relocating from Japan and scheduled to begin on October 21, 2024.

- E. **Staffing** – CBP personnel will not be removed from the seaport to cover morning activity at the airport. As of January 1, 2025, a new CBP morning shift will cover hours from 0800-2200. The trade and agriculture teams have additional staff and an influx of new officers coming.

IV. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Deputy Chief of Operations Timothy Kelly gave the following updates:

- A. **Maintenance Dredging** – The “McFarland” finished up the 70 training days in fiscal year 2024 and is currently dredging Reedy Island Range under FY25 training days. The Corps is working on an extension for the “McFarland” so she can continue to operate until the new dredge arrives in March 2028. The new dredge is currently on schedule to be completed in November 2027.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded the FY25 maintenance contract to Cottrell Dredging. The dredging schedule will be available after the pre-construction meeting.

A \$4 million contract for Fort Mifflin docks with an option for and the area near the Battleship “New Jersey” across to Penn’s Landing was awarded to Lake Michigan Dredging.

The Philly to Trenton project is ongoing. Seaward Marine is making its way north to Fairless.

Mr. Eric Holt questioned the local maintenance dredging budget. Mr. Kelly noted that the current fiscal year budget is sufficient to meet Corps needs. Also included are funds to expand disposal areas increase capacity. The Corps will award additional contracts over the next eighteen months but is waiting for the current contracts to finish.

Mr. Holt discussed the river going to fifty feet. Mr. Sean Mahoney with PhilaPort mentioned the strategic plan, Destination 2040, which mentions the fifty-foot channel and equally important a fifty-foot anchorage for deep-draft vessels.

V. U.S. Department of Agriculture

Location Coordinator and Research Leader John Baker reported on the following:

- A. **Staffing** – The USDA is bringing two new officers on board and will be fully staffed with two officers at Gloucester Terminal, one at Packer Ave., one at Penn Terminals, and three officers in the Customhouse.
- B. **Seasonal Pests** – The USDA completed the seasonal port environment trapping looking for high priority pests, and Mr. Baker was happy to have no report.
- C. **Cold Storage Treatment Facility** – The USDA certified a new cold storage treatment facility in South Jersey in the record time of two days. Mr. Holt thanked Mr. Baker and everyone involved to get the site up and running in a short period of time.

Ms. Himber took a moment to recognize and thank Mr. Carlos Martinez with the USDA and long-time friend of the Exchange for coming to the meeting from Raleigh, North Carolina.

VI. Maritime Administration

Ms. Amanda Rutherford, Director of the Maritime Administration's Mid- Atlantic Gateway, reminded members she is the contact for U.S. Department of Transportation grants and provided members with slides regarding different types grants that could serve public or even private stakeholders. Members are invited to contact [Ms. Rutherford](#) to identify grant opportunities to fit specific infrastructure or planning needs or with any questions.

VII. Open Discussion

Mr. Josey with CBP presented Ms. Himber with a plaque and thanked her for her continued support and partnership over the years. Ms. Himber thanked CBP its close cooperation with the Exchange and its members. The Exchange appreciates the positive working relationships with CBP employees past and present.

The members voted to return in person to the Maritime Operations Committee spring meeting. Ms. Himber thanked everyone for coming and being members of the committee. She encouraged members to contact Mr. [George McCarthy](#) or Ms. [Laura Miller](#) with any ideas, events, programs, or topics of interest at any time.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1052.

Attendees

Company	Name
Atlantic Commercial Materials, Inc.	James McFarlane
BATA Marine, Inc.	William Smith
East Coast CES	Steve Banasiak
Energy Transfer	David Monk
Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation	Louis Cavaliere
Greenwich Terminals	William McGinnis
Holt Logistics Corp.	Eric Holt
Host Agency	Kevin Chambliss
Maritime Administration (MARAD)	Amanda Rutherford
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay	Michael Fink
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay	Lisa Himber
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay	Taylor Kirk
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay	George McCarthy
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay	Laura Miller
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay	Paul Myhre
Philadelphia Barge Company	Lynn Cointot
PhilaPort	Joe Fox
PhilaPort	Sean Mahoney
Pinelands Group, LLC	Ed Moriarty
PSA Penn Terminals	Jason Norbut
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Timothy Kelly
U.S. Coast Guard	CDR Frank Strom
U.S. Coast Guard	Lt. Owen Mims
U.S. Customs and Border Protection	Donald Josey
U.S. Customs and Border Protection	David Ng
U.S. Customs and Border Protection	Sean Butler
U.S. Department of Agriculture	John Baker
U.S. Department of Agriculture	Carlos Martinez
U.S. Department of Agriculture	Timothy Newcamp

Note: Call-in participants may not be listed.