

**Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee**  
**October 17, 2017**  
**9:30AM**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**Nikiski Fire Department, Station No. 1**  
**Nikiski, Alaska**

**Attendees**

**Committee Members: voting**

Captain Louis Audette, Tug & Barge Operators - Primary  
Bryan Baker, Small Passenger Vessel Operators – Primary  
Gunar Berklund, Off-shore Oil Production Operators – Alternate  
Jeff Brue, Tanker Operators – Primary  
Steve Catalano, CIRCAC – Primary  
Mark DeVries, LNG Carrier Operators – Primary  
Captain Pete Garay, SWAPA - Primary  
Luke Hasenbank, Ship Agents – Alternate  
Bryan Hawkins, Port of Homer – Primary  
Captain Brad Kroon, Harbor Tug Operators – Primary  
Rachel Lord, Environmental Organization – Primary  
Captain Paul Mehler, Marine Oil Terminal Operators – Primary  
Todd Paxton, Response Organization - Alternate  
Stephen Ribuffo, Chair, Port of Anchorage – Primary  
Frank Smith, Dry Cargo Ship Operators - Primary  
Mark Tornai, Recreational Boaters - Primary

**Committee Members: non-voting**

Captain Sven Christensen, Harbor Tug Operators – Alternate  
Matt Clarke, Port of Homer – Alternate

**Ex-Officio: non-voting**

Chief James Baisden, Nikiski Fire Dept. – Primary  
Brett Farrell, Alaska Marine Exchange - Alternate  
CDR Justin Jacobs, USCG Sector Anchorage – Primary  
LTjg David Parker, USCG Sector Anchorage – Alternate

**Managing Board of Directors**

Senator Peter Micciche, President  
Captain Ron Ward, Vice-President  
Mike Munger, Secretary/Treasurer

**Others**

Marshall Blankenship, Resolve Marine  
Bart Buesseler, NOAA Coast Survey  
Howard W. Clark, Crowley  
James Doxtater, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

Sierra Fletcher, Nuka Research and Planning Group  
Brent Mellen, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)  
Alyssa Murphy, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)  
Sara Nichols, Nuka Research and Planning Group  
Jeff Tucker, Kenai Fire Department  
Tim Robertson, Nuka Research and Planning Group  
Jenni Zielinski, Southwest Alaska Pilots Association (SWAPA)

The fifth meeting of the Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee (CIHSC) was held at the Nikiski Fire Department, Station No. 1, in Nikiski, Alaska on October 17, 2017.

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Stephen Ribuffo called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. Request for the order of agenda items VII a. and VII b. to be switched, and VII g. to be deferred until next meeting.

**MOTION CATALANO, HAWKINS TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. VOICE VOTE, UNANIMOUS**

### **Approval of Past Meeting Summary**

**MOTION CATALANO, PAXTON TO APPROVE THE MEETING SUMMARY OF OCTOBER 28, 2016 AS WRITTEN. VOICE VOTE, UNANIMOUS**

### **Alaska Marine Exchange AIS Briefing**

Brett Farrell gave an overview of AIS technology tools used for a tracking network in Cook Inlet, and the role of Alaska Marine Exchange in enhancing maritime safety.

### **2016 Vessel Traffic Update**

Tim Robertson and Sierra Fletcher gave a presentation of the vessel tracking system being developed by Nuka Research and the Marine Exchange of Alaska, and a demonstration of how government and industry entities can use the system to monitor vessel traffic in the Cook Inlet.

### **Marine Safety and Recent Incidents**

CDR Justin Jacobs, U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Anchorage, gave a synopsis of recent incidents in the Cook Inlet with regard to marine safety, and how that relates to the CIHSC. There were only 5 incidents, 3 in Kachemak Bay and 2 in the upper Cook Inlet.

### **Managing Board Report**

Senator Peter Micciche, President of the Managing Board of Directors reported that the CIHSC is well on the way to being a fully functional organization thanks to the help of Nuka Research and the hard work of the Committee, Workgroups, Managing Board and Ex-Officio members. In order to carry on, everyone must contribute their dues to make the organization function properly.

### **Work Group Reports**

#### **Harbor Safety Plan Work Group (HSP WG)**

Lieutenant David Parker, U.S Coast Guard, Sector Anchorage, and Chairman of the Harbor Safety Plan Workgroup presented the revised Harbor Safety Plan, which has undergone an annual public review cycles after being approved at the HSC Meeting October 28, 2016. All comments and suggestions were

analyzed and many changes were made, namely formatting and making the contact information current. The group went over the whole plan and several additional amendments were suggested.

- Add CIHSC Workgroup Mission Statements to Section A.2
- Change the word “Patrol” to “Protection” in the title of Section B.6.6
- Add the word “or” to the final sentence of Section B.9.1 to read – “On a case by case basis, inbound vessels may be directed by the COTP to proceed to anchorages or modify transit schedules in order to effectively mitigate the obstruction.”
- Change the word “halibut” to “groundfish” in the last sentence of the fourth paragraph of Section B.14.
- Add a map overview of the commercial fishing areas and the seasons as depicted in the table on page 39
- Remove Sablefish from the table on page 39 depicting fishing seasons
- Add a chart showing where ground gear is, something to show where and when activities are happening including charter fishermen. Need a good understanding of typical vessel routes.  
**This will be taken up by the Workgroups**
- Add sections with language from the Ports of Homer, Nikiski and Anchorage to Section C.2.
- Strike the list of ADV Task Force members from Section C.5. because it is an ad hoc group
- Add definition of Deep Draft Vessels
- Strike Section C.6.3. Log Tows and Storage

**MOTION KROON, BAKER TO ACCEPT THE AMENDMENTS AND APPROVE THE COOK INLET HARBOR SAFETY PLAN. VOICE VOTE, UNANIMOUS**

**Navigation Work Group**

Captain Pete Garay, Chairman of the Navigation Workgroup reported that SWAPA per a request from the HSC for more continuity, has created operating guidelines which include an interview process and a peer group review of the Underkeel Clearance definition. Issues relating to Navigation will be addressed with one voice. Jenni Zielinski was introduced as the SWAPA Business Manager who will be that voice, and hopefully provide more consistency.

SWAPA is submitting changes to the Cook Inlet Guidelines to the USCG. This language will be available via the CIHSC Website after approval in November. Captain Garay also requested more people to participate in the Navigation Workgroup.

**MOTION GARAY, AUDETTE THAT THE UKC LANGUAGE IN THE COOK INLET HARBOR SAFETY PLAN BE REPEALED AND REPLACED WITH THE FOLLOWING:**

**Under Keel Clearances**

**The accepted practice is to allow 10’ calculated under keel clearance (UKC) for transiting Cook Inlet. NOAA has put a “note” on all nautical charts of Eastern Cook Inlet that reads, “Cook Inlet, and Eastern Portion Numerous uncharted and dangerous submerged boulders exist in the eastern portion of Cook Inlet. Mariners should use extreme caution in the area.” This 10’ rule allows for any anomaly that may exist and provides a risk mitigation factor for a safe transit. SWAPA has published a 10’ calculated under keel clearance requirement for vessels transiting Nikiski and Knik Arm Shoal channels as stated below:**

**Calculated under-keel clearance of 10 feet is recommended for deep draft vessels transiting in Cook Inlet. It should be noted that the determination of an appropriate minimum under-keel**

clearance for a specific vessel transiting a specific waterway must consider many factors in addition to vessel draft and least depth, including but not limited to; environmental conditions, speed, tides and hydrography of the waterway. Masters and pilots should use prudent seamanship and should evaluate the need for additional clearance to accommodate the effects of roll, list, pitch and squat.

**VOICE VOTE, UNANIMOUS**

### **Salvage Work Group**

Neither the Chair nor Co-chair of the Salvage Work Group was present, as Todd Duke had been called out on a job, and David DeVilbiss had recently resigned his position with the HSC due to further international expansion of his job. Chairman Ribuffo requested the Salvage Work Group be deferred to the next meeting. There was no objection.

### **Marine Firefighting Work Group**

Chief James Baisden, Chairman of the Marine Firefighting Workgroup reported that he is working with the Salvage Workgroup and they will have their portion of the Harbor Safety Plan amendments prepared in the near future. Baisden suggested changing the name of the workgroup to Emergency Response and adding emergency firefighters and public safety dive team members to the group. The Prince William Sound RCAC hosted a Marine Firefighting Symposium in Homer and it was a great resource, that everyone should be involved in in the future. Mr. Munger stated that Cook Inlet RCAC has seen the value of the MFF Symposium and has stepped up to support it.

### **Derelict Vessel Bill**

Rachel Lord reported that together with Senator Micciche and a group of concerned citizens, Senate Bill 92 addressing the removal of abandoned vessels from State land is moving forward and will rewrite the state's derelict vessel statutes to better define ownership by requiring more documentation and registration of all vessels. It raises the bar of responsibility for boat owners, clarifying liability and establishing a Derelict Vessel Prevention Program. Chairman Ribuffo and Rachel Lord will work together to develop a Resolution of support and circulate it for Committee input and an email vote.

### **New Business**

#### **Winter Ice Guidelines**

USCG has requested that the HSC take up ownership of the process for managing the Ice Guidelines. Captain Mehler voiced concern that this would put an administrative burden on the Committee that it is too new to handle, and suggested that this would be a good fit for the HSC in the future. USCG specified that they are asking that the Ice Guidelines be constructed by HSC, and that the USCG will administer them. Chairman Ribuffo stated that further consideration on this issue would be taken up by the Managing Board.

#### **Chair of the Harbor Safety Plan Workgroup**

CDR Jacobs requested that the Harbor Safety Plan Workgroup be led by a member of the Committee, specifying that the USCG is not trying to divest their involvement in the HSC, only their leadership within it. Chairman Ribuffo stated that this will require an amendment to the HSC Charter. The Managing Board will amend the Charter and nominate a seated HSC member to Chair the HSP.

### **Review Action Items**

- Nuka will draft a General Cook Inlet FAQ for the website
- Copies of the meeting's presentations will be made available
- USCG and Nuka will make the HSP amendments and get the revised document out to the public
- Ports of Anchorage, Homer and Nikiski will provide their pertinent details to be inserted into the HSP
- Rachel Lord will draft a resolution in support of SB92 as a unified response from the HSC as an organization; Resolution will then be circulated to Committee members for review and a vote.
- Managing Board will decide the HSC's role in Winter Ice Guidelines and the Chairmanship of the HSP Workgroup.
- Salvage and Marine Firefighting Workgroups will finalize their HSP language
- Navigation Workgroup will develop language regarding high-risk areas and mooring policy for the HSP

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for some time in April.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10PM.