

Mariner's Advisory Committee Minutes

December 11, 2025

Captain Drew Hodgens MAC Chairman welcomed members and guests in the room to the 1st Quarterly Meeting

**Following the Posted Agenda**

**NOTE: Presentation summaries are below, presentation details can be found in the attached pdf here:**

<https://www.macdelriv.org/files/mac-meeting-packet.pdf>

I. **Approval of the Minutes**

Captain Drew Hodgens MAC Chairman opens the meeting. Thank you for making time to come today. Captain Hodgens then requested we go around the room for participants to introduce themselves. Motion to approve minutes – Michael Cureton seconded by Captain Cuff.

II. **Reports**

**A. Treasurer's Report – Captain Rick Iuliucci**– Good morning everyone. A new deposit of \$800.00. This week I will be sending out next year's invoices. We are ending the year strong with a balance of \$9,153.30.

### III. USCG Report

A. **Captain Kate Higgins-Bloom** - Good morning, it's wonderful to be here with you all celebrating the holiday meeting. Not too much to say other than thank. You to all port partners for a great year working together. It's been a busy one and working with everyone has been enjoyable and so encouraging. We also have the POSA next week, so it's really a great opportunity to participate in the process and speak directly to the Coast Guard. If you don't have a rep participating, please talk to Owen, and he will make sure you get to be there. Our cyber protection team was here. They conducted a CPT visit. They were able to identify some interesting vulnerabilities that the airport's going to be closing ahead of the 2026 events. This is a free resource that the Coast Guard has. They are still relatively new, but I must tell you I was so impressed with the technical capabilities these guys have. We're loaning them out to the FBI and some other agencies now because they have some cutting-edge capabilities and getting them in there to do a pre-pre-incident mission is really it's a no-brainer. And then lastly, I'm just a little bit sentimental but this is probably my last holiday MAC meeting. I'll be rotating in the summer. When I think about the future, I know that it's in amazing hands with all of you. Again, whether that's cruise ships or FIFA or anything else that comes up the river I think that the community here will take it in stride and make it a success. So, thank you. Have a great Christmas.

### IV. NOAA

A. **Kenneth Curry** – Gave an overview of satellite-based ice detection using Sentinel-1A and related assets. He also discussed the planned online products: time-lapse site, GIS-accessible notes, and day-range forecasts (1–3, 4–6, 7–9 days). He reviewed the ice classification categories based on accumulated degree days and model blends. He also put an emphasis on interpreting satellite reflectivity differences (smooth ice vs. land).

### V. ACOE Report

A. **Mr. Timothy Rooney** – Good morning, everybody. Delaware River - we have Cottrell Contracting, who've completed the dredging of Marcus Hook Anchorage with the dredge Lexington, and she has mobilized up to Delaware River Philly to Sea Project. The next year's maintenance contract was awarded to Norfolk Dredging Company for \$27-plus million. They have been issued notice to proceed, and they're going to schedule dredging to start at Wilmington Harbor. It's going to be the priority, but that will also include Marcus Hook, Cherry Island, Deepwater Point, and Newcastle Ranges. They're looking to start at Wilmington in January. The Hopper Dredge McFarland next tour is going to be in April. Next slide - C&D Canal has a maintenance dredging contract that will start potentially next week. It's scheduled to remove 500,000 cubic yards of material from the channel. That includes the canal proper and the approach channels. Moving on to Summit Bridge, we have the paint and repair contract that's going on. Basically, we have an air gap that has been set at five feet, and I believe it's the southern side of the channel right now, and we'll put out notices when it gets changed, but currently, the work is being done on the southern side.

Details in meeting packet 3 through 7

## VI. NOAA

A. Christopher DiVeglio – Good to see everyone. Happy holidays. A couple of updates on the NOAA ports program. Next slide - this is just a layout of the map. I always keep this slide on here showing everyone all the observing locations that are part of the NOAA ports program and the National Water Level Observation Network. Typically, when I'm at this meeting, I report out on some of the sensor statistics over the last quarter, September 1st through November 30th, all of the air gap systems that are part of this port system, the two along the canal, and of course, the Ben Franklin and Delaware Memorial - everything was operating close to 100%. There was a significant catch-up on maintenance up and down the river over the course of the fall. There were several contract issues on the NOAA side earlier in the year that prevented maintenance to occur, but fortunately, before the government shut down, things got squared away, and that allowed our maintenance contractors to get out and about. All the water level and meteorological stations, as well as the current stations, were serviced this fall. So, in the spirit of ice season, I just want to remind folks, at least for the stations that we manage through NOAA, all the water level stations up and down the river are equipped with backup pressure sensor technology in case ice does form near the shoreline. That allows a continuity of water level observations in the event of ice. And then finally, just, you know, for the sake of monitoring ice formation potential, most of the stations up and down the river and in the bay do include water temperature reading and they're very accurate.

Details in meeting packet 8 through 13

## VII. Burlington County Bridge

A. Mr. Michael Ott – Good morning, everyone. I want to give you a heads up. We have a project upcoming that will impact marine traffic transiting the Tacony from our river. The Tacony-Palmyra Bridge is a double-leaf bascule, so we have cables that run under the bascule span for power and control. Those cables are over 40 years old. When we replace them, we're going to be closing the channel. While we're working, we will have divers in the water in the blue outlined area underneath the bascule. We'll have dive boats; we'll have some barges. So, our plan is to close the bascule to vessels during the day and then give you passage at night for cargo ships and larger vessels. The cables are over 40 years old. The bridge itself is almost 100 years old. We want to keep it reliable so we're pre-emptive design and construction to replace these cables before they fail. The new cables are going to be down below the 50-foot mark, which will allow the Army Corps to dredge the channel another five feet. We have a 12-month lead time on the cable itself, so that drives our construction season to the summer of 27. We have a two-month window where we can dig in the bottom of the river where there's no shad. We plan on doing it in July and August, we'll take advantage of the longer daylight hours. Have the contractor work 12-hour days, 7 days a week.

Details in meeting packet 14 through 20

#### VIII. USCG Chief Petty Officers Association

A. Mr. Matthew Whitlow - Captain Drew Hodgens stepped in as Mr. Whitlow was unable to attend at the last minute. One of the things at the holiday meeting is in the past we gave out a gift, and we decided this year to do something different, and part of that was based upon the government shutdown for 43 days. What we wanted to do was to provide a gift on behalf of the MAC and, we chose the US Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association that we're going to give our gift to. The Maritime Exchange, offered to match that also and so did the Pilots Association. Thank you to both those organizations. We have information if anybody here in attendance would also like to donate.

Details in meeting packet 21 through 22

#### IX. Unfinished Business

A. Captain Drew Hodgens - The Delaware Railroad Bridge update went out last week. The Coast Guard posted that on the MAC website that it's going to be closed in the down position on December 15th during daylight hours; 0700 to 1900. And I posted yesterday that at Monroe Energy in Trainer there has been an adjustment for the maximum draft at the ship dock. The maximum draft fresh water will be 28 feet. And for the barge dock, freshwater draft is going to be 23 feet, 7.01 meters.

#### X. Adjournment

Captain Drew Hodgens asked for a motion to adjourn: Mike Cureton motioned, and Kubilay seconded.

Next meeting Thursday, March 12th at Popi's 1030 for coffee and 1100 start.