

APPROVED

Harbor Safety Committee of the Humboldt Bay Area

0900 hours Thursday March 15, 2012 Woodley Island Marina Conference Room

The Harbor Safety Committee meeting was convened at 0900 hours.

Members Present:

Ms. Suzie Howser, Chair (Port Authority)
Capt. Tim Petrusha (Bar Pilot)
Capt. John Powell (Bar Pilot)
Deputy Roy Reynolds (Local Law Enforcement)
Mr. Stephen Kullmann (Tribal/Environmental)
Mr. John "Hawk" Martin (Recreational Boater)
Capt. Tim Klassen (Recreational Boater)
Dr. Vanessa Metz (Coastal Commission)
Capt. Gilbert Groszmann (Tug Operator)
Mr. Aaron Newman (Commercial Fishing)
Lt. Rob Starr (USCG Group HB)
Mr. Gerry Wheaton (NOAA-OCS) via telephone

Others Present:

Mr. Al Storm (OSPR Liaison)
Mr. Jeff Dayton (OSPR)
Mr. Josh Zulliger (OSPR)
Mr. Dan Larkin (HC OES)
LTJG Rachel Wellman (USCG Sector SF)
Lt. George Suchanek (USCG Group HB)
CWO4 Jo Wildman (USCG MSD HB)
BM1 Chris Moore (USCG Station HB)
ENS Corinne Gaines (USCG Sector SF)
Mr. Kyle Noderer (CalEMA)
Mr. Leroy Zerlang (Brusco Tug & Barge)
Mr. Jeff Raimey (City of Eureka)
Ms. Julie Salminen (Pacific Affiliates)

Ms. Howser announced a quorum was present and the meeting would proceed.

1. Introductions were made.

2. Swearing in of new members. Mr. Storm announced that there are no membership categories expiring this year. The Coastal Commission position has been renewed with Mr. Jonathan Bishop as Member for all Harbor Safety Committees in California and Dr. Vanessa Metz is Alternate for the Harbor Safety Committee of the Humboldt Bay Area. Since Mr. Bishop and Dr. Metz are state employees and have already taken the oath, they are not required to take another oath.

3. Public Comment. None

4. Consideration of approval of minutes for the meeting of November 17, 2011. Captain Petrusha motioned to approve the minutes of November 17, 2011; Deputy Reynolds seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Consideration of approval of minutes for the meeting of January 19, 2012. Captain Petrusha motioned to approve the minutes of January 19, 2012; Deputy Reynolds seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Consideration of approval of revisions to Best Practices and Possible Mariner Actions for Small Craft regarding Tsunamis. Ms. Howser reported to the membership that this was not going to be an action item today as the sub-committee met yesterday afternoon and it was agreed that the document is still in draft form.

Mr. Larkin provided an update on the changes that had been made in regards to the draft document. Members are encouraged to review the new draft document for content and provide Ms. Howser with suggestions. The sub-committee will meet again in the next couple of weeks to review the Best Practices. The brochure "*TSUNAMIS! What RECREATIONAL BOATERS should know*" was finalized as of yesterday. This brochure is a generic brochure for California and is ready to be distributed to the public.

Mr. Martin reported that he had traveled to Crescent City and Noyo and discussed the previous version of the brochure with recreational and commercial boaters. Crescent City and Noyo seemed to be well informed. However, the boaters in Humboldt Bay are not aware of tsunami issues. Education is the key. Any information this committee can provide to the boating public will assist them in making their decisions regarding Tsunami threats.

7. Status/Updates

- a. **Oil Spills/Accidents.** Mr. Dayton reported that it has been quiet along the north coast
- b. **Abandoned Vehicles/Vessels/Debris.** LTJG Wellman reported that a brochure has been created to assist agencies with the process of declaring a vessel abandoned. There is no funding mechanism in place for commercial vessels and the only funding available for disposal of recreational vessels is through local and state programs. The previously reported 208-foot ferryboat *SAN DIEGO* cannot be destroyed at Mare Island and is now waiting for destruction at another facility. Ownership of this vessel is in question.
- c. **Boater Safety.** Mr. Martin reported that he has a boating safety class coming up in the next month.

Ms. Howser reported that Bev Noll conducted a two day AMSEA course for commercial fishermen last week. Another round of AMSEA classes is scheduled for April 16 and 17 in Eureka and April 19 and 20 in Crescent City. These classes are free for commercial fishermen and satisfies the USCG Drill Conductor Training requirement

A USCG Auxiliary Safe Boating class was held on February 04, 2012 in Eureka and another class is scheduled for April 07, 2012. It was unknown how many persons attended the February 04 class.

Lt. Suchanek reported that if the commercial fishermen are interested in learning how to hoist properly, the USCG would be happy to conduct a course in the Harbor District conference room. Or if there is any topic of training the commercial fishermen would like please let USCG know and they will consider all training. Mr. Newman asked if flare training could be looked into as a course. Lt. Sushanek will get back to him with USCG ability to conduct such a course.

- d. **Navigational Aids.** Lt. Starr reported that all Humboldt Bay aids are working properly.

Ms. Howser reported that unfortunately NOAA Buoy 46022 went adrift on February 20, 2012 as was heading south. The buoy is currently located approximately 120 NM west of Fort Ross. The current has shifted direction and the buoy is now heading north. USCGC *BARRACUDA* attempted to retrieve the buoy when it first went adrift; however, there was too much floating line around the buoy for the vessel to work safely. USCGC *ASPEN* is currently in the ship yard and is unable to assist with retrieval.

Scripps Waverider Buoy 46244 off the North Spit went adrift on February 12, 2012. The buoy was quickly recovered by a commercial fishing vessel and is currently in the workyard at Woodley Island marina waiting to be redeployed. Scripps Institute is inquiring if we would like to see surface current data incorporated into the Waverider buoy located off the South Jetty. A resounding yes was voiced by the membership. Ms. Howser will contact Scripps to let them know of our desire.

- e. **Ship Traffic.** Capt. Powell reported that the ship *SILVER LAKE* departed Humboldt Bay with a full load of logs. The next ship is tentatively scheduled for April.

Capt. Zerlang reported that the next ship is scheduled for Schneider Dock and that California Redwood Company is proceeding with their project to bring the chip dock back into operation. Current difficulties with loading ships have been the lack of workforce in our area to fill gangs.

Capt. Petrusha reported on funding for the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to dredge Humboldt Bay. Humboldt Bay currently requires a minimum \$8.6 million to conduct a full dredging. This year the USACE has \$3.2 million allotted for Humboldt bar and entrance channel maintenance dredging. The dredge *ESSAYONS* will be here for 17 days and will only work the bar and entrance channels. No interior dredging will be conducted. There is currently a shoal along the north side of the entrance channel. Draft restrictions are in place for deep draft vessels.

Capt. Petrusha also reported on the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF). The American Association of Port Authorities which represents public port agencies throughout the western hemisphere including all major ports on the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico and Great Lakes coasts, sent a letter to the US House of Representatives Budget Committee requesting that the HMTF be released and used for its intended purpose. Shoaling at ports and harbors has increased due to lack of maintenance dredging and not only does this impact commerce but as with Humboldt, creates dangerous conditions. Capt. Petrusha asked that the Harbor Safety Committee send a letter to Congressman Thompson requesting that the HMTF be released to fund dredging.

Ms. Howser asked Mr. Storm if this is an action item that requires a vote. Mr. Storm replied that it would be best if the committee took a vote.

Capt. Groszmann made the motion for Ms. Howser to send a letter to Congressman Thompson requesting that the HMTF be released to fund dredging. Capt. Powell seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

f. **Navigational Chart Changes.** Mr. Wheaton reported the 24th edition of Chart 18620 is now available.

Mr. Wheaton also reported that the President's budget includes major cuts to NOAA. \$4.6 million has been cut from the tsunami monitoring program which includes DART buoys. There has also been a \$3.6 million cut in grant funding to states to assist with tsunami planning. Another budget cut is to the NOAA Navigation Response Teams (NRT). The NRT is responsible for the hydrographic and ENC verification of surveys and emergency response surveys after disasters; such as emergency surveys conducted after hurricane Katrina and after the tsunami impacts at Crescent City and Santa Cruz. The use of NRTs is part of the Harbor Safety Plan.

Mr. Larkin stated that the budget cuts to the NOAA tsunami program would have a significant impact to our area.

8. **Potential Bay Projects.** Ms. Howser provided the committee with an update on the Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS®) for Humboldt Bay. The agreement for the maintenance of the current meters is almost complete and installation should begin this summer.

9. Reports/Presentations

a. **USCG.** Lt. Starr reported that the USCGC *BARRACUDA* did attempt to recover Buoy 46022 but the amount of floating line was hazardous to the safe operation of the vessel.

CWO4 Wildman reported that Mr. Atkinson from District 11 will conduct VOSS training June 19-21 in Humboldt Bay. The R/V *CORAL SEA* will be used as the vessel of opportunity. Everyone is invited to participate.

Ms. Howser asked if all the VOSS equipment has been returned to Humboldt Bay including the Lancer barge. LTJG Wellman reported that the Lancer barges were destroyed in the BP incident and provisions are being made to replace the Lancer barges with another type of collection system.

USCG reported that Crescent City was looking into forming a Harbor Safety Committee. USCG also reported that hazardous bar conditions have become regular at the entrance to Crescent City harbor which is unusual for the area. After the tsunami last March NOAA NRT6 took a survey of Crescent City but it was unknown if they took a survey of the entrance. The Crescent City Harbor District should have the soundings in the office.

b. **USACE.** No report.

c. **OES.** Mr. Larkin reported that the next Operational Area Meeting will be April 05 at 1330 in the Humboldt County Correctional Facilities conference room.

On February 09 a communications exercise involving over 30 local agencies was conducted at the Woodley Island Marina. The test was successful and agencies were encouraged to include other agency frequencies into their fixed and mobile communications for better interoperability. Also participating in the exercise were Del Norte and Mendocino Counties.

The new controller for the tsunami siren at Woodley Island Marina was installed and will now be automated and sound properly. The final tsunami siren for Humboldt County will be installed at Moonstone. This makes a total of 12 sirens for Humboldt County.

March 25-31, 2012 has been designated as National Tsunami Preparedness Week. On Wednesday, March 28 there will be a full public communications test involving activation of the Emergency Alert System and activation of all tsunami sirens. The sirens will sound for 3 minutes beginning at 1100. Oregon Civil Air Patrol will be conducting a coastal flight and use their new loud hailer system.

Tsunami evacuation maps regarding a Cascadia event are in the final stages and should be available in the next couple of days. The CalEMA Cascadia Project is moving forward.

d. **CPB.** No report.

e. **OSPR.** Mr. Dayton reported the Area Contingency Plan on the website is experiencing some problems. If anyone requires a hard copy of the current ACP, please contact Mr. Dayton.

Mr. Storm reported that a Job announcement was sent to the membership regarding six Oil Spill Prevention Specialist positions open with OSPR. The deadline for applications has been extended to April 06, 2012.

Mr. Dayton reported the Sea Otter that washed up on the beach by Gold Bluffs (Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park) is at Santa Cruz waiting for necropsy. He will give us an update once tests have been conducted.

The Clean Pacific Conference will be held May 15-17 in Long Beach, CA.

The Harbor Safety Summit is tentatively scheduled for October 2012.

f. **HC Sheriff.** Deputy Reynolds reported that a couple of weeks ago a 17 foot Bluewater had capsized by PG&E Cove and last reported the vessel was partially submerged and heading out of the bay.

The Sheriff's Department continues to deal with loose Hoby Cats in Big Lagoon as well as recreational crab pots in the navigation channels of Humboldt Bay.

A fisherman was reported overdue on the Van Duzen River and search efforts were hampered due to the terrain. The fisherman eventually walked out. Deputy Daastol saved two dogs from drowning on the Eel River.

g. **NOAA.** Mr. Wheaton gave his report under item 7.f.

h. **Coastal Commission.** Dr. Metz reported that Dockwalker training will be available on May 12, 2012 at the Wharfinger Building in Eureka.

i. **Member Reports.**

Capt. Groszmann reported shoaling is occurring again around buoy #7 and #9 but this time it is closer to #7. A few years ago, the area between Buoy #9 and #10 developed a huge shoal that was known as the “mini-bar” and at times was treacherous to cross.

Ms. Howser reported that the USACE survey boat was here but experienced mechanical problems. They were only able to get soundings for the Bar and Entrance to approximately Buoy #5. The survey crew will be back after making repairs to complete the pre-dredge survey from buoy #5 to the USCG Station.

Mr. Newman reported that so far the commercial fishermen have not had difficulties, but are aware of the shoaling. However, the recreational fleet may have problems once their season begins.

Capt. Klassen reported that Halibut season begins on May 01 and that Salmon season might also begin on May 01. Recreational groundfish season will begin May 15.

10. **Other –** Ms. Howser made an observation that she wished to share with the membership. Ms. Howser reported that she did have difficulty in relaying latitude and longitude information to the commercial fishing fleet when the Scripps buoy went adrift. Most data is now coming out in decimal degrees and the commercial fishermen are operating on degrees, minutes, seconds. A lot of complaints were voiced with the initial information and once she converted the data to DMS, the buoy was found quickly.

The next Harbor Safety meeting is scheduled for [THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2012.](#)

Meeting adjourned at 1030 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzie V. Howser, Port of Humboldt Bay