

## **Charleston Area Harbor Safety Committee (HSC) Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday – July 24, 2025**

**Roll Call & Call to Order: LTJG Nicholas Jones, USCG**

**Opening Comments: N/A**

**Opening Remarks: Ms. Karen McDonald, Moran Towing**

Ms. Karen McDonald opened with a brief welcome. No new business was noted.

### **Open Issues, Presentations, Proposals, Follow-Up:**

#### **Stevens Towing**

- Kevin noted that bridge operators at Wapoo cut were more responsive recently due to collaborative efforts with SCDOT. He highlighted that the approach to the bridge must be conducted during slack tide hours, the bridge fender system is struck on a regular basis. He noted that a proposed opening restriction during rush hours may cause MTS disruption during certain days of the week based on tides. John Cameron, Charleston Pilots, noted that it was common for both red flag barges and dredges to transit that area and the need for the bridge to be open on-demand.
- He noted several concerns on the Georgetown Bridge construction project. The project is between finishing the new bridge and beginning demolition of the old one. He noted that communications between the towing vessels and bridge were non-existent due to the lack of VHF on the construction site.

#### **SCDOT, Kevin Turner**

- Mr. Turner noted that the bridge operators will be going to an objective standard for the opening of bridges that are of an on demand opening. SCDOT is in the final stages of generating a script and creating internal process for bridge operators. Aiming for an early August roll out that will encompass all of South Carolina.
- Rudy Socha, CEO Wounded Nature, highlighted the complexities of conducting derelict vessel towing operations, echoed by TowBoat US. Mr. Turner stated that in an emergency response, bridge operators should be opening as soon as safely possible. He further stated that tenders that don't do that are not following SCDOT policy.

### **McAllister Towing, Steve Kicklighter**

- Noted that there is a general concern given the immense influx of recreational boat traffic to the Charleston area. He recommended an increase patrol presence to enforce existing regulations from both the state and federal level. He motioned to write a letter from the HSC noting the issues with recreational boaters and suggested that the South Carolina legislative branch go on the books to rectify these issues.
- There was a good discussion on the need to increase things like USCG Auxiliary boater safety courses, as well as identify the main areas of concern.

### **John Mahoney, Moran Environmental**

- Provided context to Castle Pinckney restoration project. Noted that their website was taken down via cyberattack. Request for MASC to fly a flag for the 100th anniversary at the site.

### **Kathleen Wilson, Swim Around Charleston & Charleston Trident Swim**

- Highlighted the new Charleston Trident Swim event. Gave notice that the swims are taking place, and wanted to ensure that port partners and mariners had contact information and highlighted existing event safety measures. Noted that the Trident swim will be rolled into the Navy Seal Foundation series of events. Invited any safety boats that want to come out. The Trident Swim is set for 14Nov25 with a 10 a.m. start time.
- Towing companies asked for an ETA on when the swimmers would cross the channel.

### **Closing:**

LTJG Jones thanked everyone for coming, and noted that the next HSC meeting was set for 23Oct25.