Mariner's Advisory Committee Minutes

March 12, 2026

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

Following the Posted Agenda

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 – Dave Monk seconded by Tony.

II. Reports

A. **Treasurer's Report** – **Captain Drew Hodgens**– Good morning everyone. A new deposit of $15,599.08. Ending with a balance of $18,018.36.

III. USCG Report –

A. **Captain Kate Higgins-Bloom -** Good morning, it's great to see everybody. Not too much to say other what we're calling Deep Freeze 2026 here in Delaware, River and Bay. It was a unique operation, and for us it was learning while doing. As the river froze solid, I was giving briefs directly to the commandant, who was then briefing the White House and the Secretary of Homeland Security on every single square inch of ice on the river. So, it was getting a lot of attention at the highest levels, and to me, it was just a powerful reminder of how connected we are to the waterway. It was an all-hands-on deck event on the river. While everyone was involved in dealing with Depp Freeze 2026, I want to recognize one person specifically, Ms. Laura Miller. On behalf of Sector Delaware Bay, please accept our gratitude for your unwavering commitment and outstanding support, given our organization from 22, January 2026 to 25 February 2026. As, one of the Delaware River and Bay Port Partners, you provided valuable insight and guidance to the incident management team members. You served as a data collection section of the marine transportation system branch during Operation Deep, Freeze 2026. Your actions allowed for the expedited information sharing of crucial data and port facility availability throughout the Delaware, River and Bay. And then the last thing I just wanted to hit on where the U S. military operations in Iran have been going on for about 13 days now. And since then, there's been a series of persistent cyber-attacks across different pieces of critical infrastructure here in the United States. The transportation sector is very much a target. So, we have received some guidance that we're allowed to distribute. We're not going to put it out on the internet, but we will be emailing it out via Mac Blast. It's not classified information, but it is some specific guidance on the sort of cyber protections you all should be taking just to keep your businesses operating. We talked about it yesterday with another group of stakeholders. These cyber-attacks are very unlikely to affect the operation of your vessel. One more thing, Lieutenant Commander Mims is heading out for grad school, and I also currently have orders back to headquarters. Captain Rob Rivera will be fleeting up. So, you'll get some continuity here in the port, which we're happy about. So, other than that, thank you so much for all the amazing teamwork and leadership over the last couple months. It shows really what the MAC is for in many ways.

IV. ACOE Report

A. Mr. Timothy Rooney – Good morning, everybody. We did have a crazy ice year, and it created some delays for us. But starting with Delaware Philly to see the Norfolk dredging contract, they should have been started by now. The ice came in, and they were going to get going about I guess it was a few weeks ago. And the pipeline had a whole bunch of issues. Long story short, they checked the pipe and they're looking to sink it tomorrow. Following the Wilmington Harbor job, which we did get extensions on that so we should be able to complete. Following the Wilmington Harbor job, which we did get extensions on that so we should be able to complete. And then last on it for Delaware River, we have um the harbor. The hopper dredge McFarland should be going out in the spring. Right now, we're looking at Cross Ledge or Mifflin ranges, but we'll talk with you before that. There might be some bay locations and we'll figure that out. All right, Philly to Trenton that job was completed in January by Cotrell and no update on when we're going to be doing the the next one. Last, but not least is object removal, which was posted on the 26th of February. We're looking to receive bids on the 30th. That's a five-year contract that will have readily available a contractor to go out there whenever there's obstructions and such. So, it will happen quicker than past ones. And finally, is the Summit Bridge painting. Basically, there's a five-foot air gap restriction that's going to be there till October 26th.

Details in meeting packet 3 through 7

V. NOAA

A. **Christopher DiVeglio –** Good morning, a couple of updates on the ports program for uh the last quarter since we last met. All the air gap systems that are of interest to folks in this community, all were pretty much up and operational. We had a couple of dropouts at the Reedy Point air gap. We must replace the sensor there, which will be happening in the short term. But overall, green is good for the current meters. Both the Philadelphia Penn's Landing current meter was reinstalled in the fall, so that's been up and running. And then Delaware Bay Channel, a couple of dropouts here and there. We also, at one point had to turn the data off because of the ice being that far south in the bay and it was lodged up against the buoy at a couple of times. Reedy Point is one of the NOAA sponsored stations, so that's not part of the port system that's funded by the local stakeholders. But of course, the data from that station is integrated into the greater ports program. This is an old Army Corps pier, which Army Corps made clear to us a long time ago they don't have any interest in maintaining. So, NOAA chose to stay on this pier, and it's obviously been in rough shape for a couple of years. At some point late January, early February, the water level data went offline. That's because the equipment is now at the bottom of the canal, with the rest of the pier infrastructure. I don't know what the future of this station looks like again. Also, another NOAA funded

station, the Philadelphia Coast Guard water level. We are in the process of redesigning and rebuilding that. We've coordinated with the Coast Guard and got permit approval. Right now, the station itself is on Coast Guard property, but you can see here this, this concrete pier is where the new station will be rebuilt in September or be upgraded

B. **Ryan Wartick –** Good morning, from my perspective at NOAA, the last couple months, the big thing that we've been working on is prepping for Sail 250 up and down the East Coast. We've been doing a lot of work in preparation for that. And we've been getting ready for our upcoming 2026 fuel season. So, we're going to be doing lots of work all up and down the East Coast and excited for updating the charts and just continuing to support everyone.

Details in meeting packet 8 through 14

VI. BMT

A. **Mr. Phillip White –** Great to great to see everybody and thanks to the MAC for having me come up today. So, I wanted to I am new to the area. My name is Philip White. I am a geologist by degree from Texas. BMT is a marine engineering company, and we're going to talk a little bit about that. We have about fifteen hundred eighty people working for us. We are on four continents. BMT stands for British Maritime Technology. It started as a research firm in the UK and then spun off on the commercial side. The four main pillars of our business are: We have a defense and security business; We're customer friend sort of providers for the Royal Canadian Navy, the Royal Navy with submarine and service support contracts combat weapon systems. And other things that are not really within my purview, but we do have a maritime design and consultancy business which involves everything from vessel design. We also do Navigation simulation. We do some modeling for dredge management. Basically, we have capabilities to do a full mission bridge simulator, mooring analysis. BMT Rembrandt is our is the name of our simulator. So, in the bottom right, you can see a cruise ship simulator. Most of the major cruise lines in the world use our simulation software. The hydrodynamics and hydraulic modeling are extremely accurate. The math and physics that go into these impressive video game quality graphics are really the important part is the math and physics that we've developed underneath to make sure these vessels handle the way that they're supposed to. We can simulate any kind of environment, any kind of current conditions. We can do forensics examination. The NTSB is a license holder. Right now, The NTSB is using our software to investigate the Francis Scott Key Bridge incident in Baltimore. We also have a maritime traffic assessment tool that we've developed, and it can be integrated into that VMT Rembrandt simulation as well. So, it's dynamic; it could be real time again using AIS data, and to help mitigate risk. Then the last thing I'll show is that we do also do vessel design. So, these are a few of the vessels that we've designed. You've got a CTV there on the upper right. We do ferries, we worked with the New York ferry system, government security, and then if you're a billionaire, we can design you a mega yacht as well. Great to see all of you. Thank you again, appreciate it.

Details in meeting packet 15 through 32

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Captain Drew Hodgens – No unfinished business.

VIII. Adjournment

Captain Drew Hodgens asked for a motion to adjourn.

Next meeting Thursday, June 11th at Popi's 1030 for coffee and 1100 start.