



## **April UMWA Meeting Minutes**

Thu, Apr 16, 2020 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM (CDT)

Called to Order at 12:35 by Doug Hosszu

### **In attendance:**

- a. Board: Tom Burrows, Doug Hosszu, Kathryn Sarnecki,
- b. Staff: Amy Beckham
- c. Members: Ava Kinney, Mark Wegner, Paul Rohde, Gerry Vick, Bryan Peterson, Dan Cottrell, Patrick Phenow, Linda Loomis, Tamara Cameron

**Chairman's Report** – Doug Hosszu reported. Boats and Barges are now running, most docks are now working, river level is down so mostly back to business. There are crewing issues due to COVID-19. The crewing issues primarily stem from the challenge of finding staff and staggering shifts to keep people distanced, in addition to cleaning protocols that are now in place for all vessels and shipyards.

**Executive Director Report** – we recently obtained a digital version of the Inland River Guide and will be using that to expand our reach for potential members, there are a good number of organizations that use river transport and a membership would be beneficial for them. This will be a big task, the membership committee will work on it as time permits now that it's the busy season.

**Paul Rohde – WCI Report** – The Waterways Council is based in the DC area, they are a broader coalition of carriers and shippers with a heavy agricultural sector as well as organized labor. Paul is physically based in St Louis. The FY20 federal budget was released February 10 and contained zero dollars for lock construction. Senators Klobuchar and McCollum were very active in keeping funding for the Army Corps of Engineers alive during the Appropriations process, and this year there is \$4.5 mil in the FY20 workplan for pre-construction, engineering and design (PED) for the Navigation-Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP). The shift is now to reach out to representatives and senators to make requests to Corps HQ, asking for NESP to be funded in the FY21 workplan. Construction continues in FY20, and hopefully FY21 despite the program being zero'd out by the Administration) thanks to the appropriations process. General revenue funds are matched with the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF). WCI's priority for this year's Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) is to conform the IWTF to the shift WRDA 2016 did for ports, making the formula moving forward as 75% General Revenue/25% IWTF. Lately it's been more like 70/30, with some exceptions being 85/15. Bottom line is a shift to 75/25 would go a

long way in getting a construction start on the Upper locks that were authorized for 1,200' chambers in WRDA 2007.

Several members of the House recently supported this concept in an April 1 letter to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, including:

(MN) Craig, Phillips, McCollum, Omar, Emmer, Peterson & Stauber. (missing is Hagedorn) Sen. Klobuchar made the request to Senate Environment & Public Works Committee last fall. (missing was Smith)

(WI) Pocan & Kind. (missing: Steil, Moore, Sensenbrenner, Grothman & Gallagher) Sen. Baldwin made the request to Senate EPW last fall. (missing: Johnson)

We can help by going to [waterwayscouncil.org](http://waterwayscouncil.org), navigate to the action center and ask your member of congress to support this cost-share shift, especially if they were not on the April 1 letter. This link could be emailed to your associates and employees to do so as well. Anyone can also sign up by texting the word LOCKS to 52886.

Phase 3 of the CARES Act impacting the Corps included retrofitting existing structures as hospitals in light of the current pandemic. CARES also includes Sec 14003 which s Section 14003 includes a provision that would allow ports to potentially receive additional harbor dredging by removing it from the Appropriations Committee's discretionary spending cap.

#### **Agency Report**

- d. **USACE** presented by Dan Cottrell – see attached
- e. **LMRWD** presented by Linda Loomis. They are currently seeking approval to redirect funds usage from a previous grant for a new project, still meeting but not a lot of other activity right now.
- f. **MNDOT** - Patrick Phenow – no report at this time.

**New Business** – Mark Wegner – Twin City and Western RR, taking on significant rail car orders and will begin moving things the second half of April. This is a positive sign for business and traffic this early in the season. Rail operations are running on schedule, not a lot of impact from COVID-19. Ethanol industry is stressed, nationwide at least half of the production is impacted and looks to get worse.

Kathryn Sarnecki – update from St Paul Port Authority, looking for updates from groups looking for PPE's etc. If you are getting a lot of requests, please let her know so they can keep track.

**Other Business** – none

**Adjourn** – meeting adjourned at 1:30