



PRESENT

David McMillan (Chairman of Board), William Mielke (Advisory Board Member), Dr. Arthur Sulzer (Advisory Board Member), Craig Middlebrook (Deputy Administrator), Tom Lavigne (Associate Administrator), Wayne Williams (Chief of Staff), Kevin O'Malley (Director of Budget and Economic Development), Nancy Alcalde (Director of Congressional and Public Relations), Nancy Scott (Director of Finance/CFO), and Michael Howard (Executive Officer)

I. CALL TO ORDER

In his capacity as Board Chair, David McMillan welcomed all participants to the Advisory Board meeting and, noting the presence of quorum, called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by William Mielke, the Board approved the minutes without objection, the motion passed unanimously, and the December 2, 2019 meeting minutes were approved as drafted.

III. DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Deputy Administrator Craig Middlebrook provided brief remarks on water levels and announced that the opening date for the Montreal-Lake Ontario section of the Seaway is scheduled for April 1, and the Welland Canal is scheduled to open on March 24. Mr. Middlebrook announced that the Ballast Water Working Group protocols for all international vessels entering the Seaway will continue in 2020. He mentioned Viking Cruise Lines is planning to emphasize Great Lakes Cruising beginning with the 2022 season. He praised SLSDC trade development staffer Rebecca Yackley for her work to facilitate Viking's partnership with Great Lakes Seaway System stakeholders over the past several years, resulting in the January announcement of a new Great Lakes itinerary. Mr. Middlebrook also briefed the Board on the status of the SLSDC's new tug, *Seaway Guardian*, before providing updates of ongoing CBA negotiations with its unionized workforce in Massena. Lastly, he informed the Board of Associate Administrator Tom Lavigne's anticipated retirement after nearly 40 years of service to the Corporation.

IV. QUARTERLY UPDATES

- Mr. Lavigne provided an update for operations. He noted there were no issues with the decommissioning of buoys. He also reported that the Seaway will open with little or no ice and that global health and safety concerns may create some challenges with respect to enhanced Seaway inspections and ballast water testing in Montreal. He mentioned that the SLSDC is looking forward to the delivery of the *Seaway Guardian* tugboat and that the vessel master and first mate will soon be taking simulator training. Finally, he noted that SLSDC boat operators will be receiving training to upgrade their licensing.



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Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2020

Meeting Held via Teleconference

- Kevin O'Malley reported that the SLSDC's FY 2020 appropriation was enacted by Congress. He mentioned that the President's Budget request was \$28 million, but Congress enacted a budget of \$38 million, including \$16 million in funding dedicated to Seaway infrastructure. The enacted budget also includes an additional \$2 million for additional trade and economic development activities in conjunctions with U.S. stakeholders. He noted that the SLSDC is working with the American Great Lakes Ports Association and the Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers on collaborative efforts to spend the additional funding. In wrapping up his presentation on the budget, Mr. O'Malley also noted that the budget request for FY 2021 was submitted to Congress in February. Related to financial management, Mr. O'Malley acknowledged SLSDC CFO Nancy Scott's presence who reported on the clean, successful audit for FY 2019 and the initial planning work done to date on the FY 2020 financial statements audit.
- Mr. Lavigne briefed the Board on the Asset Renewal Program activities for the Office of Engineering and Maintenance. He reported that several projects have been completed and that work for replacing the hydraulic machinery for the ship arrestors at both locks and the shotcrete repairs to damaged concrete surfaces in the north filling and emptying culvert at Snell Lock are both progressing well. He also reported that testing of the modified piping, valves, and inlet grating for the ice flushing system at Snell Lock was successful. The construction of the tug *Seaway Guardian* is approximately 98 percent complete and a contract for construction of a tug to replace the *Performance* has been awarded.
- Nancy Alcalde provided a recap of previous quarter activities to include the conclusion of the Seaway's 60th Anniversary. She reported that documents, videos, and photos are being archived for planning of the future anniversary celebrations. She mentioned that her office is working with the Great Lakes Seaway Partnership on commodity-specific videos and working on water levels information. Of special note, the water levels topic has generated more traffic to the SLSDC's social media sites, Facebook in particular. Ms. Alcalde also reported her team is working on an updated version of the SLSDC's marketing brochure to make it usable for multiple stakeholder groups as well as updates to the SLSDC's Visitors' Center brochure. Finally, she mentioned that her team is working on a content piece on cruising in the Great Lakes for various travel and tourism publications and websites.

V. OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

- Mr. Mielke asked about the status and timing for the new SLSDC's Eisenhower Lock Visitors' Center. Mr. Middlebrook reported that the project has been delayed due to the SLSDC's focus on water levels management. He noted that the center plans are being reviewed internally and will need to be updated before making a construction contract award.



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- Mr. McMillan asked about the possibility of hosting the next Advisory Board meeting in either Massena, N.Y. or Washington, D.C. Mr. Middlebrook noted the request and mentioned that the SLSDC needs additional guidance from the Department in terms of travel policies before commitments can be made for an in-person meeting.
- Board members inquired about scheduling the next meeting and asked for as much advance notice as possible.

VI. CLOSING DISCUSSION AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m., with a motion to adjourn from Mr. Mielke and seconded by Dr. Art Sulzer.

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