



Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS)

Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2024

Meeting Held via Teleconference

PRESENT

William Mielke (Advisory Board Member), Dr. Arthur Sulzer (Advisory Board Member), Adam Tindall-Schlicht (Administrator), Anthony Fisher (Deputy Administrator), Jeffrey Scharf (Associate Administrator), Carrie Lavigne (Chief Counsel), Sylvonica Madlock (Executive Officer), Kevin O'Malley (Strategic Advisor for Financial and Resources Management), Paul Braden (Director of Lock Operations), Tony Curley (Director, Engineering and Maintenance), Jennifer Wilk (Director of Congressional and Public Relations), and Rebecca Yackley (Director of Trade and Economic Development).

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board member William Mielke, as acting Board chair in place of David McMillan who was excused from the meeting, called the meeting to order and welcomed all participants to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS) Advisory Board meeting, noting the presence of quorum, he called the meeting to order at 2:16 p.m. (Eastern).

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Board member Dr. Arthur Sulzer, which was seconded by Mr. Mielke, the Board approved the minutes without objection, the motion passed, and the minutes from the November 29, 2023, meeting were approved as drafted.

III. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- GLS Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht welcomed the group to the meeting and announced the upcoming opening of the 2024 Seaway shipping season on March 22. He also spoke briefly on the results of the GLS's recent supervisor retreat in Massena and introduced the GLS's new Director of Congressional and Public Relations, Jennifer Wilk.
- Administrator Tindall-Schlicht reported on a federal budget deal that was recently announced by Congress to include the Seaway's budget and is anticipated to be passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate in short order. Once the budget is signed into law, the GLS will fully execute its FY 2024 programs.
- He also reported on a recent announcement of a toll increase, the first in five years, at the Seaway International Bridge (co-owned by the GLS and the Canadian government), effective April 1. While bridge traffic has returned to near pre-pandemic levels, operational funding requires additional funding, which the toll increase is expected to support.



IV. QUARTERLY UPDATES

- Deputy Administrator Anthony Fisher reported working with Great Lakes/Seaway ports and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to examine the possibilities of automating container scanning at the ports. He said container scanning at the ports would incur an extra cost to pay CBP officers who would be stationed at the facility. Deputy Administrator Fisher also noted that major transportation firms are echoing the GLS's message for suppliers to explore Great Lakes/Seaway ports as a potential shift in their supply chain.
- Jeffrey Scharf, Associate Administrator, reported on the GLS and Canadian SLSMC collaborative efforts to develop the Voyage Information System (VIS). He also reported favorable water levels and stated that the Seaway System's reliability rating for the 2023 navigation season was 95.9 percent. He noted this was below the 99 percent target for the first time in many years, due to the extended SLSMC labor strike. Lastly, Mr. Scharf reported that the Seaway International Bridge executive director position has been recently filled.
- Rebecca Yackley, Director of Trade and Economic Development, spoke about the GLS's current efforts to promote cruising on the Great Lakes Seaway System, which is garnering increased exposure and attention from regional stakeholders on both sides of the border. She noted that her office is leading four upcoming international trips to promote the Great Lakes Seaway System and educate prospective commercial customers.
- Jennifer Wilk, Director of Congressional and Public Relations, introduced herself and provided a brief background of her career working for the maritime industry in communications and advocacy outreach. She spoke of GLS messaging strategies that focus on reliability, the Green Shipping Corridor Network (GSCN), and the economic impact of Seaway trade. She mentioned arranging and facilitating interviews and media interviews for Administrator Tindall-Schlicht and Deputy Administrator Fisher. Finally, Ms. Wilk reported a first-time joint press release with the Canadian SLSMC, noting that while there was an operational interruption caused by the Canadian Seaway strike, there was still an increase in tonnage during the 2023 navigation season.
- Paul Braden, Director of Lock Operations and Marine Services, highlighted that the U.S. Seaway locks operated for 289 days during the 2023 navigation season, the longest announced navigational season in Seaway history. Mr. Braden reported that, during the 2023 navigation season, 100 percent of foreign-flag vessels bound for the Great Lakes received ballast water management exams on each of their transits.



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- Tony Curley, Director of Engineering and Maintenance, reported on the on-going winter work nearing completion at the two U.S. Seaway locks and the concept design for the new GLS Administration Building. ~~Mr. Curley also reported on plans for soliciting a contract for backup power and electrical distribution upgrades and rehabilitating the GLS's stop logs, which are the structures used to dam up the locks during winter work and any possible lock emergency.~~
- Kevin O'Malley, Strategic Advisor, reported on the GLS's FY 2024 budget, which is expected to get passed in the next few days and fully fund the GLS at the requested level. Once signed into law, there are a number of procedural steps that will need to be completed before the GLS will have access to all FY 2024 funding. In addition, Mr. O'Malley highlighted the GLS's FY 2025 budget request, which will be submitted to Congress on March 12 as part of the President's Budget request. He noted that the next step in the budget request process will be to brief Congressional appropriations staff and answer any questions related to GLS programs and operations.

V. OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

The next GLS Advisory Board quarterly meeting is scheduled in person at the GLS's offices in Massena, N.Y., on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. (Eastern).

VI. CLOSING DISCUSSION AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m. (Eastern), with a motion to adjourn from Dr. Sulzer and seconded by Board member Mr. Mielke.

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