



Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS)

Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

November 29, 2023

Meeting Held in Person in Montréal and via Teleconference

PRESENT

David McMillan (Advisory Board Chairperson), William Mielke (Advisory Board Member), Dr. Arthur Sulzer (Advisory Board Member), Adam Tindall-Schlicht (Administrator), Anthony Fisher (Deputy Administrator), Jeff Scharf (Associate Administrator), Sylvonica Madlock (Executive Officer), Paul Braden (Director of Lock Operations), Tony Curley (Director, Engineering and Maintenance), LaToya James (Public Affairs Specialist, Congressional and Public Relations), Carrie Rogers (Director of Administrative Services), Rebecca Yackley (Director of Trade and Economic Development), and Terence Brown (public member).

I. CALL TO ORDER

In his capacity as Board Chairperson, Mr. David McMillan welcomed all participants to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS) Advisory Board meeting and, noting the presence of quorum, he called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. (Eastern).

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Mr. McMillan, which was seconded by Board member Dr. Art Sulzer, the Board approved the minutes without objection, the motion passed, and the minutes from the July 26, 2023, meeting were approved as drafted.

III. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- GLS Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht welcomed the group to Montréal and noted that the Grunt Club events during the week are an important time for GLS staff as they meet with international and domestic stakeholders and customers. He reported on the Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC) workers strike in October, which led to a multi-day closure of the entire Seaway. He explained that the two U.S. locks, which are in the middle of the system, cannot operate or have any business when the Canadian locks are inoperable. He stated that the strike-related closure was the first labor-related disruption to Seaway traffic in 55 years. Administrator Tindall-Schlicht also reported on the execution of the GLS's new trade development Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Canadian SLSMC that he believes will help to implement some of the changes and priorities necessary to support economic development in the Great Lakes/Seaway region.

IV. QUARTERLY UPDATES

- Deputy Administrator Anthony Fisher began his report with a focus on a systematic and holistic approach to trade development on the Great Lakes Seaway System. He mentioned that if the Great Lakes/Seaway cargo market is going to be more competitive globally, we have to make the entire system more efficient. Mr. Fisher spoke of GLS visits to ports and discussing ideas on how to work more collaboratively.



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- Paul Braden, Director of Lock Operations and Marine Services, reported handling over 55 ships through the U.S. locks within a 72-hour period following the end of the Canadian SLSMC worker strike. He also reported that the *SEAWAY GUARDIAN* tugboat recently returned from drydocking and is now fully operational. He also highlighted the GLS's all-season buoy program and that the current inventory of 25 all-season buoys will be deployed on the river in the spring of 2024. Finally, Mr. Braden noted that over the next 90 days, his focus would be on the recruitment of senior-level ship inspectors and licensed crew for towing vessels, the fall buoy run with the use of the *SEAWAY GUARDIAN*, and the successful closing of the 2023 navigation season.
- LaToya James, Public Affairs Specialist, Office of Congressional and Public Relations, reported on the release of the results of the binational economic impact study, which included a press release with quotes from Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg. She briefly spoke about the August 29 Performance Working Group meeting related to the Green Shipping Corridor Network (GSCN) held at DOT headquarters and the September 7 GSCN Alternative Fuels Working Group held in Montréal. Ms. James noted that the GLS continues to promote the GLS Pacesetter Award presentations, including in-person events attended by the Administrator in the New York ports of Oswego and Ogdensburg. Finally, she highlighted that the GLS recently eclipsed 1,000 on-line subscribers for its quarterly industry newsletter *Seaway Compass*.
- Rebecca Yackley, Director of Trade and Economic Development, provided an overview of U.S. and Canadian port visits by her team as well as leading the GLS's efforts during a recent Port of Halifax agriculture event, noting that Jazmine Jurkiewicz, international trade specialist, represented the GLS and presented at the conference. Ms. Yackley discussed the GLS's role in the recent Seaway Trade Mission to Germany and Seatrade Europe conference and exhibition. She also noted the GLS's presence at the Breakbulk Americas conference in Houston, Texas, and the Highway H₂O annual conference in Toronto.
- Carrie Rogers, Director of Administrative Services, reported on the completion of the GLS's FY 2023 financial statements audit in which the GLS received its 60th consecutive unmodified (clean) audit opinion. She was very complementary of her team especially when considering that half of the staff are in their first year with the GLS. She also reported that the GLS's FY 2025 budget request was sent to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in September and the GLS is awaiting "passback" from OMB in order to prepare the request for the President's Budget rollout in early 2024. Finally, Ms. Rogers noted that over the next 90 days, budget and finance will finalize the FY 2025 budget request package and complete the GLS's FY 2023 Seaway Infrastructure Program (SIP) annual report to Congress.



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- Tony Curley, Director of Engineering and Maintenance, reported on several major maintenance and infrastructure projects, including the award for the design of the new GLS Administration Building to be relocated to the south side of Eisenhower Lock. He also spoke about the near completion of the Seaway Visitor Center at Eisenhower Lock. Related to Seaway operations, Mr. Curley highlighted the on-going replacement of rubber fending at both locks, which helps with the wear-and-tear on commercial vessels and assists them with their ability to safely approach and enter the locks. He also reported that his division is working on contract documentation for backup power and electrical distribution improvements at the Maintenance/Marine Base and for the refurbishment of stoplogs at Eisenhower Lock.

V. OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

The next GLS Advisory Board quarterly meeting is scheduled in person at the GLS's offices at the USDOT Headquarters in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Eastern).

VI. CLOSING DISCUSSION AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m. (Eastern), with a motion to adjourn from Mr. McMillan and seconded by Board member Mr. William Mielke.

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