

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF CORPORATIONS, BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING

BOARD OF MARINE PILOTS

CONDENSED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD OCTOBER 15, 2025

These draft minutes were prepared by staff of the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing. They have not been reviewed or approved by the Board.

By authority of AS 08.01.070(2) and in compliance with the provision of AS 44.62, Article 6, a scheduled meeting of the Board of Marine Pilots was held on October 15, 2025, at the Alaska Energy Authority Building, 813 W Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage, AK

Date:	October 15, 2025
Time:	9:00 a.m.
Location:	Alaska Energy Authority Building: 813 W Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage, AK
Board Members Present:	Chair Curtis Thayer, Captain Edward (Ed) Sinclair, Captain James Cunningham, Les Cronk, Andrew Mew, Joseph (Joe) Tougas, Don Habeger
Board Members Absent:	
Division/SOA Staff Present:	Renee Carabajal (Marine Pilot Coordinator), Sylvan Robb (Division Director), Patrick Kase (Investigator 3)
Present from the Public:	Jenni Sitton (SWAPA), Jessie Li (SEAPA), Robert Dersham (SEAPA), Nick Garay (AMP), Mike Tibbles (ASA), Paul Axelson (NPMI), Kris Mackie (SEAPA), Ashley Wieber (NPMI), Todd Duke (Resolve Marine)

Review Agenda	
Brief Discussion:	There was no discussion to amend the agenda.
Motion:	Agenda accepted by unanimous consent
Ethics Disclosures	
Brief Discussion:	There were no ethical disclosures by any board members or staff.
Public Comment	
Brief Discussion:	There was nobody in attendance for public comment.
Review/Approve Minutes: July 23, 2025	
Brief Discussion:	Board members requested it be noted that the meeting start was delayed due to technical difficulties and D. Habeger noted his vote was not listed for the adjournment.
Motion:	Move to accept July 23, 2025, meeting minutes as amended. (First: Cronk; Second: Sinclair).
Discussion:	With nothing to discuss, the board approved the motion via roll call vote.

Recorded Votes:	Cronk - Yes	Mew - Yes
	Cunningham - Yes	Tougas - Yes
	Sinclair – Yes	Habeger - Yes
		Thayer - Yes
Association Reports		
AMP	<p>Captain Nick Garay of Alaska Marine Pilots provided the AMP report for Western Alaska. AMP has 9 full pilots and 1 deputy pilot. Currently, there are 5 individuals in the training program, 3 of them are in the hands-on portion of training.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion about the impact changes to the federal pilotage will have on AMP trainees. AMP is working with the US Coast Guard to make changes to erroneous pilotage, but that has been placed on hold due to the federal government shutdown. If the changes are not made, it will result in trainees being held up while they complete un-needed pilotage. Chair Thayer recommended that the associations reach out to Senator Dan Sullivan’s office for support on getting the changes made to the pilotage.</p>	
SEAPA	<p>Captain Kris Mackie, SEAPA President, provided a report for SEAPA. SEAPA has 45 fully licensed pilots and 19 deputy pilots, and 9 trainees. SEAPA met all the traffic needs for 2025 and is on target to meet the needs for 2026. By the beginning of the 2026 cruise season, 5 of the deputy pilots should obtain their full pilot licenses. They have exams scheduled for placement into the training program and will be accepting 6 more trainees in November 2025.</p> <p>Captain Mackie thanked the board for approving the changes to the training program early in the summer; those changes took effect immediately and have been beneficial to the training program.</p>	
SWAPA	<p>Jenni Zilinski, Business Manager for SWAPA, provided their association report. SWAPA has 12 full-member pilots qualified for Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs) with 6 deputy pilots. They have 6 in the training program; 2 are in hands-on training, and one is an observer who passed the CORE exam but, due to issues with federal pilotage endorsements, is unable to do hands-on maneuvers at this time, as he is restricted to tug and barge only. SWAPA, like AMP, is working with the Coast Guard on pilotage issues.; they have been working with the American Pilots Association in Washington, D.C. There are 2 pilots in the process of transferring from AMP, and a ballot is out to membership to bring on an additional observer.</p>	
Regulation Project Update/Division Update		
Division Update	<p>Division Director Sylvan Robb joined the meeting to update the board on Administrative Order 360. The order requires that by the end of calendar year 2027, all regulations must be reduced by 25%; 15 % of that is due by the end of calendar year 2026. The board has a deadline of 2/13/2026 to submit a plan of what regulations it intends to either streamline or eliminate in an effort to meet the 25%. The division has scheduled several meetings to accept public input; these have been split up between healthcare and non-healthcare-related programs. Director Robb explained the processes the division has been working on to tally the number of discretionary regulations, which are the regulations that can be streamlined or eliminated. The division has until the end of October 2025 to provide a count of the total number of discretionary regulations to the governor’s office to establish the baseline number for the percentages to be taken from. She emphasized that while the order requires a 25% reduction, the division and boards will consider public safety as the</p>	

	<p>highest priority. Board members asked questions in a round-robin. <i>Will previous reductions would “count” towards the reduction?</i> Unfortunately, previous regulations changes already in effect will not count towards this number but any regulations amendments not finalized will. <i>Can the guidance documents that outline the procedures for counting the discretionary regulations be shared with the board and that they be given a summary or list of those regulations so they can propose amendments most efficiently?</i> Director Robb will check to ensure the guidance document can be shared and MPC Carabajal will provide it to the board. Once the final counts have been completed, MPC Carabajal will send a summary of the regulations on the table for reduction and streamlining. <i>Since the changes are being mandated by the Administrative Order, how is the entire process being funded (general fund or regular methods of funding)?</i> That was a question Director Robb asked at the outset of this process and unfortunately, this project will be funded by each individual program for all staff time such as Department of Law reviews, regulations specialists and all other expenses.</p> <p>MPC Carabajal informed the board that the end-of-year 2025 fiscal report has not been completed but will be forwarded to the board for review and discussion for that report will be on the January meeting agenda. She provided the remainder of the division update. Regulations projects that were started in 2025 are currently on hold still due to AO 358. These will count towards the mandated reductions in AO 360. Due to ongoing issues with AssessAI, the testing platform engaged to administer the CORE and Local Knowledge Exams (LKE); the division decided not to renew their contract. At the end of the first year, only 2 CORE exams were successfully administered and no LKE’s were administered. The division is working to finalize a contract with ProV, a testing company located in Salt Lake City, UT. ProV does not have a start-up cost as AssessAI did and will be able to administer exams remotely. The estimated costs of each exam will be approximately \$85 per exam which will result in a significant reduction in exam fees which are currently \$500 per exam. MPC Carabajal anticipates ProV exams being available for use before the end of calendar year 2025.</p>
<p>Investigative Report</p>	
	<p>Investigator 3 Patrick Kase provided the investigative report for the time period of July 18, 2025 – October 8, 2025 to the board. Currently, there is 1 open case regarding an unlicensed practice or activity, it is at the intake stage. This case pertains to movements of a vessel in compulsory pilotage waters that is alleged not to have had a licensed marine pilot on board. During this period, 1 case for unlicensed practice or active was closed at the complaint stage; the reviewing board member determined there was no violation. This closed case was with regard to a pleasure craft exempted vessel allegedly having failed to employ a properly certified captain. The vessel demonstrated that a certified captain was on board the vessel. The board asked if there was any pending litigation still outstanding and Investigator Kase assured them that the prior litigation was closed.</p>
<p>US Coast Guard Update; Changes to Federal Pilotage</p>	
	<p>MPC Carabajal addressed the board. USCG Chief Bryan Olson had reached out regarding changes to the federal pilotage endorsements. He has been working on the federal pilotage that AMP and SWAPA both referred to during their association reports. Chief Olson had planned on attending the meeting to discuss this with the board and work on potential resolutions. However, he is currently on furlough due to the federal government shutdown. MPC Carabajal will reach out to him and request that he attend the January 2026 meeting to have the discussion at that time.</p>

APC/USCG/Alaska Pilotage Discussion	
	<p>Todd Duke, General Manager of Compliance Services for Resolve Marine and One Call Alaska, spoke to the board. One Call Alaska is an oil spill response organization focused on compliance with national planning criteria for vessel safety. In Alaska's vast and infrastructure-limited environment, they create tailored plans for Coast Guard approval, incorporating routing measures that keep vessels at least 50 miles offshore, particularly in the Aleutians. Captains are required to adhere to these measures, though exceptions exist, such as in the Bering Strait. Weather can complicate navigation, prompting collaboration with weather routing services, even when their suggested routes conflict with protocols. Any deviations from these measures require Coast Guard approval. Last year, a vessel navigated too close to shore during a storm, risking safety because the crew opted against using a pilot. This event raises concerns about enforcing navigation standards in state waters. It's critical to remind operators about safe navigational practices, especially where depth charts are inadequate. One Call's contracts specify that vessel captains must follow a marine pilot's direction when one is onboard. Mr. Duke emphasized the importance of adhering to vessel routing measures for safety. Board members asked some clarifying questions so they fully understood how his company and similar companies operate. Mr. Duke was thanked for attending the meeting.</p>
Schedule Future Meeting Date(s)	
Brief Discussion:	<p>After discussion, the board decided to hold their 2026 spring meeting in Sitka on April 29th, 2026, with the Local Knowledge Exam scheduled for April 28, 2026. The board's next scheduled meeting will be January 21, 2026, in Anchorage. The board will remain open to scheduling brief teleconferences as needed to address any comments received for Board of Marine Pilot regulations in the public meetings the Division is holding regarding AO 360. The board will review and vote on its final plan of proposed regulations to streamline or eliminate at the January meeting.</p>
Adjourn:	
Brief Discussion: Off Record at 10:59 am	Having completed all scheduled business on the agenda, the board adjourned.
Motion:	Move to adjourn (First: Cronk; Second: Mew).
Discussion:	With nothing to discuss, the board approved the motion via roll call vote.
Recorded Votes (roll call):	Cronk - Yes
	Mew - Yes
	Cunningham - Yes
	Tougas - Yes
	Sinclair – Yes
	Habeger - Yes
	Thayer - Yes
Date Final Minutes Approved by the Board: ____ Meeting ____ OnBoard	