

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 JANUARY 29, 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 January 29, 2025, at the Alaska Energy Authority Building, 813 W Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage, AK

Date:	January 29, 2025
Time:	9:00 a.m. (9:02 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
Board Members Absent:	Don Habeger
Division/SOA Staff Present:	Renee Carabajal (Marine Pilot Coordinator), Melissa Dumas (Operations Manager), Patrick Kase (Investigator 3)
Present from the Public:	Jenni Sitton (SWAPA), Kylie Stone (SWAPA), David Artz (AMP), Mik Tibbles (ASA), Paul Axelson (NPMI), Kris Mackie (SEAPA), Caroline Wilkinson (NOAA), Ron Leighton (SEAPA), Brett Merrill (SEAPA), Robert Dersham (SEAPA), Ron Ward (SWAPA), Angel Holbrook (NPMI), Bella Robert (YSA), Katie Montgomery (CLAA)

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: October 24, 2024	
Brief Discussion:	There was no discussion to amend the meeting minutes.
Motion:	Move to accept the October 24, 2024, meeting minutes as written (First: Tougas; Second: Mew).

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	Thayer - Yes
Association Amendments		
SEAPA; Training Volume II, Part 6		
Discussion:	Captain Todd Carleton provided a brief overview of the proposed changes to the SEAPA Training manual. The change is designed to help apprentice trainees take advantage of the increased number of cargo ship anchorings in Region 1. It was a simple change intended to enable apprentice trainees to benefit from training opportunities on cargo vessels, particularly anchoring and getting underway from anchor. Doing so would allow them to earn credit toward the additional cargo training already required under Volume 2. This proposal was presented by the Training Committee to the SEAPA membership, and it was approved last fall.	
Motion:	Move to approve SEAPA's amendment to their Training Manual Volume II, Part 6, as presented (First: Mew; Second: Cunningham).	
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	Thayer - Yes
SWAPA: Proposed Revision to Training Manual		
Discussion:	The Southwest Alaska Pilots Association's (SWAPA's) business manager, Jenni Zielinski presented a brief overview of the proposed amendments to the SWAPA training manual. The revisions update the requirements to Kachemak Bay to a minimum of 4 anchoring maneuvers under the supervision of at least 2 different training pilots. The revision also adds 2 supervised anchorings on vessels in excess of 60,000 gross tons for a deputy pilot's in-house clearance for an increase to 95,000 gross tons.	
Motion:	Move to approve the revisions to the SWAPA training manual as presented. (First: Cunningham; 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	Thayer - Yes
SWAPA	Proposed amendments to the SWAPA Bylaws.	
Discussion:	The Southwest Alaska Pilots Association's (SWAPA's) business manager, Jenni Zielinski, presented the proposed changes to the bylaws. The revisions amend Article II: Membership, Section 8: Conversion to Corporate Membership and Article III: Full Membership Fees and Charges. The changes reflect a new name for the entity that owns the building where the SWAPA offices reside in Homer.	

Motion:	Move to approve the revisions to the SWAPA bylaws as presented. (First: Mew; 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	Thayer - Yes
SWAPA: Proposed Regulation Amendment 12 AAC 56.500 – VLCC Pilot Endorsement		
Discussion:	Captain Ron Ward of SWAPA presented the proposed regulation amendment to 12 AAC 56.500(a). The proposed amendment aligns the regulation with the SWAPA training manual for VLCC (Very Large Crude Carrier) endorsements. The revision will specify that only pilots who hold a VLCC endorsement may dock/undock those vessels as opposed to “pilot” those vessels in waters covered under Chapter 08.62.	
Motion:	Move to start a regulations project to amend 12 AAC 56.500(a) to read “Due to the great mass, windage, and ship-handling peculiarities of very large crude carrier(VLCC) class vessels, only pilots holding a VLCC endorsement may dock/undock those vessels in waters covered by this chapter.” (First: Cunningham; Second: Mew).	
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	Thayer - Yes
Association Reports		
SEAPA	<p>Captain Ron Leighton provided a report for SEAPA. We currently have 42 fully licensed pilots. Recently, three pilots retired and did not renew their licenses. We have 16 deputy pilots, with a new one joining soon, leaving us with 11 trainees.</p> <p>We have successfully covered all vessels in our region, including yachts and miscellaneous traffic, achieving one hundred percent coverage in Southeast. We expect about 30 applicants for the upcoming test to enhance our program.</p> <p>The 2025 season should be similar to 2024, but we anticipate an 18% increase in cruise traffic for 2026, which will make operations tighter.</p> <p>We have one cargo dock remaining, and our training program will stay the same as previously discussed. Log ships will now anchor instead of docking, allowing us to integrate this into our training process. Currently, we have around 11 dockings a year, possibly 12 if we're lucky.</p>	
SWAPA	<p>Jenni Zilinski, Business Manager for SWAPA provided their association report.</p> <p>We currently have 11 full-member pilots qualified for Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs), but this will decrease to 10 due to an upcoming retirement. We have 3 deputies with 110,000 gross ton licenses, and one will become a full marine pilot with his VLCC endorsement in February, marking his third anniversary. There are also 3 deputies in training with 95,000 gross ton licenses; 2 are in hands-on training, and one is close to completing his training and obtaining his deputy license. By summer, we expect one pilot to transfer from AMP and 4 others to be observing, totaling 7.</p>	
AMP	<p>Captain David Arzt of Alaska Marine Pilots provided the AMP report for Western Alaska.</p> <p>We currently have eight full pilots and one deputy pilot. Additionally, one of our pilots is in training to transfer to Region 2 with SWAPA, which is expected to happen within the next</p>	

	<p>year. We also had one retiree this year who has not renewed his license. Currently, there are five individuals in the training apprentice program. Of these, we expect that two should be ready to finish their hands-on training in about a year.</p>	
Division Update	<p>Melissa Dumas, Operations Manager for the Division provided the division update and reviewed the most recent fiscal reports for the program with the board. She presented both the Fiscal Year 2024 fourth-quarter financial report and the Fiscal Year 2025 first-quarter report. Starting with the fourth quarter report, which ended on June 30, 2024, you'll see financial information above the blue line, representing the program's total revenue. To clarify, this report includes cumulative data for both foreign pleasure craft and marine pilot revenues and expenditures. For Fiscal Year 2024, the total revenue from licensing fees was \$53,590, with an additional \$742 from the general fund. In terms of expenditures, we differentiate between direct and indirect costs. The direct costs, which include personal services, totaled \$41,348. Non-investigative travel expenses, primarily for board member meetings, amounted to \$14,012. Legal services cost \$10,107, and interagency mediation added another \$2,429, bringing total non-investigative expenditures to \$76,096. For investigative costs, we spent \$8,954 on personal services related to investigations, with total investigative costs reaching \$9,295. Overall, the total expenditures amount to \$85,391.</p> <p>Due to delays and billing for legal costs and RSA services, we face some challenges with the first-quarter report. While I've included a placeholder to show the current situation, more detailed information will be available in the next reports. For total revenue, we have three closed bienniums, and we're now working on the new biennium for 2024 and 2025. In July, August, and September, there was \$6,700 in revenue from personal services, \$10,500 in service costs, \$5,750 in travel, and \$685 in investigative costs. The indirect numbers are placeholders, based on the previous year's figures. As we end the first quarter, you have about half a million dollars in the bank. This renewal period will bring in most of your revenue for the next fiscal year, so you should be in a good position.</p>	
Foreign Pleasure Craft Exemptions and 2025 Navigation Packet Approval		
	<p>MPC Carabajal provided an overview of FPC exceptions issued by the board from 2020 – 2024 and a summary of the revenue brought in by those applications. The number of vessels has been decreasing over the past few years and the vessels that have applied have been smaller than in previous years resulting on lower revenue.</p>	
Discussion:	<p>MPC Carabajal provided the list of documents required for the Pleasure Craft Exemption Navigation packet with updated print revision dates where applicable for the board to review and consider for the upcoming 2025 season. Coast Pilot's 8 and 9 have revision dates of January 2025; the tide tables and tidal tables have 2025 revision dates as well. The remaining documents in the packet have not had an updated revision since the board approved them in 2024.</p>	
Motion:	<p>Move approve the Yacht, FPC Navigation Packet for the 2025 season. (First: Sinclair; Second: Cunningham).</p>	
Discussion:	<p>With nothing to discuss, the board approved the motion via roll call vote.</p>	
Recorded Votes:	Cronk - Yes	Mew - Yes
	Cunningham - Yes	Tougas - Yes
	Sinclair - Yes	Thayer - Yes
Investigative Report:		

	<p>Investigator III Patrick Kase provided the investigative report to the board. Currently, there is one open case regarding a contested license denial that has been ongoing for some time, categorized as litigation initiated. As for closed cases, there have been four. Two were self-reported marine pilot incidents that closed with no action, as they were properly disclosed. Another was a license application review related to a previously reported vessel collision, which was also closed. The last case involved unlicensed practice, resolved with a non-disciplinary letter of advisement.</p> <p>Question from the board: Is there any indication of a timeline for the resolution of the case in litigation? A current status by the next meeting would be appreciated.</p> <p>Investigator Kase will reach out to the Dept. of Law to see if he can have an update before the next board meeting.</p>
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NOAA – Office of Coast Survey (S-100 charts, new navigation tool)

	<p>Caroline Wilkinson with NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey provided an overview of the new navigational tool, the S-100 charts to the board and association representatives. . She discussed the new S-102 products, which are rolling out in Southeast Alaska and will eventually expand to all of Alaska. As the Alaska Navigation Manager, she oversees ocean floor mapping priorities. Vessels are currently using the S-57 standard for nautical charting, set by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), but will soon transition to the S-100 standard. This change will alter how charts are displayed and how data layers are organized. ECDIS machines will start rolling out with S-100 compatibility this year, though it's unlikely you'll encounter one on a ship until after 2029, when all new systems must accept S-100 charts.</p> <p>The discussion focused on S-102, the bathymetry layer that can be toggled on and off within charts. Other interactive layers will include water levels and surface currents, with additional layers sourced from various federal and state agencies in the future. Our immediate focus is on basic electronic nautical charts, while advanced ice and weather layers are expected around 2027 or 2028.</p> <p>This initiative is part of precision navigation, which allows vessels to navigate safely and efficiently by accessing integrated data layers. The goal is to combine various navigational information—tides, charts, and weather—into a single interface, allowing you to easily toggle between layers.</p>
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Deputy Marine Pilot Candidate Interview

<p>Motion: Off Record: 10:11 a.m.</p>	<p>I, Andrew Mew, move that the Alaska State Board of Marine Pilots enter into executive session in accordance with AS 44.62.310(c), and Alaska Constitutional Right to Privacy Provisions, for the purpose of discussing subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation and character of any person, provided the person may request a public discussion; and matters which by law, municipal charter, or ordinance are required to be confidential. Board staff Renee Carabajal to remain and Deputy Marine Pilot candidate Captain Brett Merrill, to remain during his interview (First: Mew; Second: Sinclair).</p>	
<p>Recorded Votes:</p>	<p>Cronk - Yes</p>	<p>Mew - Yes</p>
	<p>Cunningham - Yes</p>	<p>Tougas - Yes</p>
	<p>Sinclair - Yes</p>	<p>Thayer - Yes</p>
<p>Brief Discussion: On Record: 10:41 a.m.</p>	<p>No official action was taken during the executive session.</p>	

Board Action: Deputy Marine Pilot Candidate	
Discussion:	The board approved Deputy Marine pilot licensure for Captain Brett Merrill.
Motion:	Move to approve a Deputy Marine Pilot license for 50,000 Gross Tons for Region 1 for Captain Brett Merrill - Badge #257, license #178727 (First: Cunningham; Second: Cronk).
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
	Thayer - Yes
12. Schedule Future Meeting Date(s)	
Brief Discussion:	After discussion, the board decided to have their next meeting in Ketchikan, on April 16 th , 2025, with the Local Knowledge Exam on April 15 th , 2025.
Adjourn:	
Brief Discussion: Off Record at 10:52 am	Having completed all scheduled business on the agenda, the board adjourned.
Motion:	Move to adjourn (First: Mew; Second: Cunningham).
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
	Thayer - Yes
Date Final Minutes Approved by the Board: ____ Meeting _____ OnBoard	