

**Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
HARBOR TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Summary

March 1, 2006

MPCA Conference Room, Canal Park, Duluth, MN

HTAC Voting Members Present		HTAC Voting Members Absent	
Organization	Representative	Organization	Representative
City of Duluth	Chuck Froseth	Industry-General Bulk	Mike McCoshen
City of Superior	Jason Serck (Vice-chair)	Industry-General Cargo	Gary Nicholson
Duluth Seaway Port Auth	Jim Sharrow (Chair)	Industry-Grain sector	Mick Sertich
Industry-Coal sector	Marshall Elder (alt)	Industry-Ore Sector	Tom Steele
Industry-Harbor Services	Ed Montgomery	Industry-Pilots	Don Willecke
Industry-Recreation	Joel Johnson	Industry-Vessel Operations	Jerry Walls
MN DNR	Patty Fowler	Isaak Walton League	Gary Glass
MnDOT	Dick Lambert	MIC	Nick Baker
MPCA	Cindi Kahrmann	NWRPC	Jason Laumann
Save Lake Superior Assoc	Nancy Paisley (alt)	St Louis County	Barbara Hayden
St. Louis River CAC	Ted R. Smith (alt)	US EPA	David Cowgill
U.S. Army Corps	Al Klein	US Fish & Wildlife Service	Dave Warburton
USCG Marine Safety Office	Larry DiDomenico	USDA-NRCS	Paul Sandstrom
WI DNR	Duane Lahti	WLSSD	Jack Ezell
WisDOT	Martin Forbes		
Others Present			
Organization	Representative	Organization	Representative
Rep. Oberstar's Office	Jackie Morris	Marine Tech	Ted Smith
International Shipmasters	Bob Libby	MPCA	Doug Beckwith
JGP Group	Lisa Neitzel	MPCA	Pat Carey
MIC	Ron Chicka	MPCA	Marc Hershfield
MIC	Andy McDonald	MPCA	Jane Mosel
MIC	Rondi Watson	Service Engineering	Marsha M Patelke
MN DNR	John Lindgren	Service Engineering	Tim Rogers
MN Sea Grant	Dale Bergeron	U.S. Army Corps	John Larson
WI Sea Grant	Gene Clark	US Customs Service	Barbara Lambus
Technical Advisor	Bill Majewski		

1. Agenda Review / Introductions

HTAC Chair Jim Sharrow called the meeting to order at 9:05 am. All participants introduced themselves. No changes to the agenda were put forward.

2. Committee Business

2006 Officers

Ron Chicka reported that the Membership and Bylaws committee was putting forth a recommendation to change the terms of service for the HTAC Chair and Vice-Chair from

one year to two, since they only preside over four meetings annually. Another proposed change was that the chair position would alternate between the two states, i.e., a Minnesota-based chairperson for one term would be followed by a Wisconsin-based chairperson for the next. He added that if the HTAC Bylaws were so amended, current chair Jim Sharrow and vice-chair Jason Serck would continue in those offices for 2006. Jim commented that although he did not seek this type of change, he would not object to serving for a second year as chair. He asked for a motion to approve.

Motion by Joel Johnson with a second by Jason Serck to approve the change to the HTAC Bylaws Section 4a, as presented. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

December 7, 2005 Meeting Summary

Chair Jim Sharrow called for changes to the Meeting Summary from the previous HTAC meeting. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve.

Motion by Martin Forbes with a second by Ted R. Smith to approve the December 1, 2005 Meeting Summary as presented. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

3. St. Louis River Interlake/Duluth Tar Superfund Site Update

Jane Mosel, project leader from the MPCA-Duluth office, gave some background on the SLRIDT project, for which the MPCA issued a Record of Decision for site clean up in 2004. She explained that over 60 years of waste water discharges from the water gas, coking and tar facilities formerly located on the site resulted in extensive sediment contamination, consisting primarily of PAHs and metals. She also gave an overview of the process to get to the point of actual cleanup, which began in 1979 when contamination was first reported to the MPCA.

The remedy is described as a dredge/cap hybrid, which includes dredging approximately 224,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediments, constructing an on-site containment facility and capping approximately 39 acres. Parts of the remediation began in the fall of 2004. Full-scale implementation on the remaining portions is scheduled to begin this spring and will continue through 2009. The ultimate goal is to restore the habitat to something close to its original state. After the remedy is implemented, the site will be monitored to ensure its long-term performance and to trigger additional actions. She noted that the Responsible Parties would be held accountable for the success of this project for at least thirty years.

Tim Rogers, Project Engineer from Service Engineering, gave an update of current and planned field activities. In April, after roads to the site are improved, dike construction will begin on the Slip 6 containment facility. This summer the underwater cap and surcharge material will be placed in Stryker Bay. The 8-foot surcharge will compress the sediments and will remain in place for two years. Water control features (silt curtains and sheet pile) will be placed. A wastewater treatment plant will be built with a discharge line to Slip 7.

Activities in 2007 will mostly consist of dredging and in 2008 on-shore excavation of contaminated wetlands will begin. In 2009, the surcharge sand will be removed and placed as a sand cap in the containment facility. Fish habitat will be mitigated and environmental medium (seeding to assist with wetlands creation) will be placed, creating habitat areas, buffer zones, conservation easements and a recreational sand beach.

4. GLNPO Great Lakes Legacy Act Funds

Doug Beckwith, project supervisor from the MPCA office in Duluth, explained that XIK Corporation, one of the Responsible Parties (RPs) in the final remedy for the SLRIDT project, had applied, with MPCA support, for 2002 Legacy Act funding for a geotextile mat for use at the SLRIDT Superfund Site. This additional expenditure, in addition to enhancing the effectiveness of the mandated remedy, will be considered as a local match to leverage as much as \$5-6 million in additional funds for harbor-wide projects.

In addition to remediating contaminated sediments at the SLRIDT site, these “Phase 2” Legacy Act projects will include assessing and remediating contaminated sediments in Minnesota Slip and conducting the St. Louis River Area of Concern Assessment, a process to identify gaps in its data to be able to identify hotspots and then prioritize these sites to apply for future federal funding. He noted that one unique and important feature of the SLR AOC project is that it goes across state lines to treat the Duluth and Superior harbor as one entity.

Marc Hershfield, also with MPCA-Duluth, reported that the EPA was pushing to de-list some of the Areas of Concern in the Great Lakes Basin and described how the data from the St. Louis River AOC Assessment will help to achieve this goal. He noted how the project involves a complex mix of objectives and that delisting targets should have measurable indicators and remain flexible. He stressed that the process will require a good deal of cooperation between local stakeholders and Minnesota and Wisconsin state agencies (MPCA and WisDNR).

5. Subcommittee Reports

Dredging Subcommittee

Subcommittee chair Gene Clark reported that 2005 accomplishments included assisting the MPCA with the completion of the Lower St. Louis River Sediment Management Plan; participation on the Great Lakes Regional Dredging Team; participating in several contaminated sediment remediation projects such as the Hog Island Inlet and SLRIDT projects; and providing input to the MPCA draft dredge material guidance document.

Goals for 2006 reflect a interest on the part of the team to identifying beneficial re-use alternatives to disposal as well as a commitment to supporting land use practices that lessen the amount of material to be dredged out of the Duluth-Superior harbor in the first place. These include identifying potential beneficial use sites for habitat enhancement

and other projects and continuing to support and utilize the Lower St. Louis River Sediment Management Plan and Duluth-Superior Port Land Use Plan.

Great Lakes Ports Advocacy Subcommittee

Subcommittee chair Ted Smith reported that the Advocacy Subcommittee was established in early 2005 after discussions about how lobbying on behalf of Ohio River ports has resulted in Army Corps maintenance budget increases. He noted that Great Lakes ports have not been organized and are experiencing a larger share of maintenance budget cuts.

Accomplishments included defining the subcommittee's Problem Statement and Mission Statement, as follows:

Problem Statement: The Great Lakes ports are currently bearing a larger share of federal budget cuts and receive less federal investment in infrastructure than coastal ports and inland river ports. In the case of the Ohio River ports, organized advocacy groups have been effective at lobbying federal lawmakers in Washington, DC.

Mission Statement: The Great Lakes Ports Advocacy Coalition: To serve as balanced brokers for industry, shipping and public interests of the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Seaway System; to ensure a safe, reliable, economically viable and environmentally sustainable transportation corridor, maintained and enhanced for domestic and international shipping; to provide legislative support and guidance for all improvements to the System.

The decision was also made to approach the Great Lakes Task Force to team up with this existing regional group to work toward this goal. He added that at the annual meeting held in November in Toledo, the Great Lakes Task Force formally accepted our mission into their main focus, which is the Jones Act.

Goals for next year include increasing membership and establishing a dues structure; organizing members into regional sub-groups to better serve members' needs and determining effective lobbying methods.

HTAC Membership and Bylaws Subcommittee

Subcommittee chair Ron Chicka reported that the annual review of membership and attendance at HTAC meetings was prompting a possible change in the way the Industry sectors are represented; specifically the Pilots and Vessel Operations sectors might be combined and a Dredging/Harbor Engineering sector might be added. He noted that he would present recommendations for adoption by the entire HTAC at the June 7 meeting.

6. Project Updates / Roundtable Discussion

Port Security Updates

Barbara Lambus, from the US Customs and Border Protection office in Duluth, suggested that the HTAC could perhaps convene a Port Security subcommittee to give regular updates on this topic, given its important new emphasis at federal, state, city and stakeholder levels. Ron Chicka replied that Ray Skelton from the Port Authority had

formerly been reporting on this topic to the HTAC, but that a schedule conflict had prevented his regular attendance as of late. He stated that he would contact Ray to see if it would be possible for him to attend future HTAC meetings—even if only towards the end of the agenda-- to provide this information to the group. He added that for this reason an HTAC subcommittee would probably not be needed, given the existence of other local groups organized to address this issue.

Duluth Comprehensive Plan

Jim Sharrow from the Duluth Seaway Port Authority expressed dismay that a number of differences exist between the land use categories recommended by the HTAC in the Duluth Port Land Use Plan and those showing up in the current version of the city's Comprehensive Plan. He encouraged HTAC members to get involved by attending the upcoming public meetings and commenting on the port-area land use categories.

US Coast Guard - Area Contingency Plan Development

Larry DiDomenico from the Duluth USCG-Marine Safety Office reported that the Port of Duluth had been listed as one of the nation's 100 most critical ports and as such is mandated to update its Area Contingency Plan. As part of this effort, he requested assistance from HTAC members to help identify 'Places of Refuge,' to pre-plan destinations in the case of floundering or impaired vessels in the western Great Lakes area. Jim Sharrow, Ed Montgomery, Bob Libby and Dale Bergeron volunteered to participate and Rondi Watson stated she would be contacting them to set up a meeting.

Larry added that Duluth had also been selected to participate in a full-scale port security and oil spill exercise this summer, to be held on August 30 – 31.

S.S. Meteor

Jason Serck, Planning and Port Director for the City of Superior, reported that the S.S. Meteor, the last remaining whaleback freighter, is undergoing survey and inspection as part of an Historic Structures Report (HSR). It is hoped that this work will lead to the vessel being recognized on the National Register as a historic landmark, which should help in obtaining funds for its preservation. The total budget for preparation of the report is \$180,000. The City has received seven proposals for parts one and two (of five), which will provide historic data on the vessel, evaluate its condition and provide recommendations to restore and preserve the vessel for the long term. The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a co-sponsor of the project.

7. Adjourn

No other items were put forward for discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rondi Watson
MIC Secretary