

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

**Meeting Summary
March 5, 2008**

MPCA Conference Room, Canal Park, Duluth, MN

HTAC Voting Members Present		Others Present	
Organization	Representative	Organization	Representative
City of Duluth	Chuck Froseth	Barr Engineering	Eric Dott
City of Superior	Jason Serck (<i>Chair</i>)	City of Duluth (intern)	Kyle Banks
Industry-Coal sector	Marshall Elder (alt)	Congressman Oberstar	Jackie Morris
Industry-General Cargo	Denise McDougall	GLMRI-UWS	Stacy Carlson
Industry-Harbor Engineering	Ted Smith (<i>Vice-Chair</i>)	GLMRI-UMD	Carol Wolosz
Industry-Harbor Services	Ed Montgomery	Great Lakes Fleet	Bill Peterson
Industry-Pilots/ Vessel Ops	Bob Libby	Congressman Oberstar	Jackie Morris
Isaak Walton League	Gary Glass	JGP Group	Lisa Neitzel
Duluth Seaway Port Authority	Jim Sharrow	MIC	Ron Chicka
MN DNR	Patty Fowler	MIC	Andy McDonald
MnDOT	Dick Lambert	MIC	Rondi Watson
MPCA	Pat Carey	MPCA	Mary Jean Fenske
Save Lake Superior Assoc	Nancy Paisley	MPCA	Marc Hershfield (alt)
USDA-NRCS	Paul Sandstrom	St. Louis River CAC	Julene Boe (alt)
St. Louis River CAC	Ted R. Smith	St. Louis River CAC	J. Howard McCormick
USCG Marine Safety Office	CDR Gary Croot	Sea Grant-MN	Dale Bergeron
WI DNR	Duane Lahti	Sea Grant-WI	Gene Clark
WisDOT	Martin Forbes	Technical Advisor	Bill Majewski
		UMD-Large Lakes Observ'y	Richard Ricketts
		U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Thom Holden
		USCGC Alder	Kevin Wirth
		USCG Marine Safety Office	LT Aaron Gross
		USCG Marine Safety Office	Larry DiDomenico
		UWS Transpo & Logistics	Dr. Richard Stewart
		US Customs Service	Barbara Lambus

HTAC Voting Members Absent	
Organization	Representative
Douglas County	Vacant
Industry-General Bulk	Mike McCoshen
Industry-Grain sector	Mick Sertich
Industry-Ore Sector	Tom Steele
Industry-Recreation	Joel Johnson
NWRPC	Jason Laumann
St Louis County	Barbara Hayden
US EPA	David Cowgill
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Steve Brossart
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Dave Warburton
WLSSD	Jack Ezell

1. Agenda Review / Introductions

HTAC Chair Jason Serck called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. All participants introduced themselves. No changes to the agenda were put forward.

2. Committee Business

December 5, 2007 HTAC Meeting Summary

Chair Jason Serck called for changes to the Meeting Summary as presented. No changes were put forward, so he asked for a motion to approve.

Motion by Bob Libby/Ted R. Smith to approve the December 5, 2007 Meeting Summary as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Captain of the Port – USCG-Duluth MSO Annual Report

Port Commander Gary Croot gave an overview of current Coast Guard operations, including the new TWIC (Transportation Worker Identification Credential) cards. A TWIC card will be required of anyone requiring unescorted entry to secure port facilities and he reported that initial enrollment process is going well. Kevin Wirth, commander of the USCG Cutter Alder, reported on 2008 ice breaking efforts. Harbor ice conditions were described as very dynamic as the ice was very thick this year—18 to 36 inches. The lift bridge is closed until March 22nd.

4. Proposed Minnesota Ballast Water Regulations

Mary Jean Fenske, Program Coordinator at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in St. Paul, spoke about the new ballast water regulations being developed for the state of Minnesota. A court ruling from California is spurring new actions to regulate ships which dump ballast in U.S. waters. The agency will require permits by Sept. 30 for all vessels with ballast tanks that enter the Minnesota waters of Lake Superior. The regulations will require ships to treat their ballast water to kill nearly all living organisms before the tanks are emptied. A public comment period will open in June. Discussion at the HTAC centered on the need for uniform federal regulations instead of a state-by-state approach to ballast water management.

5. USCG Ballast Water Management Plans and Aquatic Invasive Species Workshop

Dale Bergeron, Maritime Extension Educator for the Minnesota Sea Grant program, reported on a Ballast Water and Invasive Species workshop he facilitated at a recent Coast Guard conference in Cleveland. The focus was not on developing regulations to be implemented at a future date, but on answering the question “what can we do now to slow the spread of invasives and the VHS fish virus?” With over 40 participants representing a broad range of agencies, the workshop provided an opportunity to dialog and build relationships that will lead to a better understanding of vessel operations and to determine best practices for Great Lakes vessels.

6. Duluth Seaway Port Authority Initiatives

Jim Sharrow provided an update on recent Duluth-Seaway Port Authority initiatives. Tonnages across the Great Lakes have been decreasing but Duluth's have been increasing--wheat and coal shipments set records in 2007. Bottom line, the Duluth Port has weathered economic downturn and expects continued growth in 2008.

7. Spirit Lake Marina Development Proposal

Brian Bocht from Bocht Engineering, the group looking at redeveloping the Spirit Lake Marina, reviewed their proposal to convert a dilapidated marina in the Riverside neighborhood into condos and an RV park, to include 45 lots with water, sewer and road improvements. Although the Duluth City Council has initially approved this project, one complication is that the ends of the piers are actually located in Wisconsin waters and Wisconsin's public trust doctrine is more stringent than Minnesota's.

8. Subcommittee Reports

Dredging

Gene Clark reported that the next phase of work for the Erie Pier Management Plan is to address the issue of loosestrife and all noxious weeds by determining best management practices from various agencies.

He also reported that the Army Corps agreed to update the Dredged Materials Management Plan (DMMP) for the Duluth-Superior Harbor, good news because that process will be much easier than developing a new one. An important goal is to identify additional project options, e.g., with Sky Harbor airport and/or CN rail, than those currently permitted. Jim Sharrow noted that it was the promise of being able to work with the HTAC membership and the attendant prospect of better local buy-in from local stakeholders that influenced their decision to agree to the update.

He also reported on the status of the Erie Pier Reuse Cost and Marketing Analysis: Rodger Brannan and James Skurla, from the UMD Labovitz School of Business and Economics, have completed their data collection and review. The subcommittee is currently involved in reviewing the assumptions, etc., before the analysis can be finalized. Expected completion date is this fall.

He closed by announcing that the Sea Grant program will have funding to offer another harbor tour this year for interested HTAC members on the LL Smith research vessel. They will try for a date or dates in July or August.

Advocacy

Ted Smith reported that the Army Corp received a budget increase of \$7 million for Great Lakes dredging projects (now equaling the 1997 budget), resulting in 44 dredging contracts

this year (up from 11 last year). He added that the bad news is that the Bush administration has proposed a 35.5 percent reduction for 2009.

Modeling

Gary Glass reported that we still don't have a "home" for the WARMF model, problematic because it could be useful in modeling applications for various harbor issues such as the VHS fish virus.

9. Legislative Updates

Jason Serck reported that the City had received a significant amount of funding from Wisconsin's Harbor Assistance Program (HAP) for projects on the Superior harbor. CLM Corp. is receiving \$2 million to help make dock wall repairs costing \$3.2 million. The balance will be paid by CLM. In addition, Cenex-Harvest States is receiving \$1.3 million of HAP funding to address corrosion problems with their facilities.

He also reported that the Superior Harbor Commission was reinstated by the City Council at its meeting the previous night.

He closed with the news that the St. Louis River estuary had been chosen as next National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERR site), to be implemented in 2010.

10. Project Updates / Roundtable Discussion

Gene Clark noted that Duane Lahti would be retiring; committee members commended him for his involvement and service to the HTAC. Duane noted that his successor would continue to be an active participant in the group and in turn commended the HTAC for its work as a cooperative stakeholder group working toward the common goal of balancing economic and environmental interests.

11. Adjourn

No other items were brought forward for discussion and the meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rondi Watson, MIC Secretary