Illinois River Carriers Meeting – Minutes

September 10, 2019 Regular Meeting

President Mike Blaske

* Called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and guest. He then provided a safety briefing in case of an emergency.
* Introduction of members and guests

Captains Committee Chair – Jeremy “Shot” Tardy

* Updated the group on river forecasts which were overall pretty good with most water levels hovering a foot or two above normal.
* Buoy conditions are in pretty good shape on the Illinois
* Update on projects on the Illinois Waterway
* Village of Hardin will have fireworks on September 21st
* 16 tows in queue at Starved Rock as of this morning
* 34 tows in queue at Marseilles Lock

Tracy Hoffman – Sediment Sampling on the Chicago Sanitary Canal

* Testing this fall (or early Spring) is scheduled for areas near the Stickney Water Reclamation plant
* Testing has been intermittent in the Chicago area since 2009
* Work also involves upland areas along the canal
* Testing is usually early morning to dusk
* Future testing will be near mid-channel and will require better communication than past testing
* Damen Avenue Bridge to Stickney plant area of testing
* Crews will check traffic prior to starting a sample and will also monitor channel 16 for traffic.
* Tracy then answered questions from the group

Stan Hansen, P.E., P.L.S. Crawford, Murphy, and Tilly

* Provided a presentation on the Quincy Memorial Bridge and the Mississippi and the Beardstown Bridge over the Illinois River (presentation attached).
* A group discussion was focused on the location of the Quincy Memorial Bridge and possibly moving the navigation span closer to the shoreline.
* Public hearing will probably be sent out this winter
* Ed Henleben has requested the group be involved if decorative lighting was going to be included on either bridge.

Lincoln Puffer, Executive Officer– MSU Chicago

* Updated group on the rollout and implementation of Subchapter M – Some units are behind on the 25% requirement but that is because of some of the unique fleets within the country.
* They are working through consistency issues between districts and trying to stay aligned with other units.

Randy Preston, Commanding Officer – MSU Chicago

* Discussed work instructions that are being provided to MSU units to try and help maintain consistency throughout districts.

Mike Walsh, IWW Program Manager, USACE

* Starved Rock is expecting to turn the lock over 2 days earlier than expected and Marseilles is expected to turn the lock over 1 day earlier. They have requested a 12 hour closure on September 20th to set forms for the 2 week closure periods. The lock openings would start as early as this afternoon and we would have normal lock conditions until the September 20th closures.
* Contracts for 2020 closures at Starved Rock and Marseilles was awarded last night. 2020 start dates of July 1st for Starved Rock and LaGrange and July 6th for Peoria and Marseilles.

Pete Sanborn – USCG Bridge Branch – St. Louis

* Pete updated the group on the status of the Joliet Bridge Remote Operations project. They are running about 90 days behind schedule and there will be “test” period where the bridges will be operated remotely and the bridge tenders will be in each bridge house to open bridges in case remote operations do not work properly.

Chris Reger – USACE

* Updated the group on current dredge activities and provided a handout on 2019 schedule.

Mike Blaske – IRCA President

* Opened up a brief discussion on the locking committee to see what was a success and any issues that resulted from the committee work.

Darren Melvin – Discussed “Findings of Concern” document issued by MSU Chicago regarding bridge allisions. The document will be uploaded to the IRCA website.

Next Meeting – Tuesday, November 12, 2019 – Par-A-Dice, East Peoria, IL

Meeting Ajourned