

BOARD FOR BRANCH PILOTS MEETING MINUTES

The Virginia Board for Branch Pilots met on September 11, 2025, at the Virginia Port Authority, 600 World Trade Center, Norfolk, Virginia, with the following members present:

Aaron Anseeuw
Captain E. Waightstill Avery
Captain J.W. Whiting Chisman, III
Michael W. Coleman
Captain January N. Collins
Patrick B. McDermott
Christine Piersall
Captain Clarence M. Young

Staff present for all, or part of the meeting were:

Jeb Wilkinson, Director
Kate R. Nosbisch, Executive Director
Ecila Williams, Licensing Operations Administrator
Jhustyna McBride-Dunn, Regulatory Operations Administrator
Davon Jones, Administrative Coordinator

I. Vincent Behm, Jr, Citizen Member, Steve Kirschner, LRPD Director, Enid Candaleria-Vega, BPOR Liaison, Elizabeth Peay, Assistant Attorney General with the Office of the Attorney General, were not present at the meeting with regrets.

Members of the Audience included:

John Hanna III, Association of Virginia Docking Pilots
Beth Hanna
McKay Borden
Benton Borden
Captain Richard Lyons
Captain Mark Anderson
Captain John Hanna IV
Beth Anderson
Mark Anderson
Mark Coberly, Manager, Maritime Law Department, Representative from Wood Rogers Vandeventer Black PLC.

Finding a quorum of the Board present, Mr. Coleman, President, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. The President then requested a moment of silence in remembrance of the victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Call to Order

Ms. Nosbisch advised the Board of the emergency evacuation procedures.

**Emergency
Evacuation
Procedures**

Ms. Piersall moved to approve the agenda. Mr. McDermott seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

**Approval of
Agenda**

Captain Avery moved to approve the minutes from the May 20, 2025, Board meeting and May 20, 2025, Public Hearing. Captain Young seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

**Approval of
Minutes**

Ms. Nosbisch introduced Mr. Davon Jones as the new Administrative Coordinator. Ms. Nosbisch introduced guests in the audience.

**Welcome/
Introductions**

There was no public comment.

**Public
Comment
Period**

The Board reviewed a letter from Captain Capps, regarding an incident on July 17, 2025, involving the MV CAPE SUAREZ POINT

**Notification
Letter- Captain
Capps – MV
CAPE
SUAREZ
POINT**

Captain Capps was ordered to shift the MV CAPE SUAREZ POINT (IMO #9668984) at 0900 on July 17, 2025, from the south side of Pier N at Fairwinds Landing to Portsmouth Marine Terminal. The MV CAPE SUAREZ POINT is an MSC Ready Reserve Vessel with a length overall of 787 feet and 6 inches and a beam of 123 feet. The weather conditions were fair with 15 to 20 knots of wind from the south-southwest, and the current was flooding at about 0.5 knots.

Captain Capps arrived at the ship at about 0830 and noticed that the tug CHRISTINE MCALLISTER was moored on the bulkhead astern of the ship. Upon boarding, Captain Capps conducted a Master-Pilot Exchange during which he was informed that, other than the stern thruster, all navigational equipment was operational and that the deep draft was 27 feet and 9 inches. Captain Capps discussed the maneuver, expected currents, traffic, and wind conditions with the Captain and the Docking Master. The Docking Master, who is affiliated with McAllister Towing, contacted the CHRISTINE MCALLISTER and informed them of the intention to depart from the south side of Pier N. The CHRISTINE MCALLISTER stated they would be staying in their current position. The Docking Master then contacted the McAllister

Towing operations department and asked them to inform the CHRISTINE MCALLISTER of the tug of their intentions.

The tugboats AJ MCALLISTER and JANE MCALLISTER were made fast on the port bow and the port quarter, respectively. The Docking Master then ordered both tugs to push ahead easy and for the Captain to begin letting go lines. The Docking Master made a security call on VHF-FM channel 13 stating that the ship was letting go lines and would be departing from the south side of Pier N and docking at Portsmouth Marine Terminal.

Notification
Letter- Captain
Capps – MV
CAPE
SUAREZ
POINT Cont.

At 0926, the ship undocked from the berth under the con of the Docking Master. Captain Capps remained on the bridge wing to observe the maneuver, manage traffic, and assist as needed. Both tugs were ordered to back easy, and once the ship was a safe distance from the pier, minimum ahead was ordered on the main engine and both tugs were ordered to stop. The ship slowly developed headway and dead slow ahead was ordered on the main engine. The ship continued to slowly depart the slip until the starboard quarter was clear to swing free of the pier. Once clear, the Docking Master initiated a turn to port using the ship's rudder, bow thruster, and both assist tugs. The ship continued to turn to port until safely in the channel. The transit continued without incident and the ship docked safely at Portsmouth Marine Terminal at 1004.

After docking, Captain Capps departed the ship via launch boat and was taken to his vehicle at Fairwinds Landing. Once back at the pier, he was informed by the Terminal Manager that the CHRISTINE MCALLISTER pulled down two of the dolphins from the bulkhead where they were moored. Captain Capps arrived at Lynnhaven at about 1100 and immediately reported for a Virginia state drug test and a breath alcohol test, both of which came back negative.

The File Review Committee made a recommendation that the letter be filed, and the Board take no action, as there appears to be no violation of the Board's regulations or statutes. The Board moved to accept the recommendation, and it was approved by Messrs. and Captains Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall, and Young.

Captain Avery provided the Board with a report of examinations conducted by the Exam Administrators on September 10, 2025. The following committee members were present, Captains: Avery, Chisman, Collins, and Young.

Exam
Administrators'
Report

The following report was made:

Mark S. Anderson, Jr., answered oral questions related to the initial license. The subjects included courses and distances from CH Buoy to the James River Bridge and to Town Point, local traffic, safe anchoring positions in Lynnhaven, Sewell's Point and Newport News, anchoring techniques, bridge clearances, , transiting Little Creek, docking and undocking situations with, and without towboats, pilot/dockmaster relationship, the master/pilot exchange of information, use of the auxiliary channel, bank cushion and suction, meeting and overtaking situations, propulsion and steering systems, safe vessel speed, under keel clearance, reduced visibility, proper usage of personal and ship's navigation equipment, emergency ship handling, vessel and terminal security, state and federal regulations, the duties of a Limited Branch Pilot, personal conduct, fatigue, prescription drugs, chemical testing, the role of the MRO (medical review officer) and reportable incidents.

Mark S. Anderson, Jr. successfully completed the oral examination with the Board for Branch Pilots Examining committee. After considering the results of the examination, Captain Avery moved Mark S. Anderson, Jr, for an Alpha License (25,000 gross tons and 28 feet maximum draft). Mr. Anseeuw seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott and Young.

John A Hanna, IV answered oral questions related to the initial license. The subjects included courses and distances from CH Buoy to the James River Bridge and to Town Point, local traffic, safe anchoring positions in Lynnhaven, Sewell's Point and Newport News, anchoring techniques, bridge clearances, transiting Little Creek, docking and undocking situations with, and without towboats, pilot/dockmaster relationship, the master/pilot exchange of information, use of the auxiliary channel, bank cushion and suction, meeting and overtaking situations, propulsion and steering systems, safe vessel speed, under keel clearance, reduced visibility, proper usage of personal and ship's navigation equipment, emergency ship handling, vessel and terminal security, state and federal regulations, the duties of a Limited Branch Pilot, personal conduct, fatigue, prescription drugs, chemical testing, the role of the MRO (medical review officer) and reportable incidents.

John A Hanna, IV successfully completed the oral examination with the Board for Branch Pilots Examining committee. After considering the results of the examination, Captain Avery moved John A Hanna, IV for an Alpha License (25,000 gross tons and 28 feet maximum draft). Mr. McDermott seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott and Young.

Austin C. Capps answered oral questions related to the raise in grade. The subjects included safe anchoring positions in Lynnhaven, Cape Charles and Sewell's Point, anchoring deep draft vessels, transfers from Newport News to Norfolk, vessel squat and adequate under-keel clearance, engine power limiters, usage of the deep-water route in the southeast sea lanes, limitations of bow thrusters and adequate tugboat assistance, hazards of marine construction and dredging, traffic management and safe vessel speed.

Austin C. Capps successfully completed the oral examination with the Board for Branch Pilots Examining committee. After considering the results of the examination, Captain Avery moved Austin C. Capps for a raise in grade from a Foxtrot classification (65,000 gross tons and 42 feet maximum draft) to a Golf classification (75,000 gross tons and 44 feet maximum draft). Mr. Anseeuw seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott and Young.

Exam
Administrators'
Report Cont.

Mathew C. Morse answered oral questions related to the raise in grade. The subjects included safe anchoring positions in Lynnhaven, Cape Charles and Sewell's Point, anchoring deep draft vessels, transfers from Newport News to Norfolk, vessel squat and adequate under-keel clearance, engine power limiters, usage of the deep-water route in the southeast sea lanes, limitations of bow thrusters and adequate tugboat assistance, hazards of marine construction and dredging, traffic management and safe vessel speed.

Mathew C. Morse successfully completed the oral examination with the Board for Branch Pilots Examining committee. After considering the results of the examination, Captain Avery moved Mathew C. Morse for a raise in grade from a Foxtrot classification (65,000 gross tons and 42 feet maximum draft) to a Golf classification (75,000 gross tons and 44 feet maximum draft). Captain Collins seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott and Young.

Captain Avery also provided the Board with a report of examinations conducted by the Exam Administrators on September 11, 2025. The following committee members were present, Captains: Avery, Chisman, Collins, and Young. Staff: Director Wilkinson and Ms. Nosbisch.

The following report was made:

Timothy Delaney Oksman answered oral questions related to the extension of route. The subjects included courses and distances from CY buoy to Cheatham Annex, safe anchoring positions in the York River, channel dimension, local traffic, high water transit times, under keel clearance, George P. Coleman Bridge restrictions and characteristics, pipeline, cable and restricted areas, York River range lights, Yorktown monument head bearing, Explosives Handling Berth, aids to navigation and safe vessel speed. Maryland ULCV and LNG traffic, Quarantine anchorage, docking at Cheatham Annex without tugs, setting up PPU's on Navy ships, and making the turn inbound off Cape Henry.

Timothy Delaney Oksman successfully completed the oral examination with the Board for Branch Pilots Examining committee. After considering the results of the examination, Captain Avery moved Timothy Delaney Oksman for an extension of route from the entrance of York River to Cheatham Annex upon the York River. Mr. Anseeuw seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott and Young.

Exam
Administrators'
Report Cont.

Richard Austin Lyons answered oral questions related to the extension of route. The subjects included courses and distances from CY buoy to Cheatham Annex, safe anchoring positions in the York River, channel dimension, local traffic, high water transit times, under keel clearance, George P. Coleman Bridge restrictions and characteristics, pipeline, cable and restricted areas, York River range lights, Yorktown monument head bearing, Explosives Handling Berth, aids to navigation and safe vessel speed. Maryland ULCV and LNG traffic, Quarantine anchorage, docking at Cheatham Annex without tugs, setting up PPU's on Navy ships, and making the turn inbound off Cape Henry.

Richard Austin Lyons successfully completed the oral examination with the Board for Branch Pilots Examining committee. After considering the results of the examination, Captain Avery moved Richard Austin Lyons for an extension of route from the entrance of York River to Cheatham Annex upon the York River. Ms. Piersall seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott and Young.

Ms. McBride-Dunn informed the board that the Board for Branch Pilots Regulations are in the proposed stage, published April 7, 2025, with the comment period ending June 6 and no comments received. A public hearing on May 20 also drew no comment. It was noted that the revisions required by SB 826, replacing “moral turpitude” with “fraudulent or dishonest acts” to ensure clarity and compliance with state law. Captain Chisman made a motion to adopt the final changes to the regulations, authorize DPOR staff to file the final stage for further executive review, and allow DPOR staff to make any necessary technical or stylistic corrections. Ms. Piersall seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall, and Young.

**Regulatory
Update**

Mr. Coleman congratulated the licensees and emphasized that they should always be mindful of the significant responsibility they were assuming as licensed pilots to both the Commonwealth and the Nation.

Director Wilkinson informed the Board that DPOR operates as a non-general-fund agency and is required under §54.1-201 of the Code of Virginia to ensure each regulatory board is financially self-sustaining. It was advised that initiation of a Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) to amend regulatory fees was necessary to cover existing and projected expenditures. Captain Chisman made a motion to authorize DPOR Staff to file the NOIR for the fee adjustment action. Captain Avery seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall, and Young. President Coleman requested further clarification of the statistics at the next board meeting.

Ms. McBride-Dunn presented the revised SB 826 Application Review Matrix, noting staff will handle criminal conviction fact findings while the Board retains authority over experience and technical reviews. Anseeuw made a motion to approve the Board for Branch Pilots Application Review Matrix as a guidance document, as amended. Captain Young seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall, and Young.

Captain Chisman presented a proposal for the practical examination required under forthcoming regulations for licensing from Wolf Trap to Smith Point. It was recommended to have an open-book chart exercise using NOAA Legacy Chart 12225, together with a local-knowledge oral examination conducted by the Examining Committee. The proposal addresses rare but important circumstances when vessels anchor in Virginia waters near Smith Point. Ms. Piersall moved to approve the proposed practical examination criteria for Smith Point licensing as presented. Mr. McDermott seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains Anseeuw, Avery,

**Proposed
Practical
Exams for
Smith Point
Licensing**

Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall, and Young.

President Coleman informed the Board of the meeting dates for 2026.

- i. Thursday, March 12, 2026
- ii. Thursday, June 11, 2026
- iii. Thursday, September 10, 2026
- iv. Thursday, December 10, 2026

Captain Young moved to approve the 2026 Meeting Dates. Mr. Anseeuw seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall, and Young.

President Coleman advised that, in consideration of budget constraints, the Board defer attendance to the Virginia Maritime Association 2025 Symposium for this cycle.

Captain Chisman informed the Board that the Apprenticeship Program, originally accredited by the USCG in 1987, was successfully renewed by the U.S. Coast Guard for five years. During the renewal process, inconsistencies were identified where "MAMA" (Mid-Atlantic Maritime Academy) had not been updated to "U.S. Coast Guard-approved courses" in certain objectives. Captain Chisholm presented the revised objectives reflecting this change. Mr. McDermott made a motion to approve the amendments to the apprentice learning objectives. Captain Collins seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall, and Young.

Captain Chisman informed the Board that branch pilots have scheduled Continuing Education for 2026, to be held in Virginia Beach as a two-day seminar. Day One will cover a Pilot Incident Management course and a leadership seminar. Day Two will address hydrodynamics for pilots, ship technology topics including the use of AI in navigation and dynamic positioning systems, and emerging issues such as carbon intensity indexes and ship power limiters. Mr. McDermott made a motion to approve the 2026 Continuing Education program. Ms. Piersall seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall, and Young.

**2026 Meeting
Dates**

**Virginia
Maritime
Association
2025
Symposium**

**Apprenticeship
Program –
Amend
Apprentice
Learning
Objectives**

**2026 Branch
Pilot
Continuing
Education**

Conflict of Interest forms and travel vouchers were completed by all members present.

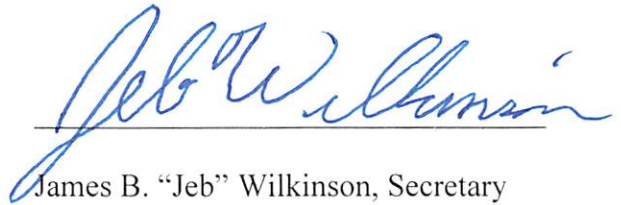
**Conflict of
Interest Forms
and Travel
Vouchers**

The meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

Adjourn



Michael Coleman, President



James B. "Jeb" Wilkinson, Secretary

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government

1. Name: Aaron Anseeuw
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Branch Pilots
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting September 11, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.


Signature

2025-09-11
Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government

1. Name: E. Waightstill Avery
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Branch Pilots
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting September 11, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

N/A

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

N/A

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

- ☒ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

- ☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☐ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

E. Waightstill Avery
Signature

9/11/2025
Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: J.W. Whiting Chisman III
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Branch Pilots
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting September 11, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:



I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

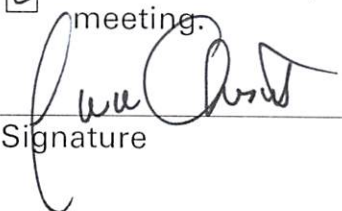
or



I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

Signature



Date

9-11-25

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government

1. Name: Michael W. Coleman
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Branch Pilots
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting September 11, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.



Signature

9/11/2025

Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government

1. Name: January Collins
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Branch Pilots
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting September 11, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:



I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

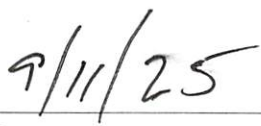
or



I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☐ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.


Signature


Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Patrick B. McDermott
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Branch Pilots
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting September 11, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

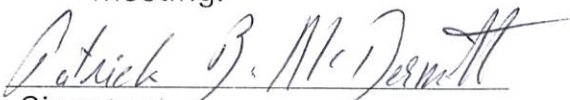
I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.


Signature


Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Christine N. Piersall
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Branch Pilots
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting September 11, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

Christine Piersall
Signature

9/11/2025
Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Clarence Young
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Branch Pilots
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting September 11, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

N/A

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

N/A

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:



I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or



I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☐ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

Signature

Date

11 Sept 2025