

BOARD FOR BRANCH PILOTS

Thursday, March 12, 2026 – 2:00 p.m.
Virginia Port Authority-Norfolk, VA

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation
9960 Mayland Drive
Richmond, Virginia 23233

Mission: Our mission is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public by licensing qualified individuals and businesses enforcing standards of professional conduct for professions and occupations as designated by statute.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- b. Determination of Quorum

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Branch Pilots Board Meeting, December 11, 2025
- b. Branch Pilots Fee Adjustment Committee Meeting, February 12, 2026

IV. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

V. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ***FIVE MINUTE PUBLIC COMMENT, PER PERSON***

VI. NOTIFICATION LETTER

- a. Captain Hoffman - M/V Market Cooper

VII. EDUCATION

- a. Exam Administrator's Update

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Limited Branch Pilot Capt. Morse Recognition from the United States Coast Guard
- b. Regulatory Update
 - i. General Regulatory Review Update
 - ii. Guidance Document 7945 Update
 - iii. Guidance Document 5008 Update
- c. General Assembly Update
- d. Fee Adjustment Committee Update

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Review of the Notification Letter Process

X. COMPLETE CONFLICT OF INTEREST FORM AND TRAVEL VOUCHER

XI. ADJOURNMENT

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR **THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026**

- ❖ Agenda materials made available to the public do not include disciplinary case files or application files pursuant to §54.1-108 of the Code of Virginia.
- ❖ Five-minute public comment, per person, with the exception of any open disciplinary or application file.
- ❖ Persons desiring to participate in the meeting and requiring special accommodations or interpretative services should contact the Department at (804) 367-2785 at least ten days prior to the meeting so that suitable arrangements can be made for an appropriate accommodation. The Department fully complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

DRAFT AGENDA
Materials contained in this agenda are proposed topics for discussion
And are not to be construed as regulation or official board position.
DRAFT AGENDA

**BOARD FOR BRANCH PILOTS MEETING
MINUTES**

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

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

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

Jeb Wilkinson, Director
Steve Kirschner, LRPD Director
Kate Nosbisch, Executive Director
Ecila Williams, Licensing Operations Administrator
Kyle Mathews, Regulatory Operations Administrator
Davon Jones, Administrative Coordinator
Conner Davis, Budget Officer

Elizabeth Peay, Senior Assistant Attorney General with the Office of the Attorney General, was present.

Enid Candaleria-Vega, BPOR Liaison, was not present at the meeting with regrets.

Member of the Audience included:

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 10:31 a.m.

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., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

**Approval of
Agenda**

Captain Avery moved to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2025, Board meeting. Ms. Piersall seconded the motion which was approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Behm abstained from voting due to his absence from the meeting.

Ms. Nosbisch introduced Mr. Conner Davis, Budget Officer with the Finance Division of DPOR and welcomes Mr. Kyle Mathews as the new Regulatory Operations Administrator, replacing Jhustyna McBride-Dunn. Ms. Nosbisch introduced guests in the audience.

Welcome/Introductions

There was no public comment.

Public Comment Period

The Board reviewed a letter from Captain Nienstedt, regarding an incident on August 11, 2025, involving the M/V GRETKE OLDENDORFF.

Notification Letter-Captain Nienstedt-M/V GRETKE OLDENDORFF

On Monday, August 11th, 2025, Captain Nienstedt was ordered at 04:30 to sail the M/V GRETKE OLDENDORFF (IMO #9681962) at 06:30 from Norfolk Southern Coal Pier 6 (NS6) in Norfolk, Virginia, to sea. Captain Nienstedt arrived aboard the vessel at approximately 06:00, proceeded to the bridge, introduced himself to the master, and reviewed the pilot card and the ship's particulars. A master-pilot exchange was conducted, during which details of the outbound transit were discussed.

The weather conditions were favorable. The wind speed fluctuated from 0 to 5 knots from a southeast direction, visibility was clear for approximately 10 miles, and the tidal current was flooding at approximately 0.5 knots at Lambert's Bend.

With the Moran docking master at the conn and tugs Kirby Moran and Jan Moran assisting, the GRETKE OLDENDORFF undocked from NS6 at 06:30 . At 06:47, both tugs were released. Captain Nienstedt conducted a docking master-pilot exchange, took the conn, and the docking master disembarked. Captain Nienstedt left the engine half ahead while maneuvering the GRETKE OLDENDORFF from the south end of Craney Island Reach toward Norfolk Harbor Reach.

At approximately 06:51, Captain Nienstedt ordered the engine full ahead. The tug CONNIE ANN was pushing a loaded barge outbound on the red side of Craney Island Reach on the port beam of the GRETKE OLDENDORFF . At approximately 06:52, CONNIE ANN called tug CAPE HENRY on VHF Channel 13 and stated that they would pass astern of the GRETKE OLDENDORFF and meet CAPE HENRY port to port. At that time, the

GRETKE OLDENDORFF was maintaining a course of 353° on the green side of the channel with a speed over ground of 7.2 knots, gradually increasing to 8 knots.

At 06:56, the barge being pushed by CONNIE ANN collided with the port quarter of the GRETKE OLDENDORFF. Following the collision, CONNIE ANN contacted the GRETKE OLDENDORFF and requested Captain Nienstedt's cell phone number. During that call, the tug operator explained that the tug lost control of the barge and was unable to prevent the barge from striking the vessel, despite using the tug's engines full astern.

At approximately 06:58, Captain Nienstedt ordered the GRETKE OLDENDORFF's engine to half ahead and contacted the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Virginia Command Center to report the incident. Captain Nienstedt then reduced engine speed in preparation for anchoring in Sewell's Point F-1 Anchorage.

At 07:05, Captain Nienstedt reported the incident to Virginia Pilot Association Operations. At 07:07, Captain Nienstedt contacted Moran Towing to request tug assistance for anchoring. Moran Towing was unable to provide assistance in time for anchoring in the F-1 anchorage. As a result, Captain Nienstedt proceeded toward Lynnhaven Anchorage and requested permission from both Virginia Pilot Association Operations and the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Virginia Command Center to anchor in Lynnhaven Alpha Anchorage.

At 09:07, the U.S. Coast Guard ordered the GRETKE OLDENDORFF to anchor east of buoy 2CH near Cape Henry. At 09:40, Captain Nienstedt anchored the GRETKE OLDENDORFF, informed Virginia Pilot Association Operations, and disembarked the vessel.

At approximately 10:15, Captain Nienstedt submitted a non-DOT Virginia State drug and alcohol test.

The File Review Committee and DPOR Staff 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., Mme., and Captains: Anseuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Captain Avery provided the Board with a report of examinations conducted by the Exam Administrator, noting the committee met in accordance with procedures and entered closed session for examinations on December 10, 2025 and December 11, 2025. The following committee members were present, Captains: Avery, Chisman, Collins and Young.

On December 10, 2025, the committee examined Captain William G. Saunders Jr., Captain Charles A. Huffman, Captain Chadwick M. Jamison,

Notification
Letter-
Captain
Nienstedt-
M/V GRETKE
OLDENDORFF
F (CONT.)

Exam
Administrator
s' Report

Captain Richard Austin Lyons, and Captain Timothy Delaney Oksman for an extension of route from Wolf Trap Light to Smith Point Light on the Chesapeake Bay. Topics included courses/distances, anchoring positions, currents, channel dimensions and lights, range characteristics, vessel traffic including ultra-large containers and LNG, danger areas on charts, tides/weather/sea conditions, maximum draft considerations, and tug escorts. It was noted that candidates submitted chart examinations for review as required.

After considering the results of the examination, Captain Avery moved Captain Charles A. Huffman, Captain Chadwick M. Jamison, Captain Richard Austin Lyons, Captain Timothy Delaney Oksman, and Captain William G. Saunders Jr., for an extension of route from Wolf Trap Light to Smith Point Light on the Chesapeake Bay. Ms. Piersall seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

On December 11, 2025, the committee examined John Alexander Hanna, IV and Mark S. Anderson for a raising of grade from Alpha (25,000 gross tons / 28 ft max draft) to Bravo (34,000 gross tons / 31 ft max draft). Topics included anchoring positions, meeting ultra-large vessels, docking/undocking without tug assistance, thruster use, air draft limits and calculations, sea lane depth, wind effects, AIS limitations, Portable Pilot Unit (PPU), radar use, tidal data, lookout requirements, marine construction considerations, and safe speed. Both candidates successfully completed the oral examination with the Board of Branch Pilots Examination Committee

Exam
Administrators
' Report
(CONT.)

After considering the results of the examination, Captain Avery moved that the Board approved the Examining Committee recommendations for a raise grade from Alpha (25,000 gross tons and 28 feet maximum draft) to Bravo (34,000 gross tons and 31 feet maximum draft) for Captain John Alexander Hanna, IV. Mr. Anseeuw seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Captain Avery moved that the Board approved the Examining Committee recommendations for a raise grade from Alpha (25,000 gross tons and 28 feet maximum draft) to Bravo (34,000 gross tons and 31 feet maximum draft) for Captain Mark S. Anderson. Mr. Piersall seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Captain Avery stated that the members of the Board for Branch Pilots License Renewal Committee have reviewed the renewal applications for the 2026 calendar year and present the following report:

**Consideration
of Renewal and
Licenses-
December 8 &
9, 2025**

E. Waightstill Avery; Christopher H. Behm; Charles I. Boggs, Jr.; Julian Wythe Whiting Chisman, III; January N. Collins; William G. Diggs; Ernest W. Dodson, Jr.; Zachary S. Dodson; Michael S. Eubanks; Mark S. Evans; Tazewell Fitzgerald; N. Turner Gray, Jr.; Herbert R. Green, III; Adam L. Halstead; Kevin D. Hartz; David H. Heath; C. Howard Hoffman; Charles A. Huffman; Chadwick M. Jamison; Jacob R. Johnson; Richard A. Lyons; Joseph R. McKnew; Ryan R. Nienstedt; Timothy D. Oksman; Frank M. Rabena, Jr.; Torrence A. Rogers; William G. Saunders, Jr.; Joseph M. Schacherer, III; G. Benjamin Schill, Jr.; Benjamin L. Speckhart; David B. Ware; Gregory R. Willson; Jonathan D. Worth; and Clarence M. Young.

The members of the Board for Branch Pilots License Renewal Committee reviewed the renewal application paperwork and deemed the individuals qualified pursuant to § 54.1-906 of the *Code of Virginia*. Captain Avery moved to approve the renewal applications of the above-listed unlimited licensees. Captain Chisman seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young. Captains Avery, Chisman, Collins, and Young abstained from voting on their respective licenses. Mr. Behm abstained from voting on Christopher H. Behm's license. Ms. Piersall abstained from voting on Charles A. Huffman's license.

The following limited branch pilot licenses were also presented for renewal: Mark S. Anderson Austin C. Capps, John Alexander Hanna, IV, and Matthew C. Morse.

The members of the License Renewal Committee reviewed the renewal application paperwork and deemed these individuals qualified pursuant to § 54.1-906 of the *Code of Virginia*. Captain Avery moved to approve the renewal application of the above-listed limited licensee at the respective limitations as of December 31, 2025. Mr. McDermott seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Captain Avery moved to waive the requirements of subsection C.4 of regulation 18VAC45-20-20, pursuant to subsection C.4 of regulation 18VAC45-20-30, from Hopewell to Richmond upon the James River for the following Pilot: Captain David B. Ware. Ms. Piersall seconded the motion which was approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Board members reviewed the VPA Apprenticeship Training Program.

Captain Chisman stated the Apprentice Committee is responsible for the stewardship of the Virginia Board for Branch Pilots Apprenticeship Program. Each year the committee evaluates the duties, curriculum and professional schooling that are required during the apprenticeship with the goal of providing the Commonwealth of Virginia with the most accomplished pilots available.

**Review and
Renewal of
Virginia Pilot
Association's
Apprenticeship
Training
Program**

Board members reviewed proposed revisions to certain objectives in the VPA Apprenticeship Training Program. Revisions include one change: under Learning Objective 7.18, the program would remove "Complete Sounding Trip" that gave a modern navigation and hydrographic resources and replace it with review of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers hydrographic surveys, including instruction by a pilot on accessing and interpreting digital survey resources.

Captain Avery moved to renew the apprenticeship program for 2026 with learning resource modifications. Captain Young seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Ms. Peay informed the Board that pursuant to § 54.1-100 of the *Code of Virginia*, an annual review by counsel had been conducted of the Board's regulations and there were no conflicts in their regulations with the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of Virginia, the laws of the United States, or the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**Review of
Regulations
Pursuant to
§54.1-100 of
the Code of
Virginia**

President Coleman addressed the board regarding the U.S. Coast Guard recognition of Limited Branch Pilot Captain Matthew Morse, including the circumstances involving the crane-carrying vessel Dong Bang Giant 2, which experienced equipment failure, dragged anchor, and drifted toward the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel during a wind event. Captain Morse responded without delay, managed the vessel's movement to avoid hazards, coordinated tug escorts, and worked with stakeholders to secure a berth, resulting in safe resolution. The Coast Guard recognition highlighted excellent seamanship, calm conduct under pressure, professionalism, leadership, and contributions to maritime safety.

**Limited
Branch Pilot
Capt. Morse
— Recognition
(U.S. Coast
Guard)**

After discussion, Captain Chisman moved that the general accommodation/commendation be formalized for recognition. Captain McDermott seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Director Wilkinson and Mr. Davis addressed the board regarding the statewide efforts to streamline fee adjustments through proposed revisions to the Callahan Act, including replacing the full regulatory process for fee changes with a faster process involving evidence, a public hearing, Board action, and executive review—estimated four to six months. Director Wilkinson also provided context on agency financial practices, accounting corrections, and the need for boards to be self-sustaining. The Board discussed concerns about prior financial statements and the desire to confirm that revenue is applied appropriately to Board operations.

Regulatory Update

President Coleman recommended establishing a small subcommittee to evaluate fee considerations and return with recommendations at the Board meeting, using information provided by DPOR and other comparative data. By consensus of the Board, Messrs. And Captain: Chisman, Behm, and McDermott were designated to serve on the subcommittee.

Ms. Nosbisch informed the Board's final regulations were scheduled to become effective December 17, 2025, and explained that website posting would appear as a link rather than a PDF due to accessibility requirements. Ms. Nosbisch advised an updated regulation booklet would be provided at the next meeting and electronic copies would be distributed.

Ms. Nosbisch presented an updated guidance document that was originally effective August 2012 and has been revised on December 11, 2025, to align with the regulatory changes effective December 17, 2025, particularly regarding renewals. After a discussion, Captain Collins moved to adopt revisions to the License Renewal Requirements Guidance Document. Captain Collins seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Anseeuw, Avery, Behm, Chisman, Coleman, Collins, McDermott, Piersall and Young.

Ms. Nosbisch reminded the Board that Financial Disclosure statements are due by February 1, 2025.

Financial Disclosure

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

Conflict of Interest Forms and Travel Vouchers

The meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Adjourn

Michael Coleman, President

James "Jeb" Wilkinson, Secretary

DRAFT AGENDA
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DRAFT AGENDA

**BOARD FOR BRANCH PILOTS
FEE ADJUSTMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

The Fee Adjustment Committee of the Board for Branch Pilots met on Thursday February 12, 2026, at the Virginia Port Authority, 600 World Trade Center, Norfolk, Virginia. The members indicated below were present:

Capt. J. W. Whiting Chisman, III
Patrick B. McDermott

I. Vincent Behm, Jr, was not present at the meeting with regrets.

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

Steve Kirschner, LRPD Director
Kate Nosbisch, Executive Director
Connor Davis, Budget Officer

Capt. Chisman called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM. Pat McDermott was unanimously elected as Chair of the committee.

Call to Order

Ms. Nosbisch advised the Board of the Emergency Evacuation Procedures.

**Emergency
Evacuation
Procedures**

Capt. Chisman moved to approve the agenda. Mr. McDermott seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by Messrs., Mme. and Captains: Chisman and McDermott

**Approval of
Agenda**

Ms. Nosbisch informed the Committee that Jessica Looman was appointed as the Secretary of Labor and that Laura McClintock was appointed as the Director of Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR). She also noted that Ms. McClintock would be attending the full Board meeting in March.

**Welcome/
Introductions**

There was no public comment.

**Public
Comment
Period**

There was an in-depth discussion regarding the licensing fees. Mr. Behm sent an email prior to the meeting with his comments and questions, which were provided to the Committee since he was unable to attend.

Fee Adjustment

Ms. Nosbisch provided the Committee with information on the last three fee adjustments. There was an increase in 1994, another increase in 2000, and a significant decrease in 2007.

Mr. Davis reviewed the three proposals previously presented to the full Board, along with additional information and spreadsheets regarding expenditures.

Mr. Kirschner shared the proposed revisions to the Callahan Act before the General Assembly, which would provide for annual review of Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation and Department of Health Professions, and allow fee adjustments to be made within six months rather than the current three-to-five-year timeframe.

There was discussion regarding the cost of inquiries for notification letters.

No recommendation was made by the Committee to bring before the full Board.

Mr. McDermott requested that Mr. Kirschner make a presentation to the full Board, along with the spreadsheets, so that a decision might be made at that time.

Ms. Nosbisch will bring the flow chart for the notification letter process to the March meeting.

There was no other business to come before the Committee

Other Business

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

Conflict of Interest Forms and Travel Vouchers

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Adjourn

Patrick B. McDermott, Chair

Laura V. McClintock, Secretary

Board for Branch Pilots

Update on Regulatory Actions – 18VAC 45-20 (as of February 26, 2026)

Action: General Review of Board for Branch Pilots Regulations

Final Effective

- Regulation became December 17, 2025.

Update on Guidance Documents (as of February 26, 2026)

Guidance Document 7945: Board for Branch Pilots Application Review Matrix

Effective:

- The guidance document became effective January 1, 2026.

Guidance Document 5008: Board for Branch Pilots License Renewal Requirements

Effective:

- The guidance document became effective February 26, 2026.