

The Newsletter of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission

2020 Vol 1



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our newsletter! The way we are all doing business has been drastically changed as a result of the pandemic, however the drive for excellence has not diminished. The port itself has been operational without missing a beat, and we at the Port of Pittsburgh Commission have also continued to perform our services in advocating for the waterway industry, using whatever means necessary, including hosting our first-ever virtual board meeting. With this newsletter, we hope to provide an additional means of keeping our stakeholders informed of important matters, in addition to our website and social media channels. This is certainly new territory for all of us, but if

we work together, support each other, and communicate - our region will persevere as it always has. Stay informed, stay safe."

Mary Ann Bucci

Mary Ann Bucci, Executive Director, Port of Pittsburgh Commission

SPOTLIGHT ON INFRASTRUCTURE

Montgomery Locks and Dam

The Montgomery Locks and Dam processes about 300 commercial lockages every month, plus an additional 150 lockages of recreational boats during the summer. This important navigation project was completed in 1936. It is a gated dam which enables the Army Corps of Engineers to control the pool level above the dam, although it is not designed to provide flood control.

Being located just 8 miles inside the Pennsylvania border means that it is the first lock inside the Pittsburgh Port District on the Ohio River. Any closure of this facility effectively closes off the Port of Pittsburgh from all traffic outside the port. It is estimated that there is a 50% chance that there will be a critical failure of the Montgomery Lock by 2028. The \$6 billion Shell cracker plant sits upriver from the Montgomery Locks and Dam.

After touring the Montgomery Locks and Dam last summer at the invitation of U.S. Rep. Conor Lamb, (PA-17), Mount Lebanon, U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur, (D-Ohio), expressed dismay at the crumbling condition of the 83-year-old structure.

"It's a poster child for why Congress needs to pass an infrastructure bill and why the president needs to sign it," said Kaptur, a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee and chairwoman of that committee's subcommittee on energy and water development.

Port of Pittsburgh Commission Executive Director Mary Ann Bucci has said that while all of the aging infrastructure is a constant worry, "Montgomery keeps a lot of people up at night."



3 RIVERS, 3 QUESTIONS

with Susie Shipley

Susie Shipley is the President of Huntington Bank, Western PA and Ohio Valley Region. She is the chair of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission.

• What is the Port of Pittsburgh Commission's role in terms of economic development for our region and its waterways?

For hundreds of years, southwestern Pennsylvania has been a "strategic port" because of our inland waterways – our rivers: The Ohio, The Monongahela and The Allegheny.

Today, the inland waterways continue to be a strategic and valuable resource for our region. Through its commercial and recreational programs, the Port of Pittsburgh Commission (PortPitt) is creating jobs and improving the quality of life in our region. The Commission acts as a conduit, connecting businesses and stakeholders with local, state and federal funding and programs to expand and develop the commercial use of the region's waterways.

Advocacy is an important role of The Commission. Providing connection to local, state and federal officials to advocate for the region's lock & dam infrastructure is a critical role. Funding for that infrastructure creates jobs and maintains our locks and dams which are vital for navigation, recreation, flood control, and drinking water.

The inland waterway transportation system is strategic and can be more economically viable and environmentally friendly than other modes of freight transport.

(continued on page 2...)



3 RIVERS, 3 QUESTIONS continued

The inland waterway was a critical link to building the Shell Cracker Plant – most of the large components for the plant moved by water. Important products, such as salt, gravel, petroleum, coal and steel are just a few examples of materials being transported more safely and cost-effectively via towboats on our waterways. No wear-and-tear on our roadway infrastructure, cheaper by pound and lower emissions. When paired with other transportation modes, our region’s waterway is an important link to our nation’s supply chain.

• **Tell me your vision for the Port of Pittsburgh Commission, and doing business in the Pittsburgh area?**

It is important to promote the value and benefits of the inland waterways. The Port of Pittsburgh’s vision is complementary to our region’s vision - attracting new businesses, helping local businesses to grow & thrive and contributing to the region’s vitality. PortPitt and our inland waterways are a differentiating asset. PortPitt continues to provide leadership, solutions and ideas to keep our region competitive and attractive to both businesses and residents.

• **What makes you most proud during your time as Chairperson of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission?**

Hands down – the Port of Pittsburgh team. They are passionate and forward thinking regarding PortPitt’s constituencies as well as providing real value to the region. They think broadly – commercial, recreational & educational needs – to get the best ideas and programs operational. And at the top of the list is how the staff works tirelessly, effectively and successfully to secure funding for our lock and dam infrastructure – creating jobs and a safer community.



\$7.7 MILLION RECEIVED TO FUND UPPER OHIO NAVIGATION PROJECT

The Port of Pittsburgh Commission is pleased to have played a role in advocating for \$7.7 million in project funding announced in February 2020, for the Pre-Construction Engineering and Design (PED) phase for the Upper Ohio Navigation Project, under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ (USACE) FY2020 Work Plan. The Upper Ohio Navigation Project addresses lock condition and capacity issues at Emsworth, Dashields, and Montgomery Locks and Dams along the Ohio River.



All three locks contained in the project were built between 1919 and 1936 and are the oldest locks with the smallest chambers on the Ohio River. USACE has recommended the replacement of each auxiliary lock with the construction of one new, larger lock chamber at each facility. This funding should complete the PED phase for the project.

This effort would not have been possible without a bi-partisan regional delegation led by Representative Conor Lamb (PA-17) and Representatives Mike Doyle (PA-18), Guy Reschenthaler (PA-14), David McKinley (WV-1) and Bill Johnson (OH-6). The delegation sought first to ensure the stability of the Montgomery Lock, located at mile 31.7 of the Ohio River in Beaver County. Currently, the lock is at risk of catastrophic failure. Our executive director, Mary Ann Bucci, praised the efforts of the delegation:

“The Port of Pittsburgh Commission commends Congressman Lamb for championing, with his colleagues, PED funding for the Upper Ohio Navigation Project. This is great news for our region and could not have happened without his focus on the importance of infrastructure to our local, state, and national economy.”



OUR TEAM

MARY ANN BUCCI
Executive Director

SCOTT HARSHMAN
Marketing/Program Mgr.

MATT PAVLOSKY
Public Relations Mgr.

MIKE BRINZA
Port Analyst

ADRIANNA WORKMAN
Administrative Assistant

