

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

The Official Union Newsletter – "The Word to the Wise"

Number 16 – April 22, 2021



In this issue//Monthly Meetings Return to In-Person Format//HQ to Begin Monthly Online Informational Meetings//TID Looks for "Worker-First" COVID-19 Recovery//Newbuilds Joining Staten Island Ferry Fleet//U.S. Onboard with Shipping Decarbonization Efforts//"Cruise Act" Seeks Resumption of Passenger Vessel Sailings//MEDGAR EVERS Crew Wins Prestigious MSC Award//Applicants Should Submit Paperwork to Make Membership//

ALL MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS RETURN TO IN-PERSON FORMAT

Over a year after the pandemic prompted the Union to begin conducting its monthly membership meetings in an online format, the M.E.B.A. has announced that the regular May 2021 meetings will take place exclusively in-person at each of the 13 meeting locations. Last year's lock-down forced the cancellation of all of the meetings in April 2020. But by the next month, the Union had put a system in place where meetings could be conducted online with a registration process. Though the online format has limitations, the Union was able to keep the regular meeting schedule intact for the next 12 months using the Zoom platform. Online meetings also afforded the opportunity for some of our members who live far away from a hall to attend. However, despite the convenience of online meetings, there wasn't a rise in attendance and the Union continued focusing on bringing back the in-person format when safe and practicable.

The monthly membership meetings at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School have been conducted in-person since November. That format has worked out well. Meeting participants observe CDC guidelines including mask usage and social distancing, something that will be in full practice at the in-person membership meetings at all 13 M.E.B.A. meeting locations in May. We look forward to seeing you "in the flesh" at one of the upcoming meetings!

M.E.B.A. HEADQUARTERS TO DEBUT MONTHLY ONLINE INFORMATIONAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Online meetings served a purpose over the last year and enabled attendees to participate who otherwise may not have been able to conveniently travel to a hall. M.E.B.A.'s District Executive Committee recognizes that fact and have decided to create a monthly informational membership meeting at Headquarters that will be conducted online. President Adam Vokac, who will chair the meeting, and Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha are urging Members, Applicants and Retirees to sign up and virtually attend the meeting taking place on Monday, May 3 at 1300 (eastern time).

This is a great opportunity for a productive discussion with your elected officials who are eager to review the latest issues and initiatives and get your feedback and ideas. Members, applicants and retirees will need to register in advance for this meeting to mcbahq@mebaunion.org Participants can register for the meeting up until the morning of May 3 at 0900 (eastern time). A reminder notice will be sent to Members, Applicants and Retirees this Monday (April 26) with email addresses on file with HQ. When registering for the Online Headquarters Informational Meeting you should provide your

full name and proof of good standing - such as your last dues receipt/service charge number or statement that you are enrolled in Dues Check-Off (DCO) with a particular bargaining unit. Retirees should provide their full name and indicate their retired status. Upon confirmation of your status, the Zoom access link will be emailed to you shortly before the meeting.

TRANSPORT UNIONS LOOK TOWARD “WORKER-FIRST” COVID RECOVERY

As the U.S. begins to recover and rebuild from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Executive Committee of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), including the M.E.B.A., gathered on Wednesday to assess the immediate, short-term, and long-term needs of transportation workers and the systems they operate. M.E.B.A. is a founding member of the TTD which represents 33 unions in the maritime, aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, and related industries.

With a worker-friendly administration, the 33 transportation union leaders discussed capitalizing on the opportunity to rebuild the middle class and strengthen unions by making transformative investments in our nation’s transportation system and infrastructure. TTD President Greg Regan said, “transportation labor is committed to working with Congress and this administration to enhance the safety of our frontline workforce, continue creating good, union jobs in transportation, and ensure [that the President’s] American Jobs Plan becomes the law of the land.”

Labor leaders laid out an aggressive agenda for 2021 and beyond focused on protecting and creating good, union jobs in transportation and infrastructure industries, improving transportation safety and security, and ensuring ongoing COVID-19 recovery efforts prioritize the needs of working families. The Executive Committee unanimously adopted a series of policy statements including one calling for the strengthening of the U.S.-flag fleet. Among other things, the statement called on Congress to provide funding for the initial Tanker Security Program, increase the percentage of non-defense U.S. impelled cargoes traveling on U.S.-flag ships from 50% to 100%, and increase cargo for U.S.-flag vessels through agreements with international trade partners. The statement also trumpets tax incentives for shippers who use U.S.-flag vessels and calls for full and continued funding for the Maritime Security Program.

STATEN ISLAND FERRY FLEET EXPECTING BOOST LATER THIS YEAR

Two newbuild Staten Island Ferries are due to join the fleet this year and a third was recently christened and put on a schedule to debut in 2022.

The three new vessels are part of New York’s \$300 million investment announced in 2014 to bring larger and more state-of-the-art ferries into service connecting lower Manhattan to St. George, Staten Island. The three new 4,500-passenger ferry boats – the first new boats added to the fleet since 2006 – were funded with a combination of federal, city, and other grant funds.

The new ferries are all under construction by Eastern Shipbuilding in Panama City, FL. After delays caused by hurricanes on Florida’s Gulf Coast, the first new ferry boat to arrive will be the STAFF SERGEANT MICHAEL H. OLLIS and the SANDY GROUND. The OLLIS is named after an Army Staff Sergeant who died protecting fellow soldiers in Afghanistan in 2013. The SANDY GROUND honors one of the nation’s first black settlements – located on Staten Island’s South Shore, which also served as a stop on the Underground Railroad. Both vessels are set to arrive in New York Harbor later this year and will begin passenger service soon after.

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio recently announced that the third Staten Island Ferry boat in the Ollis-class will be named DOROTHY DAY to honor the social activist and journalist who spent decades on the Island's South Shore. The vessel was launched at Eastern Shipbuilding's Panama Florida facility in late March.

The three ferries will be larger, reflect modern technology, and will operate more safely in extreme weather conditions. They will feature popular design elements of past Staten Island Ferries, including other customer-service amenities — including more comfortable seating and phone-charging outlets, as well as an oval upper-deck promenade that will for the first time serve as an outdoor “walking track” for ferry riders.

The three 320-foot long, double-ended 4,500 passenger ferries, will each feature four ABS Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD) 12-710@900 rpm EPA Tier 4 marine propulsion engines with two engines powering one ABS Reintjes DUP 3000 P combining gear and one ABS 36 RV6 ECS/285-2 Voith Schneider Propeller at each end of the vessel. Power generation will be provided by three ABS, EPA Tier 3 marine continuous duty diesel generator sets, Caterpillar C18 driving 480 V, 60 Hz, 3-phase generators rated at 425 kW at 0.8 P.F. @ 1800 rpm.

U.S. ONBOARD WITH EFFORTS TO DECARBONIZE SHIPPING BY 2050

The United States has announced its support for International Maritime Organization efforts to achieve net zero global shipping emissions by the year 2050, it was announced this week by U.S. leaders. IMO has aggressive CO² reduction targets but experts believe that shipping decarbonization can only take place if technology catches up requiring a significant acceleration of research and development.

U.S. climate envoy John Kerry, in advance of White House climate talks this week, said “I want to announce that in support of the global effort to keep us in reach of 1.5 degrees Celsius and in support of global efforts to achieve net zero by no later than 2050, the United States is committing to work with countries in the IMO to adopt the goal of achieving net zero emissions from international shipping by no later than 2050.”

The U.S. has also endorsed efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 50 percent by the year 2030. Kerry made the statement at an event with the Ocean Conservancy which recently released a report outlining a zero-emission future for U.S. shipping. The report calls on the U.S. to commit to achieving a zero-emissions shipping industry by 2035. Under international law, the U.S. can require all ships docking at domestic ports to adhere to a clean shipping standard. The report says that policy needs to include progressive cuts in carbon dioxide equivalent emissions of 50% by 2025, 80% by 2030 and 100% by 2035.

The report, “How the Biden-Harris Administration Can Help Ships Kick Fossil Fuels - Navigating Our Way to a Zero Emission Shipping Industry” can be viewed at https://oceanconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/All-Aboard-US-Policy-Zero-Emissions-Report_FINAL.pdf

CRUISE ACT CALLS FOR RESUMPTION OF PASSENGER VESSEL OPERATIONS

U.S. Senators Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska), Rick Scott (R-Fla.), and Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) have introduced the Careful Resumption Under Improved Safety Enhancements (CRUISE) Act, which would revoke the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) current “Conditional Sailing Order” on cruises and require the CDC to provide COVID-19 mitigation guidance for cruise lines to resume safe

operations. Representatives Don Young (R-Alaska) and María Elvira Salazar (R-Fla.) were sponsoring companion legislation in the House of Representatives.

Cruise ship companies making U.S. port stops are hoping that the CDC lifts its Framework for Conditional Sailing Order (CSO) that is providing uncertainty for the resumption of cruising.

Norwegian Cruise Line hopes to resume passenger service in July with new and extensive health and safety plans. The NCL-America vessel PRIDE OF AMERICA, crewed by M.E.B.A. officers, is one of the ships that would begin sailing again this summer. However, that plan is contingent on the CDC's lifting of the CSO.

“Unlike the airlines, rail, and other modes of transportation—and all other sectors of the hospitality industry for that matter—the cruise lines have been denied clear direction from the CDC on how to resume operations. As a result, potential cruises this summer, when the President said the country will be able to return to normal with more and more Americans getting vaccinated, have been left adrift,” Sen. Sullivan said. “The foot-dragging, mixed messages, and unresponsiveness of CDC leaders is totally unacceptable and ultimately endangering the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Americans and the hundreds of small businesses across Alaska that rely on the tourism sector. My legislation with Senators Scott and Rubio will accomplish what letters, meetings, and repeated phone calls have not—directing the CDC to finally codify timely guidance and a plan for cruise ships to safely and responsibly welcome passengers again this summer.”

MEDGAR EVERS CREW SNAGS PRESTIGIOUS MSC AWARD

For the second year in a row, Military Sealift Command awarded USNS MEDGAR EVERS the Maritime Excellence Award in March for the underway replenishment category. The “E” award is one of the command’s top honors presented to Combat Logistics Force ships. The ship was nominated for outperforming all other vessels in its class during competitive-year 2020. M.E.B.A. Chief Engineer Robert McManus and 1st A/E Marlin Carpenter were part of the excellent crew aboard the ship during the past year.

“This award appropriately reflects the endless hours the ship and crew have spent maintaining the highest degree of operational readiness, and it is a true testament to the elite seamanship of the civil service mariners assigned to the vessel,” MSC Atlantic Commodore Captain Janice G. Smith said.

SMOOTHER TRANSITION INTO MERCHANT MARINE FOR COAST GUARD MEMBERS

Following new changes to its Military to Mariner program, the Coast Guard has announced several new credentialing pathways for Coast Guard members who are looking to get into the commercial shipping arena.

The Military to Mariner (M2M) Program with Cutter Forces has been modified to ease the way toward the deck rated endorsements and officer licenses most attainable by the Coast Guard workforce, including Lifeboatman Limited, Able Seaman, Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels, and Master or Mate licenses less than 200 tons. The new change involves the implementation of four National Maritime Center-approved courses that leverage Coast Guard training, experience and qualifications to meet credentialing requirements. Upon completion of one of these courses by Coast Guard members, the M2M Program will issue a course completion certificate that members can

submit to NMC for credit as part of their merchant mariner credential application. This removes the hurdle for members to take examinations at a Regional Exam Center and to seek outside training courses in order to earn a merchant mariner credential. Program principals are looking into additional M2M changes to ease credentialing pathways for engineering merchant mariner credentials.

YOU MAY BE AN APPLICANT IF...; APPLICANTS NEED TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION TO MAKE MEMBERSHIP

If your Book Number begins with “AB” and not “MC” you are an Applicant. In addition, your Group Card may describe you as a “Member” or “Applicant.”

Qualified applicants trying to make membership should make sure they provide Headquarters with the required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next District Investigating Committee (DIC) report. The DIC meets twice a year to review applicants for membership and will meet in May shortly before the release of their June report. To make membership, an applicant needs the required sailing days or specified years of employment with a particular bargaining unit, must be current with service charges and must complete other necessary requirements which may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

Applicants should know that they are responsible for providing their local Union hall/Headquarters with the documentation demonstrating their fulfillment of the application requirements. Once they submit the requisite amount of sea time (or documented years of service) to Headquarters and have otherwise fulfilled the needed requirements as stated in the application packet they signed, they may be eligible for membership.

The DIC will meet in May and will review candidates for membership at that time. Applicants who have fulfilled the necessary requirements need to get their information into Headquarters so they can be included in the next DIC Report and make membership in early June. The DIC will put their report listing qualified applicants before the membership at the regular meetings in June. If the report is passed, listed applicants will be accepted into membership.

M.E.B.A. Headquarters does not, and cannot, update an Applicant’s record with sailing time/years of service unless that Applicant submits the required paperwork, i.e. discharges, sea service letters, documentation of employment, to HQ, by e-mail, fax, or mail or via your local Union hall. For further information you can visit your local Union hall or contact the HQ Membership Department at (202) 638-5355 or membership@mebaunion.org.

MAY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS – ALL *REGULAR* MEETINGS ARE IN-PERSON (All times are local)

Monday, May 3 – Boston@1200; Seattle-Fife@1300; Online Headquarters Informational Meeting@1300.

Tuesday, May 4 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, May 5 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, May 6 – L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, May 7 – Honolulu@1100

-----FINISHED WITH ENGINES-----