

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE

March 20, 2018

1:29 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Bert Stedman, Chair
Senator Anna MacKinnon
Senator Click Bishop
Senator David Wilson
Senator Dennis Egan

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

Board of Marine Pilots:

Leslie Cronk
Peggy McLaughlin
Richard Harris

-CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

WITNESS REGISTER

LESLIE CRONK, Appointee
Ketchikan, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Addressed questions regarding his
appointment to the Board of Marine Pilots.

PEGGY MCLAUGHLIN, Appointee
Dutch Harbor, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Addressed questions regarding her
appointment to the Board of Marine Pilots.

RICHARD HARRIS, Appointee
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Addressed questions regarding his
appointment to the Board of Marine Pilots.

ACTION NARRATIVE

1:29:08 PM

CHAIR BERT STEDMAN called the Senate Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:29 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators MacKinnon, Bishop, Wilson, and Chair Stedman.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(s): **BOARD OF MARINE PILOTS**

1:29:30 PM

CHAIR STEDMAN announced the consideration of the governor's appointees to the Board of Marine Pilots.

1:30:03 PM

LESLIE CRONK, Appointee, Board of Marine Pilots, Ketchikan, Alaska, revealed that he is vice president of North Pacific Maritime, a vessel ship's agency headquartered in Ketchikan with operations located throughout Alaska. He explained that he is applying for a vessel agent position on the board, a position that he had served on from 2000-2008.

He said he was reapplying for the board appointment because he has been involved in the maritime agency business in Alaska for the last 33 years. He set forth that he has significant experience, has worked in Alaska's three pilot regions, and knows most of the marine pilots quite well. He said he looks forward to serving and working with everyone to continue the state's excellent pilot organizations.

1:30:26 PM

SENATOR EGAN joined the committee meeting.

SENATOR MACKINNON asked Mr. Cronk to speak to the loss-of-life prevention and environmental protection based on his past role as well as how he sees himself participating on the board to improve safety.

MR. CRONK replied that the board's focus is on pilot qualification to maintain the safety and integrity of the state's waterways and public safety. He emphasized that he has been involved in marine-incident-disaster training throughout his career and brings to the table what he has learned from incident and event experiences. He set forth that the key is maintaining the highest quality pilots for navigating the

state's waters safely to protect Alaskans and those visiting Alaska.

1:32:58 PM

SENATOR MACKINNON referenced a fact sheet from the Office of the Governor that summarized the Board of Marine Pilots' function as follows:

The board works to prevent the loss of lives and property, and to protect marine management.

She noted that Mr. Cronk did not provide a specific action that the board could take up to improve safety but said she was satisfied with Mr. Cronk's response. She added that she will look up the state's statutes to specifically see what the statutes say regarding the board's function.

1:35:12 PM

PEGGY MCLAUGHLIN, Appointee, Board of Marine Pilots, Dutch Harbor, Alaska, disclosed that she is the port director for the City of Unalaska and the Port of Dutch Harbor. She detailed that she has been working in the marine industry since 1998 in terms of major ship traffic. She noted that she has served with the Board of Marine Pilots the previous year and the experience has broadened her perspective on marine pilots.

She addressed lifesaving measures and emphasized that Unalaska has done a tremendous amount of work with pilots and agencies throughout the Aleutian region by developing certain emergency responses like the emergency towing system and medical transfers. She pointed out that medical transfers rely heavily on pilot expertise and knowledge of both waters and weather patterns. She disclosed that the board has been working through a tremendous amount of simulations with new vessels coming into Southeast Alaska and working through the pilotage requirements that fit into state regulations.

She summarized that all the previously noted activities are of great importance because of the amount of traffic that travels in and out of the "Great Circle Route" in terms of the Aleutian chain and future arctic traffic through the Bering Strait.

SENATOR MACKINNON referenced previous comments by Mr. Cronk and remarked that Mr. Cronk gave a better description of what the board does than what the governor's fact sheet provides. She added that the board also regulates licenses.

CHAIR STEDMAN commented that he has a lot of confidence in Mr. Cronk.

1:38:00 PM

RICHARD HARRIS, Appointee, Board of Marine Pilots, Juneau, Alaska, disclosed that he is a retired Sealaska Corporation executive and sees his appointment to the board as an opportunity to be involved in some of the important marine transportation issues in Alaska. He noted that he has had an opportunity to work with marine pilots at various times in his career. He disclosed that his wife is a seasonal port agent and his daughter works in the cruise ship industry.

He summarized that his appointment to the board is an excellent opportunity to understand more about safety and ship navigation throughout Southeast Alaska waters.

SENATOR MACKINNON announced that in accordance with AS 39.05.080, the Senate Transportation Committee reviewed the following and recommended the appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration, Board of Marine Pilots: Peggy McLaughlin, Dutch Harbor; Richard Harris, Juneau; Leslie Cronk, Ketchikan. This does not reflect an intent by any of the members to vote for or against the confirmation of the individuals during any future session.

1:40:05 PM

CHAIR STEDMAN announced that without objection, the names would be forwarded.

1:40:29 PM

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Stedman adjourned the Senate Transportation Standing Committee at 1:40 p.m.