

PORT WELFARE COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Port Welfare Committee Meeting
held on 6 September 2023 at 11:00 a.m.
in Conference Room A, 24th Floor,
Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong**

Present

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| Mr CHAO Sih-hing, Francois | Chairman | Hong Kong Shipowners Association |
| Mr CHAN Kam-foo | Member | Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce |
| Captain Firoze Minoo MIRZA | Member | Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce |
| Captain LAU Mang-tak | Member | Merchant Navy Officers' Guild – Hong Kong |
| Captain CHOW Tak- chor, William | Member | Hong Kong Seamen's Union |
| Ms NG Soo-wah, Louise | Member | Labour Department (ex-officio) |
| Dr LAU Ming-ho | Member | Department of Health (ex-officio) |
| Mr KUANG Zhi-jian | Member | Marine Department (ex-officio) |
| Ms Lisa CHIU | Secretary | Marine Department (ex-officio) |

In attendance

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| Miss Alletta LAM | Marine Department |
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OPENING REMARKS

The Secretary welcomed all to the meeting and introduced the Membership of the 2023-2026 term of the Port Welfare Committee (the Committee) as follows –

- (a) Mr CHAO Sih-hing, Francois of the Hong Kong Shipowners Association;
- (b) Mr CHAN Kam-foo of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce;
- (c) Captain Firoze Minoo MIRZA of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce;
- (d) Captain LAU Mang-tak of the Merchant Navy Officers' Guild – Hong Kong;
- (e) Captain CHOW Tak-chor, William of the Hong Kong Seamen's Union who attended the meeting for the first time;
- (f) Ms NG Soo-wah, Louise of the Labour Department who attended the meeting for the first time;
- (g) Dr LAU Ming-ho of the Department of Health who attended the meeting on behalf of Dr LO Chiu Sing, Patrick;
- (h) Mr KUANG Zhi-jian of the Marine Department who attended the meeting on behalf of Mr NG Ngai-wing, Jammy; and
- (i) Miss Alletta LAM of the Marine Department who was in attendance.

2. The Secretary invited Members to note the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Committee as follows –

- (a) To co-ordinate on behalf of Government arrangements in Hong Kong for social and recreational welfare of all serving seamen, with the exception of those who are residing in Hong Kong. The term “serving seamen” shall be construed to mean “those seamen visiting the port and those temporarily residing here, consequent upon discharge for health or other reasons, awaiting re-engagement or repatriation”;
- (b) To allocate any grants of monies which the Committee may receive from all sources for the social and recreational welfare of seamen;
- (c) To obtain information on developments and facilities in connection with seamen’s welfare in other ports, and to take appropriate action in the light of this information;
- (d) To take such other action as it may see fit to promote the welfare of seamen, including action in conjunction with other social and recreational bodies; and
- (e) To publish an annual report and audited accounts.

3. The Secretary informed Members that in March 2023 the Secretariat had reported to the Committee the financial position of the Committee as at 1 March 2023; the donations received for 2022-23; and the proposed allocation of grants to the two voluntary agencies for 2022-23, namely the Sailors’ Home and Missions to Seamen and the Danish Seamen’s Church, Hong Kong. All the items were unanimously endorsed by the Committee.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. (a) Declaration of Interests

4. The Secretary referred Members to the extract of the notes of the Committee meeting held on 13 September 2002 and PWC Paper No. 1/2002 “Declaration of Interests by Members of the PWC” at **Appendix A** of the agenda. Members noted that the Committee had adopted a one-tier system for declaration of interests whereby the Chairman/ Member was required to

disclose his/her interest at the meeting when he/she considered that there was a potential conflict of interest in a matter placed before the Committee. All cases of declaration of interests would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

II. Election of Committee Chairman

5. The Secretary advised that the Chairman for the new term of the Committee was to be elected among the non-official Members and invited for nomination. Mr CHAN Kam-foo nominated Mr CHAO Sih-hing, Francois to be the new Chairman and Captain LAU Mang-tak and Captain CHOW Tak-chor, William seconded the proposal. With the unanimous support of the Members, Mr CHAO was elected Chairman of the Committee for the term of 2023-2026.

6. Mr CHAO thanked Members for their support and expressed his gratitude to take up the Chairmanship of the Committee.

III. Discussion Items

(a) Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

7. The meeting noted the following financial position of the Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023 at **Appendix B** of the agenda

| | <u>HK\$</u> |
|--|----------------|
| Income | 143,500 |
| Expenditure | <u>143,000</u> |
| Surplus | 500 |
| Surplus at the beginning of the year (i.e. 1 April 2022) | <u>28,474</u> |
| Surplus at the end of the year (i.e. 31 March 2023) | 28,974 |

8. Members endorsed the Committee's account unanimously. They further endorsed the re-appointment of the Marine Department's Treasury Accountant / Internal Auditor as the Honorary Auditor for the Committee's account in 2023-24.

(b) Potential Donors for 2023-2024

9. The Secretary referred to the Donors Lists at **Appendices C and D** of the agenda. The recommended Donors List at Appendix C included donors who had made donations to the Committee in 2022-23 and the Committee was recommended to continue to appeal for their donations in 2023-2024. The list at Appendix D included other potential donors to whom the Committee could appeal for support this year.

10. The Chairman appealed for Members' support and assistance. He invited all Members to review the Donors Lists and let the Secretary have their comments in a month.

(c) Draft Annual Report for 2022-2023

11. The Secretary referred to the draft Annual Report for 2022-2023 at **Appendix E** of the agenda which had given a detailed account of the good work of the two voluntary agencies in providing social and recreational welfare for seafarers visiting Hong Kong and those temporarily residing in Hong Kong. The Annual Report would be sent to the potential donors together with the appeal letters inviting for donations, which would be issued by the Chairman on behalf of the Committee.

12. The Chairman invited Members' comments on the draft Annual Report. Members confirmed that they had no further comment on it.

IV. Any Other Business

13. Captain LAU Mang-tak noted the overlapping of some services provided by the Mariner Clubs at Kwai Chung and Tsim Sha Tsui and suggested the Secretariat to look into the matter for review. Besides, he raised concerns about the manpower shortage and succession problem for local seafarers and suggested more vigorous efforts by the Government to attract new blood to the maritime industry. The Secretary explained that bound by the TOR of Committee, which mainly focused on the coordination and promotion of welfare services for visiting seafarers, the private business

operation of the two Mariner Clubs would be outside the Committee's purview. Regarding manpower development for the maritime industry, she added that there was a training fund administered by the Transport and Logistics Bureau for the related support.

14. With due regard to the TOR of the Committee, the Chairman invited Members to offer their valuable views and advice on the work of the Committee so as to further enhance the social and recreational welfare of all visiting seafarers. Members' other related views were also welcome and might be referred to other parties for consideration if deemed appropriate. After some discussion, it was agreed that upon receipt of Members' views, the Secretary would prepare a consolidated list of suggestions to facilitate discussion in the next meeting.

V. Date of Next Meeting

15. The Secretary said that the next meeting would be held in six months' time, i.e. around March 2024. Members would be informed of the date and details in due course.

16. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:25 a.m.

(Mr CHAO Sih-hing, Francois)
Chairman

(Ms Lisa CHIU)
Secretary