

Name: Matthew Pawelski

Abstract Title: “They prepared a rotten carcass of a boat”: The Consequences of Corruption in the Construction and Loss of Metropolis

Abstract Description: On 31 January 2022 the steamship Metropolis came ashore at Currituck Beach, leading to the loss of 85 of those on board. Metropolis had not come ashore by accident. Rather, its captain had turned the vessel eastward to be beached in hope of rescue after a fatal leak had developed in its aging sternpost. The ensuing investigation, driven by a national press hungry for answers, revealed potential corruption in the vessel's construction, maintenance, and inspection that eventually culminated in its demise. This presentation explores detailed 3D modeling of the ship in its two phases of construction, analyzing what the vessel likely looked like at the time of its initial construction and at the time of its sinking. On top of the model, historical research will help pin down potential problems in construction and modification, with an eye to untangling the complicated web of questions and answers spun in the aftermath of the disaster.