

Newport-based Pangaea to conduct port operations at Brayton Point



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This file photo shows the Brayton Point Power Station which was New England's largest and one of its last coal-fired power plants, on May 31, 2017 before it was shut down. [AP FILE PHOTO]

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Pangaea does lots of business internationally, but now the company will be doing business close to home in Mount Hope Bay.

NEWPORT – Pangaea, the local company that takes its name from a super continent that existed more than 300 million years ago, is no stranger to pioneering accomplishments in the Arctic region in the modern era.

The company's subsidiary, Nordic Bulk Carriers, was the first bulk carrier to travel the Northern Sea Route back in 2010. The sea route runs along the Russian Arctic coast from the Kara Sea, along the Siberian coast, to the Bering Strait.

The company travels that route to make shipments to China, said Ed Coll, the chief executive officer and founder of Pangaea.

The company was also the first bulk carrier to go through the Northwest Passage, achieving that historic goal in 2013. The passage runs from the northern Atlantic Ocean along the northern coast of North America via waterways through the Canadian Arctic Archipelago and Arctic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean.

“We have pioneered both the Northern Sea Route and the Northwest Passage resulting in lower CO2 emissions, fewer days at sea and substantial fuel savings,” Coll said.

Pangaea does lots of business internationally, but now the company will be doing business close to home in Mount Hope Bay.

Commercial Development Company of Missouri owns the 300-acre site of the former Brayton Point Power Station in Somerset, Massachusetts. The company will be leasing the property to Pangaea and Carver Stevedoring of Coeymans, New York, to conduct cargo and port operations there.

“Our knowledge of international trade and Carver’s expertise in stevedoring will serve to make Brayton Point a premier terminal that is environmentally friendly and will help the local community,” Coll said. “It’s all about picking the right mix of businesses.”

Pangaea and Carver worked together as partners previously in establishing a new port terminal in Charlestown, South Carolina, and will be operating the Brayton Point port as Patriot Stevedoring and Logistics.

The Brayton Point project is “the brainchild” of Neil McLaughlin, Pangaea’s vice president and head of special projects, Coll said.

Coll grew up in New York, where “many of my family historically worked in law enforcement,” he said. He graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York, and sailed on merchant ships around the world. That was followed by 10 years of employment with Continental Grain Company at different international postings.”

After starting his career in shipping with Commodity Ocean Transport in Stamford, Connecticut, he moved to Newport in 1996 and started his own company.

From his current home in Portsmouth, he could see the giant concrete cooling towers of the Brayton Point power station until they were imploded earlier this year. He was glad to see them go.

Coll has no regrets about establishing his thriving business and home on Aquidneck Island.

“This is the best place I have ever visited or lived in,” he said. “It’s a great place to live and raise a family and we are all extremely lucky to be here.”

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