

**SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2024 9:00AM  
CITY HALL ANNEX BUILDING - 110 W. HICKORY ST., PONCHATOULA, LA**

President Daryl Ferrara called the regular meeting to order on June 12, 2024 at 9:07 AM. The meeting was held at the City Hall Annex Building, located at 110 W. Hickory Street, Ponchatoula, LA.

The invocation was led by Administrative Assistant Robyn Pusey, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Rhonda Sheridan.

Commissioners Present: Daryl Ferrara, Tina Roper, Timothy DePaula, Rhonda Sheridan.

Commissioners Absent: William "Bill" Joubert, Jimmy Schliegelmeyer, Jr., William Sims

President Ferrara welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked Paula Sziber of Jackson-Vaughan Insurance for her attendance today. Others in attendance included Patrick Dufresne, STPPC Executive Director and Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES**

It was moved by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner DePaula that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the regular meeting agenda for June 12, 2024, as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 3 Joubert, Schliegelmeyer, Jr., Sims

President Ferrara announced that the minutes of the regular meeting on May 8, 2024, had been sent to the Commissioners by email for review, and a copy of the minutes had been placed in their meeting folders. After a brief review of the minutes, a motion was made by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sheridan to adopt/approve the minutes from the regular meeting on May 8, 2024. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 3 Joubert, Schliegelmeyer, Jr., Sims

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Prior to the meeting today the financial reports for the period ending May 31, 2024, had been emailed to the Commissioners for their review. Due to the absence of the treasurer and port accountant, President Ferrara asked the Commissioners to look over the financial reports. As requested at the last STPPC meeting, a copy of the Edward Jones summary of assets/income (as of May 31, 2024) was forwarded to the Commissioners, and President Ferrara gave a quick review of the information. There were no questions. He then reviewed the year-to-date income statement with the Commissioners, stating that the total expenses for the month were

\$23,923.56, the total revenues for the month were \$188,590.82 and the net income was \$164,667.26. There were no questions.

President Ferrara called for a motion to approve the financials. It was moved by Commissioner DePaula and seconded by Commissioner Sheridan that the Commission accept/approve the financials for the month ending May 31, 2024. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 3 Joubert, Schliegmeyer, Jr., Sims

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. LA-DOTD Port Priority State H. 011927 – Transload Improvements – update Truck scale container update and electrical update.**

Executive Director Patrick Dufresne said we are at the final stages of this project, that the DOTD is in the process of authorizing the final change order for the electrical work (for the truck scale container house) and also the final retainage payment, which should come shortly. He said once this is done the project will be finished. There were no questions.

### **2. Warehouse Building #3 - evaluation & maintenance schedule update**

The port's attorney was absent from the meeting today; however, Mr. Dufresne gave a brief update on the evaluation and maintenance schedule, saying that the maintenance program for Warehouse Building #3 continues, that work was done on the ventilation system and also, the electrical conduits system is being completely re-done. There was also some additional work on the rail dock lighting that was damaged by Hurricane Ida. He said next month the ports attorney will provide a formal report for the commission. President Ferrara told Mr. Dufresne he had been doing a good job of providing updates with photographs of the improvements being done at the port. President Ferrara also suggested that the commission make a trip to the port at some point to make sure the maintenance work was completed to their satisfaction. There were no questions.

### **3. Prospective Tenant(s) – update**

Mr. Dufresne said he had an inquiry from a logistics company for a potential transloading and storage location for a future project. He said it was just an initial meeting, and he will advise the commission should anything come to fruition.

### **4. Insurance coverage FY 2024 – 2027, update**

Mr. Dufresne said as previously authorized by the commission, the Request for Proposal for the Insurance coverage 2024-2027 was advertised for 90 days in the port's journal of record -The Tangi Times, the Daily Star and The Advocate in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, and as a result, received only one response. Paula Sziber of Jackson-Vaughan Insurance provided a bid that was reviewed by the Commission. A long discussion was held regarding the different insurance options, and what would be the best insurance solution for the port. She told the commissioners about Trident Marine, which is a shared program that is used by a lot of different ports. It would include general liability, employment practices liability, automobile, inland marine, and she was able to get a fire policy, however the premium is not as low as she

would like, but it is an option to consider. She said there is also a 5% credit payable if no claims are filed during the term period. The Trident Marine policy excludes flood, wind/hail and named storm. She said crime/employee dishonesty will stay on its own with Travelers Insurance, and the workers comp insurance will stay with LWCC, saying they give pretty good dividends, and this year the port received a sizeable one, making the overall cost very low. Ms. Sziber said if STPPC wants some fire coverage at the port, Trident Marine would be the only option, saying STPPC would enter into a "slip" program shared with ports around the country. She said the policy has a high deductible but would be something in place to cover any catastrophic fire loss. Discussion regarding fire coverage at the port continued. Ms. Sziber told the commissioners that the biggest fire hazard at the port is the tenant. It was questioned by several commissioners as to whether the tenant had insurance. The commissioners agreed that the tenant would have to cover the cost of the fire policy or increase the rent in the new lease to help cover the cost. Commissioner DePaula said "as a general principal we probably need fire, considering what is being done in the building" (by the tenant). There are fire extinguishers in place but wouldn't be much of a deterrent should a fire start. Commissioner Roper said based on a report she had seen some of the chemicals used by the tenant are highly flammable. Commissioner DePaula said the port needs fire coverage, and that we should get the conversation going with the tenant, as this will only be a problem moving forward. Commissioner Sheridan asked when the leases are up for renewal. President Ferrara said the leases are long-term but are in the process of being revised. The port director said a conversation about the fire coverage will be had with the tenant during the revision of the lease.

Ms. Sziber said a decision about the port insurance must be made by June 20, 2024. Commissioner DePaula said he did not like making a decision of this magnitude in such a short period of time. Discussion continued regarding the port costs from Hurricane Ida - what was spent on repairs and how much was received from the insurance company, and there was discussion as to whether the port needed wind and hail coverage. Commissioner Roper asked for the port director's opinion, and he said his opinion was to get fire coverage, that he had seen what 6 hours of wind could do to the buildings (Hurricane Ida). He said the port's engineer told him this event was the best stress test on the buildings, and that it is all probability.

Commissioner Roper made a motion to move forward with Trinity Marine to include the fire coverage option. Before voting on the motion, discussion among the commissioners continued over concerns about what might happen with a wind event. Commissioner DePaula said there will be a hurricane somewhere, and pricing will go up and up. Ms. Sziber said she doesn't see the market softening. President Ferrara wanted to clarify that the total for the Trident Marine premium would be \$177,392.00 which adds fire coverage to the general liability insurance, and excludes flood, wind/hail and named storm – the port would be self-insured for these events. Ms. Sziber said she will go back to Trident Marine to firm up the final options and doesn't think the price will be much different. President Ferrara said the motion was made by Commissioner Roper to move forward with Trinity Marine to include the fire coverage option and was seconded by Commissioner Sheridan. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 3 Joubert, Schliegmeyer, Jr., Sims. Ms. Sziber left the meeting.

Discussion continued as to why the RFP wasn't published earlier in the year and questioned why there was only one bid received for the proposal. The commissioners vented their frustrations and said something else needs to be done the next time this comes up for renewal, in 3 years. They agreed they would like to advertise the next RFP for the port insurance earlier in the year.

**5. Invoice Payment Approval**

The following invoices for payment were presented by President Ferrara:

1. Cashe Coudrain & Bass		
Services rendered through May 31, 2024		
Inv# 128213	Matter # 4623-1	Amt. \$ 680.00
Inv# 128214	Matter # 4623-4	Amt. \$ 140.00
Inv# 128215	Matter # 4623-13	<u>Amt. \$ 240.00</u>
		Total Amt. \$1,060.00

A motion was made by Commissioner DePaula and seconded by Commissioner Roper that the Commission approve payment for the invoices presented today for Cashe, Coudrain & Bass. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 3 Joubert, Schliegmeyer, Jr., Sims

**6. Budget FY 2024 – update**

**a) Executive Session**

This agenda item was tabled due to the absence of Commissioner Sims, who is working on the salary increase request for the Executive Director and the Administrative Assistant. Commissioner DePaula said there needs to be finality for this agenda item, and that the commission owes it to both the director and administrative assistant to have a discussion about their request. Commissioner Roper said to Mr. Dufresne and Administrative Assistant that to get this request through the board, to come with a realistic budget for a cost-of-living increase or some other comparable pay increase, otherwise this request will continue to be delayed into next year. President Ferrara said Commissioner Sims has everything completed, and he will ask Commissioner Sims to forward his information to the commissioners for review, should Commissioner Sims be absent at the next STPPC meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business today.

**REMARKS**

President Ferrara congratulated Commissioner Sheridan for being honored with an Annie Award. This local award honors women who work in excellence and have a true servant's heart for the community. Commissioner Sheridan thanked President Ferrara, and she also let the Commission know that she will be having hip surgery and will not be able to attend the next STPPC meeting.

She also asked about the signs at the port and suggested asking DOTD to replace the sign off of the interstate. Also, she said the sign in front of the port needs to be cleaned and painted.

Having no further business, a motion for adjournment was made by Commissioner Roper. and seconded by Commissioner Sheridan. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 3 Joubert, Schliegmeyer, Jr., Sims

The meeting adjourned at 9:59 AM.

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Tina Roper, Secretary STPPC

Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC