SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2025 9:00AM
CITY HALL ANNEX BUILDING - 110 W. HICKORY ST., PONCHATOULA, LA

The regular meeting was held on Wednesday, October 15, 2025 at the City Hall Annex Building, located at 110 W. Hickory Street, Ponchatoula, LA. President Daryl Ferrara called the regular meeting to order at 9:09 A.M.

The invocation was given by Administrative Assistant Robyn Pusey, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner William Sims.

Commissioners Present: Daryl Ferrara, Tina Roper, Timothy DePaula, Rhonda Sheridan, Brandon Schanzbach, Logan Davis

Commissioners Absent: William Sims

President Ferrara welcomed the attendees to the meeting. Others in attendance included Patrick Dufresne, Executive Director, Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant, Andre Coudrain, Cashe Coudrain and Bass, Lee Barends, ITL Accounting, Richard Meek, Action 17 News.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

It was moved by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the regular meeting agenda for October 15, 2025, as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Schanzbach, Davis Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

President Ferrara told the commissioners that the minutes from the September 10, 2025 meeting had been sent to them electronically by the administrative assistant. She said there were no changes to the minutes. After a brief review, a motion was made by Vice President Roper and seconded by Secretary Sheridan to adopt/approve the minutes from the regular meeting on September 10, 2025. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Schanzbach, Davis Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

TREASURER'S REPORT

Port accountant Lee Barends reminded everyone that the financial reports had been sent out prior to the meeting. She asked if anyone had any questions about the reports, and there were none. She began reviewing the balance sheet with the commissioners

On the balance sheet at the end of September there was $332,390.72 in the operating account. Ms. Barends said she spoke with the Executive Director to move the excess of $250,000.00 from the operating account to the investment account. She reviewed the income statement which compared September to year-to-date and the approved 2025 budget. She said the investment account is doing very well. Vice President Roper asked about the FEMA project, and Ms. Barends said this will be discussed when reviewing the proposed amended budget.

A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Vice President Roper to approve the financial reports for September, 2025. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Schanzbach, Davis Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Warehouse Buildings #2 & #3 – lease agreement and inspection update**

Port attorney Andre Coudrain said the tenant is still "going back and forth" with the lease. He said the inspection service is scheduled for October 21st and 22nd. There were no questions.

2. **LA-DOTD Port Priority Program Application – update, drainage project quotes for review**
   a) **Resolution**

Mr. Dufresne told the commissioners that since the last STPPC meeting he was able to confirm that the LA-DOTD option for the drainage project was not feasible due to the high engineering costs. The commissioners were emailed 3 quotes for the port to complete the project outside of the LA-DOTD program. The lowest qualified bid for the project was received from Bip and Sons Services, LLC in the amount of $35,459.00 and includes additional limestone to fill in the void underneath the generator platform behind warehouse building #2. Vice President Roper made a motion to accept the lowest qualified bid presented by Bip and Sons Services, LLC, and was seconded by Treasurer DePaula. A resolution was introduced by Secretary Sheridan:

At a regular meeting of the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission held on October 15, 2025 the following resolution was introduced and adopted; to wit:

Moved by Commissioner Roper, seconded by Commissioner DePaula_ that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission authorized Patrick J. Dufresne, Executive Director, to enter into an agreement with Bip & Sons Services, LLC, that submitted the lowest qualified bid, to provide services and materials for the drainage project behind Warehouse Building 2, fees not to exceed $35,459.00.

Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Schanzbach, Davis Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

3. **Barge dock repair project – update**

Mr. Dufresne said the geo-technical soil-boring exploration work was scheduled to start tomorrow, October 16, 2025 and Friday, October 17, 2025 at the port. Once completed the data would be forwarded to the primary project engineer of record and this would allow him to begin his final engineering design plan. Treasurer DePaula asked if there was an anticipated date that the bids would go out. Mr. Dufresne said the project was pushed back because of the soil-boring issue but expects this to happen sometime at the end of February or March 1, 2026. There were no additional questions.

4. **5-Year Master Plan – update, quotes for review**

Mr. Dufresne said the bids for the Master Plan were emailed to the commissioners for review, and that the lowest bid was received from Dr. Jim Richardson in the amount of $12,000.00. Dr. Richardson completed the last master plan for the port, which has helped the port acquire approximately $20,000,000.00 in infrastructure project funding over the last 15 years. Vice

President Roper appreciated his low bid but wanted to make sure Dr. Richardson was aware that the plan should include the entire port district, and not just the 40 acres at the port. Mr. Dufresne said he would confirm this with Dr. Richardson. She said she wanted a good, economic, forward forecasting, high-level plan for the port that would expand the port operations forward. A discussion was had regarding the expectations for the Master Plan. Treasurer DePaula said he didn't want to "go with the low bid just because its low" and would like to see a presentation from all the bidders or possibly set up a zoom meeting for the bidders to introduce themselves and explain what it is that they do. Mr. Dufresne said he would ask the bidders to make a presentation. Vice President Roper asked the administrative assistant to send a copy of the current Master Plan in a separate email to the commissioners. President Ferrara thanked Mr. Dufresne for his work in obtaining the bids.

5. Preventative measures at Port Manchac - discussion

Ponchatoula Fire Chief Stormy Joiner was introduced by President Ferrara. Chief Joiner started his comments by telling the commissioners a little about himself and the fire department at Manchac. He said they just received a rating of 6, which is positive. He mentioned the recent fire at Smitty's in Roseland, LA. He went on to say that the port should have MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets) for every chemical on site in every drum, barrel, etc., and that the fire department should have copies of this information. He explained that the MSDS sheets provide information about the chemical and how to manage it. He said any spill over 55 gallons is a hazmat situation. Port attorney Andre Coudrain confirmed with Chief Joiner that this is a federal law requirement, and that all tenants under the lease are obligated to conform. Chief Joiner talked about the containment of spills, and said that they are structural fire fighters, and that industrial firefighting is a different thing. He said they pay the Hammond Fire Department hazmat $5,000.00 per year to handle all hazmat in the parish. He also said that he has some experience with hazmat industrial firefighting. Chief Joiner said the main thing the fire department needs to know (during a spill event) is what the material is, and what puts it out, whether a dry chemical, water, or foam system, and he described the different kinds of foam used in these situations. He said while they carry equipment on their trucks for this, they need a water source to mix with it, as the foam is highly concentrated. He said in the past he had discussed with Mr. Dufresne a water-hydrant system but said installing a pressurized hydrant system would cost a lot of money. He explained what would be needed to operate a pressurized hydrant system and mentioned that there is also a "dry hydrant" system and explained to the commissioners how it worked. He said the dry hydrant system is much cheaper, and it works, and might be something to investigate. He said there is a DRG book that matches up to the MSDS sheet and tells them how far to evacuate.

He went on to say they offer a training program to high school students that is geared to hazmat awareness, Firefighter I and Firefighter II, and counts as a credit towards school. The certification is good anywhere in the country, and the Ponchatoula Fire Department pays for it. Vice President Roper said she would like to talk to him after the meeting to discuss further.

Chief Joiner said at Manchac there are 4 boats, and another is being built – each used for different purposes. He would like to have something at the port like a shed to store one of the boats that would have a lift and locate it somewhere on the east side of the high rise.

Vice President Roper asked to return to discussion of the dry hydrant system. Treasurer DePaula asked Chief Joiner if he would make a list of recommendations of what he would like to see happen at the port and the location of where to put the hydrants at the port. Vice President Roper asked Chief Joiner to make a recommendation of businesses who provide this type of service that Mr. Dufresne can reach out to. Discussion continued about the different hydrant systems and the water needed to operate the pumps/hydrants, along with a list of the chemicals used by the tenant, and the need for the MSDS sheets. President Ferrara asked if there was a grant for this, and Mr. Dufresne said that this project is listed in the Port Priority program, along with the small vessel storage units. President Ferrara thanked Chief Joiner for his time today.

Treasurer DePaula asked Mr. Dufresne if he knew who the tenant would call for containment of spills, etc. Mr. Dufresne said he was not aware, but he contacted a company to provide an MSA (master service agreement) that the port's attorney is currently reviewing. A brief discussion was held regarding fire suppression options, and Mr. Dufresne said he has two quotes and is waiting on a third quote.

6. **Invoice Payment Approval**

The following invoices for payment were presented today for approval by Treasurer DePaula:

1. Cashe Coudrain & Bass
   Services rendered through September 30, 2025

Inv# 131962	Matter # 4623-13	Amt.$	2,116.00
Inv# 131964	Matter # 4623-1	Amt.$	720.00
Inv# 131963	Matter # 4623-4	Amt.$	60.00
Inv# 131966	Matter # 4623-0014	Amt.$	100.00
Inv# 131965	Matter # 4623-10	Amt.$	380.00
		Total Amt.$	3,376.00

A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Vice President Roper to approve the invoices presented today for Cashe Coudrain & Bass. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Schanzbach, Davis Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Budget Amendment – FY 2025**
   a) Resolution

Ms. Barends reviewed three budget items and recommendations for amending the 2025 budget with the commissioners. Under revenues, she recommended changing the amount budgeted for the FEMA Project from $834,223.50 to $26,087.62, which is the amount of money received this year. She said she had spoken with the port director, and things were moving slower than expected. An engineering invoice for approximately $26,000.00 had been received but is pending approval from FEMA. She said they don't anticipate anything else "to land" in 2025, but if it does, that would be ok. She said it would be ok if more money came in than projected, that the issue would be if the port received less income than what was projected. She said "to be safe" she recommends amending the budget for the FEMA Project from $834,223.50 to the amount of money received this year, $26,087.62.

Vice President Roper asked about the Investment Dividend & Interest, noting that the money in the account is actually over the amount shown on the proposed amended budget. Ms. Barends said she ran the report in August before the current updates. She said it is ok to be over the budgeted amount, but not under, and said she verified this with the Legislative auditor some years ago.

In expenses, the Professional Contracts Expense is budgeted for $100,000.00 but Ms. Barends proposed reducing it to $50,000.00. A discussion was held regarding the types of contracts under this line item and the Master Plan/engineering costs. Ms. Barends said the budget could still be amended again if needed.

The last item reviewed was the FEMA project expense. She said the expenses were not as expected and proposed that the budget be changed from $92,691.50 to $45,760.00, which is what was expended during the year. She said it doesn't appear that there will be any more activity this year, but if so, the budget can be amended again in December.

A motion was made by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula to approve the three changes as recommended by Lee Barends, Port Accountant, amending the STPPC Budget for FY 2025.

A resolution was introduced by Secretary Sheridan:

At a Regular Meeting of the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission held on October 15, 2025 the following resolution was introduced and adopted; to wit:

Moved by Commissioner Roper, seconded by Commissioner DePaula that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission adopt the following resolution with regard to the 2025 proposed Amended Budget:

Whereas, the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission has met all Formal requirements of Louisiana law; and,

Whereas, the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission now desires formally to adopt its proposed budget amendments for calendar year 2025 in the form of that made a part hereof:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission, acting as the governing authority of the Tangipahoa Parish Port District, that:

1. The Proposed Budget of the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission for the calendar year 2025 be and is hereby formally adopted, a copy being attached hereto and made a part hereof by reference.

2. The President of the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission, Daryl Ferrara, be and is hereby authorized to provide a copy of the Budget so adopted to the State Auditor of Louisiana, and to take any other actions with reference thereto as may be required by law.

Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Schanzbach, Davis Nays: 0
Absent: 1 Sims

Ms. Barends told the commissioners that she will be meeting with the Executive Director in a few weeks to discuss the budget for FY 2026. This will be discussed during the STPPC meeting in November and adopted by the commission in December during the Public Hearing.

LITIGATION UPDATE:

South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission vs Wilco Marsh Buggies, Inc.
Docket# 20240004367
a) Executive Session

Mr. Coudrain told the commissioners that there was no new development in the case, and that there was no need to enter into executive session.

REMARKS

President Ferrara asked about the boat slip and lift requested by Fire Chief Joiner and whether we could ask Air Products to help contribute to his request. Mr. Dufresne said the boat slip is part of the Port Priority grant and if we pay for it, we would be reimbursed for 90% of the costs, but it may take 2 years to be reimbursed. Vice President Roper asked if there was a timeline or priority for the projects to be completed. She wanted to see a list of the projects by priority and the costs for each project. Several commissioners said it would be helpful to have a list from the executive director with his recommendations for the projects that are priority for 2026, including the costs, whether there are some projects that need to be done before other projects start, and should include all areas of the port.

The executive director thanked everyone for coming today.

A motion was made by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula to adjourn the regular meeting. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Schanzbach, Davis Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

The meeting adjourned at 10:16 AM.

Rhonda Sheridan, Secretary STPPC

Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC