

**SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026 9:00AM
CITY HALL ANNEX BUILDING - 110 W. HICKORY ST., PONCHATOULA, LA**

The regular meeting was held on Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at the City Hall Annex Building, located at 110 W. Hickory Street, Ponchatoula, LA. President Daryl Ferrara called the regular meeting to order at 9:08 A.M.

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

All commissioners were present: Daryl Ferrara, Tina Roper, Tim DePaula, William Sims, Rhonda Sheridan, Logan Davis, Brandon Schanzbach

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, and Brandi Fontenot of GIS Engineering, LLC.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

It was moved by Vice President Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sims that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the regular meeting agenda for February 11, 2026, as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 7 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0

President Ferrara told the commissioners that the minutes from the January 14, 2026 meeting had been sent to them electronically by the administrative assistant. There were no changes to the minutes. After a brief review, a motion was made by Vice President Roper and seconded by Commissioner Davis to adopt/approve the minutes from the regular meeting on January 14, 2026. Motion passed. Yeas: 7 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0

TREASURER'S REPORT

Port accountant Lee Barends reviewed the January 2026 financial reports with the commissioners. She first reviewed the income statement, and said the total revenues were \$232,915.26 and expenses were \$63,397.89. She said the membership for PAL had been previously approved and the line item for membership/dues would need to be adjusted for the budget. She said she would "build this in for this year and future years." She said a few other things may need to be "tweaked" but said it was a little early to make changes to the budget, that this could be done at a later time. There were no questions about the income statement.

Moving on to the balance sheet, she said the balance in the operating account was a little under \$250,000.00 so there would be no transfer this month to the investment account. There was a brief review of the general ledger. Ms. Barends said she printed the entire Edward Jones report for the commissioners. President Ferrara said it was agreed that financial advisor Shaun McArthur would come every so often to speak with the commission. He asked Ms. Barends about the working relationship between her and Mr. McArthur, and Ms. Barends said "it's a good team." On a side note, Vice President Roper asked Mr. Dufresne if he had received an email from the state asking how much money the port had and he said yes. There were no additional questions.

A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Vice President Roper s to approve the financial reports from January 2026. Motion passed. Yeas: 7 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0

OLD BUSINESS

1. Warehouse Buildings #2 & #3 – lease agreement and inspection update **a) Spreadsheet review**

Mr. Dufresne said positive responses from Mr. Coudrain's letter were received from both roofing contractors of warehouse buildings 2 & 3. The building 2 contractor is going to replace approximately 100 screws in the area that was indicated in the inspection report at no charge to the port. The building 3 contractor is going to come to do an inspection of their work within the next 2 weeks. Mr. Dufresne said he should have a report for the commission at the next STPPC meeting. President Ferrara asked Mr. Coudrain if he had any concerns about the work from the contractors then versus now. Mr. Coudrain said the challenge for the port was the repairs had been inspected and the repairs passed the inspection. He said one issue could have been warranty related, the other is less clear, so he wants to hear what the contractor says.

Mr. Coudrain said he forwarded the inspection spreadsheet to the tenant and discussion was ongoing. He said the first round progressed very well. The second round requires the tenant to hire a contractor for some of the repairs. Mr. Coudrain said he and Mr. Dufresne went through the inspection report again and identified some other corrosive type of damage that could arguably be related to the tenant's use of chemicals in the building and may take an expert to identify. He sent a second round of concerns to the tenant and identified (per item from the inspection report) the concerns to be discussed. He said he had not yet heard back from the tenant. He said going forward, this would be an interactive process with the tenant and if the port determines some repairs are the port's responsibility, he hopes to coordinate with the tenant to get a contractor to do these repairs at the same time. He said this is still in the discussion phase, and that things are progressing.

2. LA-DOTD Port Priority Program Application - Projects - update

Mr. Dufresne introduced Brandi Fontenot of GIS Engineering, LLC with an update to the revised engineering proposal for the LA-DOTD Port Priority Program application. There was a brief discussion regarding when the port would see reimbursement for the projects. Ms. Fontenot said if the state continues with the \$39.4 million dollar funding every year, she is anticipating that

Port Manchac would receive a portion of their funding in 2028, from \$1.5 to \$1.35 million. She said the commission could move forward today with the projects and when under agreement with the state, the state would reimburse the STPPC once that money is in their accounts. Discussion was had regarding the projects. Treasurer DePaula asked about a fire suppression system in warehouse building 3 and said that the tenant had previously stated they were unsure if a fire suppression system is good for their products that are stored there, and there is a risk that a fire suppression system could damage their products. He asked if there had been a study or discussion about the need for a fire suppression system or what kind that should be installed. Mr. Dufresne said a dry hydrant system was being looked at, and he explained how it worked. He said a fire truck would be utilized to pump water into the building. There was a brief discussion about the dry hydrant system, the kind of chemicals being stored in the building and possible water damage that could occur. Treasurer DePaula said he wanted to be sure the right system is being looked at, that he didn't want to spend a lot of money on an incorrect system. Mr. Dufresne said this could be re-clarified and discussed again with Fire Chief Stormy Joiner. Ms. Fontenot said GIS Engineering would work with the tenant and do their due diligence with the tenant on exactly what is being stored in the building. More discussion was had regarding the comment from the tenant about the fire suppression system. Secretary Sheridan said the goal was to get the projects prioritized so that one or two of the projects could get completed this year and work towards the two-year mark to be reimbursed. Commissioner Sims asked if the proposal included the GIS Engineering fee and Ms. Fontenot said yes. She added that the project list was broken down to be done individually, however if the commission decided to do the entrance culvert, the drainage improvements, and asphalt paving, the projects could be advertised for bid together with one contractor, one contract and one set of documents to the state. If so, GIS Engineering would probably reduce the fee if the projects were grouped together. Treasurer DePaula asked about the engineering fees, and Mr. Dufresne said the port is responsible for 100 percent of the engineering fees. Treasurer DePaula asked for a timeline with GIS Engineering and Ms. Fontenot asked if there was a signed agreement with the state. Mr. Dufresne said yes for the application reimbursement agreement but not for the project agreement, that the LA-DOTD would need to be notified and project number would be assigned. Ms. Fontenot said this would take between 30 - 45 days, possibly longer, however GIS Engineering has an MSA in place and they could get started right away on the plans, drawings and specifications. There were no questions.

3. Barge dock repair project – update

Mr. Dufresne said there was no update today. He said the final design plans for the dock are under way and the project engineer will try to accomplish this as soon as possible. There were no questions.

4. 5-Year Master Plan – update

A copy of the group proposal from Dr. James Richardson, Dr. Anna Osland and Dr. Stephen Barnes was reviewed with the commissioners. Mr. Dufresne said per Commissioner Sims recommendation an economic impact study by the group was added to the proposal and adds around \$10,000.00 to the total project cost of \$57,465.00. Treasurer DePaula asked if the commission agreed to the proposal, was there a timeline for when it would be completed. Mr. Dufresne said in the agreement the initial draft would be submitted sometime in April. A brief

discussion about the proposal was had among the commissioners. A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Commissioner Sims to approve the Master Plan update proposal by Dr. James Richardson, Dr. Anna Osland and Dr. Stephen Barnes. A roll call vote was taken: Logan Davis – yes. Tina Roper – abstain. Daryl Ferrara – yes. William Sims – yes. Brandon Schanzbach – yes. Rhonda Sheridan – yes. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0 Abstain: 1 Roper

President Ferrara and Vice President Roper thanked Mr. Dufresne for his work getting this done, and Vice President Roper suggested to Mr. Dufresne that he notify the group of the port priority projects discussed today.

5. Invoice Payment Approval

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

1. Cashe Coudrain & Bass

Services rendered through January 31, 2026

Inv# 132897	Matter # 4623-1	Amt. \$ 200.00
STPPC General		
Inv# 132759	Matter # 4623-7	Amt. \$ 160.00
Lease with Air Products		
Inv# 132757	Matter # 4623-11	Amt. \$ 400.00
L King re: warehouse #2 repair		
Inv# 132898	Matter # 4623-13	Amt. \$ 743.00
STPPC vs Wilco Marsh Buggies		
Inv# 132899	Matter # 4623-0014	Amt. \$ 403.20
Lease with Bayou Diesel (Bldgs. 2 & 3)		
		Total Amt. \$ 1,906.20

Treasurer DePaula said all the tasks were relevant to work done by Cash Coudrain & Bass and recommended approval for payment. Motion made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Secretary Sheridan to approve payment for all invoices from Cashe Coudrain and Bass. Motion passed. Yeas: 7 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0

2. Fontenot Benefits & Actuarial Consulting

Inv# 5097 Professional services rendered in 2026 -

Actuarial valuation of post-employment benefits to comply with GASB 75

Total Amt.\$ 1,750.00

Mr. Dufresne said this invoice was related to the annual audit, and Ms. Barends said this is normal for the audit procedure.

A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Secretary Sheridan to approve the invoice presented for payment from Fontenot Benefits & Actuarial Consulting. Motion passed. Yeas: 7 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0

NEW BUSINESS

1. Air Products project update -

Mr. Dufresne said recently there was a meeting with Air Products manager Jeff Belleo, President Daryl Ferrara, port attorney Andre Coudrain, and himself. A summation sheet from the meeting was placed in the commissioner's folders for review. Mr. Dufresne said the initial agreement with Air Products was a 4-year term that was going to expire this June, with two 1-year options. He said essentially the first 1-year option with Air Products had been turned into two 6-month options. President Ferrara explained the 6-month options to the commissioners, saying that Air Products would like a 6-month lease from July to December 2026, and that they would notify the STPPC within 90 days if they would extend from January to June 2027. He said Air Products is waiting on one permit and expected to be gone by December 31, 2030 or as soon as June 30, 2027. Treasurer DePaula commented that the proposal doesn't extend the agreement, just breaks it down into different options. Mr. Coudrain said yes, for the most part, that Air Products was to notify the STPPC in January of their decision and they missed that target date, so they came back with this "re-working" of the agreement. Commissioner Sims asked if there were any terms that would be applicable to have Air Products sign a one-year lease. Mr. Coudrain said that during the meeting with Air Products it was stated that this matter went all the way up through the ranks of the company, at the highest level, and that for the STPPC to come back now with something different could delay negotiations. Discussion continued. President Ferrara said Air Products had not been working at the Port for the last few months, however, should they return, they may have issues with the dock and with parking at the port. A motion to accept the amended agreement was suggested by Treasurer DePaula. Mr. Coudrain said the motion could be that the commission is voting to accept the proposed lease amendment terms with Air Products subject to final approval of any other terms requested.

Treasurer DePaula made a motion, seconded by Vice President Roper to accept the proposed lease amendment terms with Air Products for the renewal period of monthly rent subject to final approval of any other terms that may be requested by Air Products. Motion passed. Yeas: 7 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0

2. Insurance update – FY 2026

President Ferrara introduced Paula Sziber with Jackson Vaughn Insurance Agency, who provided an update for the port's insurance this year. The official renewal date is June 20th. She said during talks with the underwriter she was told they expect a little bit of a property decrease that is industry-wide, that the market is softening. She said this could be an opportunity for the port to consider wind and hail coverage as an option. Currently the port does not have wind and hail coverage. She said the underwriter notated seeing decreases with

property rates, and that the average was 5 – 7 percent. She also asked for quotes after the \$1.5 million dollar improvement to the dock, and the underwriter agreed to mimic the contractual requirements on the insurance, that wind, hail, flood, storm surge and wind driven water for the dock (only) would add approximately \$35,000.00 to the premium annually. Treasurer DePaula commented to Ms. Sziber that the port would not receive any credit for a fire suppression system, and Ms. Sziber said not with the current carrier, that the carrier liked the rate for this risk now. Ms. Sziber said she would “shop around” approximately 45 - 30 days prior to renewal and said that this is the window the carriers like. She said insurance quotes are good for 30 days and that the carriers won’t guarantee pricing outside of that period. Discussion was had regarding the previous premiums. Ms. Sziber said the spreadsheet she provided today was a snapshot of where the premiums are now and where they may be. Additional discussion was had regarding the premiums, deductibles and clarification of the spreadsheet provided by Ms. Sziber. Also discussed was the possibility of moving the STPPC meeting in May to accommodate the timing of the insurance proposal. President Ferrara asked if there were any additional questions, and there were none. The commissioners thanked Ms. Sziber for the update.

3. Rail Track Repair estimate

Mr. Dufresne said the most recent rail inspection at the port indicated that the track ties needed repair near several switch areas. A proposal received from Rail Technical Services for the repair work was \$12,985.00. A copy of the proposal was provided to the commissioners. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Vice President Roper to approve the proposal from Rail Technical Services for repairs to the rail track at the port in the amount of \$12,985.00. Motion passed. Yeas: 7 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0

LITIGATION UPDATE:

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

The port’s attorney, Andre Coudrain, said that some discoveries had been received that may require some amended pleadings. He proposed having a more thorough discussion in executive session at the next STPPC meeting, so that he may bring everything up to date for the commission. He said, “As you know we can’t quantify a loss yet, so we are not in position to resolve the litigation.” He said they are requesting a 1442 deposition of the port, and that things are starting to “ramp up a bit.” Mr. Coudrain said he would discuss this in more detail at the next scheduled Executive Session.

REMARKS

Commissioner Sims questioned if the commissioners had decided on the work to be done by GIS Engineering, LLC. Ms. Fontenot said there was an MSA in place with the port, and that a simple task order would be sent to be signed, and that it would be their notice to proceed on whatever projects the commission would like them to handle. She sent an email to Molly Burgoyne with the LA-DOTD to confirm if the port had a CEA in place or if the port needs to start moving on that process. She said the port needed to decide which projects they would like GIS Engineering to start with. Discussion about the projects was had among the commissioners and included the dry hydrant system. Treasurer DePaula said he would propose starting with 3 projects and move forward with the dry hydrant system, holding the fire suppression project until further discussion is had about the system. Ms. Fontenot said looking into what type of fire suppression system is needed in the building would be part of their preliminary design.

Treasurer DePaula made a motion to move forward with following projects: the boat house/boat launch, replacing the entrance culvert, drainage improvement and asphalt paving, and to combine these into one project to use one contractor to possibly reduce some engineering costs, and move forward with the fire suppression system understanding that there would be some sort of study done about the type of system needed, and at minimum will move forward with the dry hydrant system. The motion was seconded by Secretary Sheridan. Motion passed. Yeas: 7 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0

Mr. Dufresne reminded the commissioners that the next STPPC meeting is March 11th. President Ferrara asked about the next PAL conference and Mr. Dufresne said an email had been sent, and that the registration deadline was February 16th. The conference dates are February 23rd and 24th.

Treasurer DePaula suggested moving the May meeting to May 21st or May 27th to accommodate the timing of the insurance proposal. It was decided by the commission to move the May meeting from Wednesday May 13th to Thursday May 21st. Mr. Coudrain said a vote was not necessary.

President Ferrara asked for a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Treasurer DePaula made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Vice President Roper. Motion passed. Yeas: 7 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 0

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Rhonda Sheridan, Secretary STPPC

Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC