

**SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

**THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2026 9:00AM
CITY HALL ANNEX BUILDING - 110 W. HICKORY ST., PONCHATOULA, LA**

The regular meeting was held on Thursday, May 21, 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 9:05 A.M.

The invocation was given by administrative assistant, Robyn Pusey, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by STPPC Secretary, Rhonda Sheridan.

Commissioners present: Daryl Ferrara, Timothy DePaula, William Sims, Rhonda Sheridan, Logan Davis, Brandon Schanzbach

Commissioners absent: Tina Roper

President Ferrara welcomed the attendees to the meeting. Others in attendance included Patrick Dufresne, STPPC Executive Director; Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant; Lee Barends, ITL Accounting; Paula Sziber, Jackson-Vaughn Insurance Agency; Will Evans, GIS Engineering, LLC; Richard Meek, Action 17 News; Dwight Williams, Ponchartrain Conservancy; Ben Taylor, Manchac Greenway.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

President Ferrara said that the port director informed him that agenda item # 5, Air Products update, needed to be amended to include a resolution. President Ferrara made a motion to amend the regular meeting agenda for May 21, 2026, to include a resolution with agenda item #5, Air Products, update. The motion was seconded by Treasurer DePaula. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Roper

President Ferrara asked for a motion to approve the amended agenda. A motion was made by Secretary Sheridan and seconded by Commissioner Schanzbach to approve the amended regular meeting agenda for May 21, 2026. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Roper

President Ferrara told the commissioners that the meeting minutes from April 8, 2026 had been sent to them electronically by the administrative assistant and she confirmed there were no changes. After a brief review, a motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Secretary Sheridan to adopt/approve the minutes from the regular meeting on April 8, 2026. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Roper

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer DePaula reviewed the financial reports from April 2026 with the commissioners. He asked port accountant Lee Barends if she saw any concerns and she replied there was nothing out of the ordinary. She said the marketing line item appears a little higher than normal but confirmed with the administrative assistant that it was for the Southeastern Executive Business Forum. Treasurer DePaula said that the actual income looks to be on track. He said the Edward Jones account portfolio value is right at \$6 million and appears to be doing well. Ms. Barends said there is a CD maturing June 30th and one on July 28th. President Ferrara asked the administrative assistant to contact Shaun McArthur to report at the next STPPC meeting. There were no questions.

A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Commissioner Sims to approve the financial reports from April 2026. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Roper

OLD BUSINESS

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

a) Spreadsheet review

Port director Patrick Dufresne reported that the contractor who replaced the roof on Warehouse Building #3 after Hurricane Ida returned recently to inspect it. He said additional caulking was installed along the roof line between the rail dock and roof proper. The contractor recommended that Premier Chemicals modify its ventilation system in the building's northeast quadrant and also recommended conducting future inspections, which the port plans to do. As a result, the tenant is working on several projects at one time and is securing the labor, materials, and equipment needed to complete them. Mr. Dufresne said the previous updates were small, that this is bigger, and he hopes to have a more progressive update on the spreadsheet soon. There were no questions.

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

Mr. Dufresne said he met with GIS Engineering, the port's LA-DOTD project engineering company of record, and a consultant regarding the sprinkler system in both warehouse buildings. They also completed a walk through of the buildings with the manager of Premier Chemicals to discuss the hydrant system requirements and discussed a connecting contact with the fire department. He thinks good progress is being made. He then introduced Will Evans of GIS Engineering, who confirmed that all projects remain on track and that weekly updates are provided to Mr. Dufresne. He also said that surveying had been completed, and that he was able to obtain a copy of the existing driveway permit, eliminating need to apply for a new driveway permit to maintain the existing culvert system and complete the repair. There were no questions.

3. Barge dock repair project – update

Mr. Dufresne reported that the project engineer of record determined additional geo-technical testing was needed for modifications to the dock's mooring dolphins and is evaluating a more cost-effective design. He explained that a smaller braced dolphin would cost more than a monopile system, and as a result, a smaller amount of additional geo-technical testing was required. The testing has now been completed, which slightly delayed the final cost estimate, but he expects to receive the information by the end of next month for review. Treasurer DePaula asked Mr. Dufresne if he knew when bids for the repairs might go out, and Mr. Dufresne responded it would be determined after the costs are reviewed, and then the commission would decide how/when they want to proceed. He said there are many things to decide before getting into the bid stage, and he expects a better understanding of the engineering and project costs sometime around July 1st.

4. 5-Year Master Plan – update

Mr. Dufresne stated that we are still waiting on the final group contract agreement documents for the 5-year Master Plan from the Blanco Research Institute at ULL. He said once received the port can formally proceed. He said it takes a long time for their board to approve everything. Commissioner Sims questioned why they hadn't signed the agreement yet, and he and Treasurer DePaula questioned why they hadn't started working on the 5-year master plan. Mr. Dufresne said the agreement must be signed before the work can begin. He said he wasn't sure how often their board meets but has sent emails every couple of weeks asking for an update. He said as soon as the document is received, he can sign off on the agreement, and then they can begin working on the 5-year master plan. He said he assumes he will receive the agreement before the next STPPC meeting. A brief discussion was held regarding the delay of the agreement. Treasurer DePaula asked Mr. Dufresne to send another email asking for the status.

5. Air Products – update **a) Resolution**

Mr. Dufresne said the updated lease agreement had been forwarded to the commissioners for review. Treasurer DePaula apologized and said he had not had an opportunity to review the document. Mr. Dufresne said the document extends the current agreement to the end of the year, with some options to follow. Treasurer DePaula asked if there was some sort of timeframe for signing the agreement. Mr. Dufresne said Air Products expected the amended agreement to be approved for signing at this meeting, as the original agreement expires in June. There was confusion about the resolution, and whether a resolution was done previously or even necessary. Mr. Dufresne said the resolution is procedural and it wouldn't hurt to make one. Discussion was held among the commissioners regarding the changes to the agreement. Secretary Sheridan said changes to the agreement had been previously approved. Treasurer DePaula briefly reviewed the minutes from the STPPC meeting on April 8, 2026 regarding the Air Products update. He said the minutes stated that everyone had signed off on the lease, that the port's attorney had spoken to the local Air Products representative about the approved

amended agreement, that there were multiple layers of approval needed by Air Products, and he expected to get back the approvals, and there were no questions. Treasurer DePaula said his concern was that he had not reviewed the agreement and did not know what changes had been made. He said his understanding was that the amended agreement did not materially change anything from the previous agreement, that Air Products wanted to change the payment structure, and it didn't change the terms. He said although he hadn't independently verified if this is true, that is what had been represented to the commission, and if that was the case, then he was fine with proceeding. Commissioner Sims said the same.

Secretary Sheridan made a motion that the STPPC will move forward with port director Patrick Dufresne to sign the amended agreement with Air Products, with the approved changes by port attorney, Andre Coudrain. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sims. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Roper

6. Invoice Payment Approval

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

Cashe Coudrain & Bass

Services rendered through April 30, 2026

Inv# 133435 Matter # 4623-1 Amt. \$ 380.00

STPPC General

Inv# 133437 Matter 4623-4

**Lease with Bayou Diesel/Premier Chemicals
(Building 3) Amt. \$ 20.00**

Inv# 133434 Matter 4623-0014

**Lease with Bayou Diesel
(Buildings 2 and 3) Amt. \$ 100.00**

Inv# 133438 Matter # 4623-7

Lease with Air Products & Chemicals, Inc. Amt. \$ 240.00

Inv# 133436 Matter # 4623-13

STPPC vs Wilco Marsh Buggies Amt. \$ 533.83

Total Amt. \$ 1,673.83

Treasurer DePaula said he felt the invoices were reasonable for the amount of time Mr. Coudrain had spent on each matter. A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Commissioner Schanzbach to approve the invoices presented for payment from Cashe Coudrain and Bass. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Roper

Rail Technical Services, LLC

Inv# 19781

Rail Track maintenance -

Amt.# 12,985.00

Multiple repairs, replacement of 10 defective switch ties

Mr. Dufresne said this invoice was for work previously authorized by the commission and he confirmed that the work had been completed. A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and secondly by Commissioner Schanzbach to approve the invoice presented for payment from Rail Technical Services, LLC. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Roper

7. Insurance Coverage for FY 2026-2027

President Ferrara introduced Paula Sziber with Jackson Vaughn Insurance. A spreadsheet was reviewed with the commissioners. She began by explaining that crime, workers compensation, and liability policies would remain unchanged. She noted that the workers compensation premium increased slightly because of a rate adjustment but said the annual LWCC dividend would significantly reduce the overall cost and remain the best option. She said the liability options are still all inclusive, with accidental and sudden pollution, rail liability, general liability, directors and officers, and employment practices. She said this is a comprehensive package, and the premium went down slightly from last year.

Moving on to the property insurance, Ms. Sziber said she misspoke at the last meeting, that there is a \$5,000,000.00 stop loss limit right now and said the most the insurance company would pay within this program, regardless of the loss, is \$5,000,000.00. She said the insurance company would agree to put more coverage back on the table, and she asked them to provide 2 separate options in addition to the current \$5,000,000.00. One option at \$7,000,000.00 would be over the value of the two warehouse buildings, which combined are just a little above \$6,000,000.00. The other option at \$8,802,230.00 is for full limit, excluding wind/hail. She explained each of these options in more detail to the commissioners. None of the options included wind/hail. She said the program also put together an option that includes wind/hail, named storm, flood/storm surge and wind driven rain, and she explained those option details to the commissioners.

She went on to say that it's weighing costs against probability, that the port currently does not have wind/hail coverage. The port must decide to either stay with the current coverage or take the opportunity to purchase back some of this coverage. She said that last year's total premium cost was \$183,328.75 and that, if the port keeps the current coverage (without wind/hail), any option selected would still be below what the port paid last year. She said the choice would be whether to add wind/hail coverage and spend more money this year on insurance than last year. Treasurer DePaula asked what the wind mileage cutoff would be. Ms. Sziber said there is no wind mileage cutoff, that "a thunderstorm is a thunderstorm, and a tornado is a tornado" and that significant wind is what would cause the damage, however there is nothing in the policy that specifically states wind mileage. Discussion continued for some time about named storms, the coverage options, deductibles and payouts.

Ms. Sziber said she had a few things for the commission's consideration, that the port does not have business interruption coverage, and it would be about 10% of the premium. Terrorism

coverage is also available at 5% of the premium, and a full pollution liability option is also available. She said the solution they are proposing is for a slow and unnoticed leak that happens over time and she gave examples of this. She said pollution issues will always fall back on the landowner, that the exposure is low, but the port does have one. Commissioner Schanzbach said there should be a discussion with the port's attorney about pollution liability to determine what the lease says. Ms. Sziber asked if the tenant had the port named as additional insured, and Treasurer DePaula said they should. Secretary Sheridan said she believed so, that this question had been asked once before of the port's attorney. Discussion continued about the port property which includes the dock and warehouse buildings, with potential damage from storm surge and wind. Commissioner Schanzbach said with these numbers, the port should add the wind coverage back. He said "as a consensus we should probably go with wind but need to decide what limit and if we are going to do a buy back or not." Treasurer DePaula said he would be in favor of this but would like to see what the full policy actually covers. Ms. Sziber said she can provide a 65-page policy document for his review.

Commissioner Schanzbach asked Ms. Sziber if the company was aware that the fire protection class changed to a 6, and that the port is installing hydrants. She said the company is aware of the hydrants and plans for port improvements. She said she would have a discussion with the company about the change in the fire protection class.

Ms. Sziber said she would be happy to come back to the next STPPC meeting to answer any additional questions. Treasurer DePaula said he could not make the STPPC meeting on June 10th and the commissioners discussed the possibility of moving the meeting to another date. After discussion, the commissioners agreed the meeting would remain on June 10th.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Official Journal of Record 2026-2027 RFP a) Resolution

Mr. Dufresne said this is the month that the port advertises the Official Journal of Record for the fiscal year 2026-2027. He asked Secretary Sheridan to introduce the resolution.

Moved by Commissioner DePaula, seconded by Commissioner Sims that the Commission empowers and executes any and all documents pertaining to advertising of its Request for Proposals for an Official Journal of Record for the period beginning August 1, 2026 and ending July 31, 2027. Requested information will be as follows: 1) Circulation; 2) Length of time in business; 3) Copy of Standard Rates; 4) A minimum of eight (8) point print for clarity of readership; 6) Any other information you deem appropriate. Proposals must be received no later than 5PM on June 30, 2026, at 163 W. Hickory St., Ponchatoula, LA 70454.

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

LITIGATION UPDATE

**South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission vs Wilco Marsh Buggies, Inc.
Docket# 20240004367**

a) Executive Session

Port attorney Andre Coudrain was absent from today's meeting. There was no litigation update or executive session.

REMARKS

Mr. Dufresne confirmed that the next STPPC meeting will be on June 10, 2026. Secretary Sheridan said we need to make sure there is a quorum.

President Ferrara asked for a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Treasurer DePaula made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Secretary Sheridan. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Roper

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 AM.

Rhonda Sheridan, Secretary STPPC

Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC