

**SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING FOR PORT MANCHAC MASTER PLAN UPDATE 2026 AND REGULAR
MEETING**

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

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

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

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

Commissioners Absent: William Sims

President Ferrara welcomed the attendees, which included Patrick Dufresne, STPPC Executive Director; Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant; Andre Coudrain, Cashe Coudrain and Bass; Louisiana Economists Dr. Jim Richardson, Dr. Stephen Barnes and Dr. Anna Osland; Brandi Fontenot of GIS Engineering; Richard Meek, Action 17 News; Louisiana Senator Bill Wheat; Stacey Duvic, Tangipahoa Economic Development Foundation, and members of the public.

APPROVAL OF PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA

It was moved by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the Public Hearing Agenda for the Port Manchac Master Plan Update on September 9, 2026. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

It was moved by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission convene the public hearing for the Port Manchac Master Plan Update. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Public Hearing – Port Manchac Master Plan Update 2026**
 - a) Opening Statement**
 - b) Remarks from public/visitors**

President Ferrara announced the opening of the Public Hearing, as pursuant to the authorized published notice in the Tangi Times on August 19, August 26, September 2 and September 9, 2026, thereby complying with the Louisiana law requirement. Dr. Steven Barnes of the Kathleen Blanco Public Policy Center in Lafayette made his opening statement and introduced research associate

Quyen Nguyen. Ms. Nguyen directed questions to the STPPC commissioners and attendees regarding the needs of the port and how the port benefits the community, as well as the port's vision in the next 5 years and in 20 years.

Discussion included how the Master Plan could promote job creation and economic growth at the port. Initial topics included how to engage the community, how to attract people to Tangipahoa Parish, and regional development beyond the port. There was a discussion about finding the right balance between economic and industrial development and preserving the lifestyle, natural resources and character of the community. Dr. Barnes asked about opportunities for open dialogue and coordination with parish government and local chambers. Vice President Roper asked how we can coordinate efforts with other ports. Dr. James Richardson noted that Louisiana has many ports, each one is very different from the other. Treasurer DePaula identified container operations as a potentially untapped opportunity. He emphasized using the port's limited funds wisely and asked how the port could sustain revenue. Vice President Roper would like to see expansion beyond the 40 acres at the port and stated that development within the port's 100 acres would require mitigation. President Ferrara asked whether the port could expand regionally. The combination of interstate access, the airport, and the growth of distribution centers may create new opportunities for the port because of its access to major transportation routes. Port attorney Andre Coudrain said the port can be landowners, that there is broad authority for anything to do with economic development.

Senator Bill Wheat emphasized the importance of community engagement and the Master Plan's responsiveness. A participant suggested looking at the study that was done a few years ago that included recreation and tourism projects. Several participants agreed that engagement with the community is essential but requires creativity, as one participant said, "people don't come to meetings" and another said, "people are quick to tell you what they don't want." It was also said that consultants have successfully attended festivals and other community events to gather opinions rather than asking residents to come to a meeting. It was also suggested to develop a short survey that could be distributed, possibly through the Chamber of Commerce, economic-development organizations, and social media outlets asking people what they would like to see happen with the port. This could generate additional feedback from people who are not represented at today's hearing.

The moderator asked about goals for the port and what success might look like in the next 5 years and 20 years. Vice President Roper said she wants to see economic gains and see the port as the economic driver for the community. A participant suggested creating some type of connection with the seafood industry and local fisherman. Comments included that the port should have revenue diversification, be financially self-sustaining, contribute to workforce development, create recreation/tourism at the port, and impact quality of life and the overall wellbeing of the community. President Ferrara asked what the next steps are. Dr. Anna Osland said there needs to be a vision statement, and that several options for the Master Plan will be provided for the commission review.

2. Close Public Hearing

President Ferrara asked for a motion to close the public hearing. A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Vice President Roper to close the public hearing for the Port Manchac Master Plan Update. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

President Ferrara announced that the public hearing was now closed and asked that the Commission proceed with the regular meeting.

REGULAR MEETING

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

It was moved by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Vice President Roper that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the regular meeting agenda for September 9, 2026, as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

President Ferrara told the commissioners that the meeting minutes from August 12, 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 Vice President Roper to adopt/approve the minutes from the regular meeting on August 12, 2026. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer DePaula reviewed the financial report for August 2026 with the commissioners. The total revenue for the month is \$123,959.30 and total expenses for the month is \$75,752.25. The net income for the month is \$48,207.05 and the total net income for the year to date is \$433,500.92. President Ferrara asked if there were any CD's ready to be transferred, and after a brief discussion it was determined that there were 1 or 2 CD's coming up to be transferred. There were no questions.

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

OLD BUSINESS

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

Mr. Dufresne told the commissioners that the list of the prioritized degraded repair items in warehouse building #2 was in their folders. The list had been reviewed and prioritized by the inspector for Arcane. The inspection report did not include the electrical work. He said electrical contractor H. Rocker Electric Co., Inc., identified several items requiring attention in warehouse buildings 2 and 3. In building 2 the contractor recommended a complete electrical panel replacement, and the estimated cost is approximately \$9,800.00. In building 3, the contractor said work is needed to repair conduit on the main electrical line and the utility box on the exterior of the building. The quote for the repairs is approximately \$3,200.00.

A brief discussion was held regarding the importance of the prioritized spreadsheet, that it gives more control over what needs to be done.

A motion was made by Vice President Roper, seconded by Treasurer DePaula to approve the quotes presented for the electrical repairs by H Rocker Electric Company, Inc., in warehouse buildings 2 and 3. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

The commissioners also requested that the electrical contractor check the electrical panel in warehouse building 3 for any potential issues.

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

Mr. Dufresne introduced Brandi Fontenot of GIS Engineering. She said the joint application for the 3-slip boathouse and boat launch rehabilitation had been submitted. She said that it's a good milestone accomplished for the site improvement project. She said she didn't have a copy of the design update report because she had been in training and didn't have a way to send the information, however she emailed a copy to Mr. Dufresne just prior to this meeting.

Ms. Fontenot said that 60% of the design for the site drainage and driveway improvements is complete, and the design team is working on the construction cost estimate. Ms. Fontenot also said that something being considered is the addition of catch basins and drainage improvements that were not included in the original budget. She said the team will review the design and available budget to determine what additional drainage work can reasonably be included.

Regarding the fire suppression system, she said a questionnaire was provided to the tenant to get a better idea of what is being stored inside the warehouse and how the tenant stores quantities of materials. She said they received a response yesterday from the tenant and will forward to YKH; this will help with their fire suppression recommendations.

Regarding the 3-slip boathouse, she said the permit drawings are completed and submitted, and the team is awaiting confirmation that the permit application has been received. She said based on other permits submitted within the past year, the permitting agency appears to be placing increased emphasis on deadlines and response times. The team is hopeful that this will help move the current permit review process forward with more efficiency. Vice President Roper told Mr. Dufresne to make sure the team working on the Master Plan is updated with all this information. There were no questions.

3. Barge dock repair project – update

Mr. Dufresne told the commissioners that a time extension request for the barge dock repair had been recently submitted to FEMA. He said he was advised that the latest extension date that could be requested is in March 2027. He said he hopes to have another update at the next STPPC meeting. There were no more comments or questions about the barge dock repair project.

4. Employee handbook manual – update

Vice President Roper said that Commissioner Sims was unavailable today to provide information regarding the employee handbook manual. At the last STPPC meeting Secretary Sheridan said there is a group in Baton Rouge who handled the city's employee manual, and she would reach out to them. Secretary Sheridan said she said has not yet reached the group but hoped to have information at the next STPPC meeting.

5. Bayou Signs – lease update

Mr. Coudrain told the commissioners that he is still waiting for the signed lease from The Lamar Companies. They have been sending checks to the port for the monthly payment. There were no questions.

6. Invoice Payment Approval

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

Cashe Coudrain & Bass

Services rendered through August 31, 2026

Inv# 134380	Matter # 4623-1	Amt. \$ 632.53
STPPC General		

Inv# 134379	Matter # 4623-0014	Amt. \$ 80.00
Lease with Bayou Diesel/Premier Chemicals		
(Buildings 2 & 3)		

A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Vice President Roper to approve invoice #134380 for \$632.53 and invoice #134379 for \$80.00 presented for payment today from Cashe Coudrain and Bass. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

Inv# 134499	Matter # 4623-13	Amt. \$ 2,253.00
STPPC vs. Wilco Marsh Buggies		
*Privileged and Confidential – Attorney/Client communications		

Retainer Fee – expert services retained by	
Cashe Coudrain & Bass	Amt.\$ 10,000.00

Mr. Coudrain said that the retainer fee should have been part of the invoice for STPPC vs. Wilco Marsh Buggies, and that he would have his office send an updated invoice to the commission office. The commission agreed to privately review these litigation invoices in Executive Session.

GIS Engineering LLC	Amt.\$ 11,567.50
Engineering services from July 2026	

Inv# 70021594

The GIS Engineering invoice for the Port Priority Phase projects included preliminary design and permitting. After a brief review of the invoice, a motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Secretary Sheridan to approve the invoice presented today for payment from GIS Engineering LLC in the amount of \$11,567.50. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business today.

LITIGATION UPDATE

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

Port attorney Andre Coudrain told the commissioners there was an update regarding the litigation case between STPPC and Wilco Marsh Buggies and recommended going into Executive Session to discuss. A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Commissioner Schanzbach to enter into Executive Session at the request of the port's attorney, Andre Coudrain. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

Approximately 15 minutes later, a motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Vice President Roper to come out of executive session and return to the regular meeting. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

The commissioners approved the litigation invoices from Cashe Coudrain and Bass, for the total amount of \$12,253.00. Mr. Coudrain said let the record show there was no action or votes taken during executive session.

REMARKS

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: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 AM.

Rhonda Sheridan, Secretary STPPC

Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC