

**SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 12, 2023 9:00AM  
CITY HALL ANNEX BUILDING - 110 W. HICKORY ST., PONCHATOULA, LA**

President Daryl Ferrara called the Regular Meeting to order Wednesday, July 12, 2023 at 9:05AM. The meeting was held at the City Hall Annex Building, located at 110 W. Hickory Street, Ponchatoula, LA.

Administrative Assistant Robyn Pusey gave the invocation. Commissioner Rhonda Sheridan led the group with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioners Present: Daryl Ferrara, William "Bill" Joubert, Timothy DePaula, Rhonda Sheridan, William Sims

Commissioners Absent: Tina Roper, Jimmy Schliegelmeyer, Jr.

President Ferrara welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged Financial Advisor Shaun McArthur of Edward Jones, thanking him for his attendance at today's meeting.

Others Present: Patrick Dufresne, Executive Director; Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant; Lee Barends, ITL Accounting; Andre Coudrain, Cashe Coudrain & Bass; Jim Ragland, Ragland, Aderman and Associates; Dwight Williams, Ponchartrain Conservancy.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES**

It was moved by Commissioner DePaula and seconded by Commissioner Sheridan that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the Meeting Agenda for July 12, 2023, as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 2 Roper, Schliegelmeyer, Jr.

President Ferrara announced that the minutes of the regular meeting on June 14, 2023, and the minutes of the special meeting on June 20, 2023, had been sent to the Commissioners by email prior to the meeting for review, and a copy of the minutes had been placed in their meeting folders.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sheridan and seconded by Commissioner DePaula to adopt/approve the minutes from the regular meeting on June 14, 2023. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 2 Roper, Schliegelmeyer, Jr.

A motion was made by Commissioner DePaula and seconded by Commissioner Sheridan to approve the minutes from the special meeting on June 20, 2023. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 2 Roper, Schliegelmeyer, Jr.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Prior to the meeting today the financial reports for the period ending June 30, 2023, had been emailed to the Commissioners by Ms. Lee Barends with ITL Accounting for their review and a copy was placed in their meeting folders. Today, Ms. Barends reviewed the reports with the Commissioners, saying the total revenues for the month were \$391,117.25, and the expenses were \$144,826.04, leaving a net income of

\$246,291.71. The general ledger and balance sheet documents were reviewed by the Commissioners. Ms. Barends asked the Commissioners if they had any specific questions. President Ferrara asked Ms. Barends if anything “jumped out at her”. She said that nothing was out of the ordinary for this month, and that “we are a little over and under in certain areas, but we can adjust whenever we do the proposed amended budget.” There were no more questions.

It was moved by Commissioner Sheridan and seconded by Commissioner Joubert that the Commission accept/approve the financials for the month ending June 30, 2023. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 2 Roper, Schliegmeyer, Jr.

Ms. Barends made one final comment, stating that the balance sheet will be adjusted once we receive the audit review for any employee liabilities for vacation, sick leave, etc. She said, “Once the audit review is completed, they will provide the journal entries as to whether there is a gain or loss, and likely you will see this at the next meeting.” She asked again if there were any questions. There were no questions.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. **LA-DOTD Port Priority State H. 011927 – Transload Improvements – update**  
**Truck scale repair update, percentage of work completed, estimated time of completion**
  - a) **Resolution**

Executive Director Patrick Dufresne reminded the Commissioners that at the last meeting they decided to move forward with the container option for the truck scale house. Since the last meeting the details for the project had been finalized, and a proposal for installation of the container was received from LA Contracting Enterprise, LLC. The proposal was emailed to the Commissioners prior to the meeting, and a copy was placed in their meeting folders for review. Mr. Dufresne said they had been waiting for the electrician to finalize the work he would be doing, which included the electrical hook ups, the electrical service pole and fuse panel. The ports engineer delivered drawings to the contractor and as a result the information for the installation was finally forwarded (to the Executive Director) and received last night. The proposal provided information that included the costs for modification of the existing platform, the scale house building, electricals, labor and materials, dress run and clean up for a total bid of \$84,335.00. President Ferrara said he thought at the previous meeting that the total cost for the container option would be \$16,000.00. Mr. Dufresne said the container house was only one part of the proposal. Commissioner De Paula questioned why the increase was so much. Mr. Dufresne said if you look at the itemization on the invoice this is typical of the contractor, that the platform must be strengthened, and the contractor would have to bring a piece of equipment to place the unit of the platform, and then the electrician would come to hook everything up. Commissioner Sims asked for clarification of the fees and read through the proposal invoice and asked if this was the only option available? Commissioner DePaula said that initially they thought \$16,000.00 would be fine, but “now that the cost has doubled, we need to go back and look at the wood option to see what that would cost.” Discussion among the Commissioners continued. Commissioner Joubert suggested the possibility of a cinder brick option. President Ferrara asked if there was any way to defer some of the cost to the tenant. Mr. Dufresne said, “When we re-negotiate the contract, we can look into that.” Discussion continued about using a wood option for the truck scale house. Commissioner DePaula stated we’re making assumptions that pricing would be the same for the wood option and said that he doesn’t feel that it is, and we need more information. Commissioner Joubert said “Does it have to be wood? Cinder bricks lasts forever.” Mr. Dufresne said we could look at other options, but there was only \$3,000.00 left in the budget for engineering, and whatever is decided would cost additional engineering fees. Commissioner DePaula said the most responsible thing would be to stay within the money allotted for the project. He requested that Mr. Dufresne go back to the contractor and ask if anything could be done to reduce the cost. Commissioner Joubert asked Mr. Dufresne for a comparison, and said “Just to be clear, you are

going to come back with a total cost for another option?” Mr. Dufresne said he would discuss this with the engineer and contractor first and then investigate other options if needed.

## **2. Warehouse Building #3 roof repair – update**

Patrick Dufresne, Executive Director told the Commissioners that the final invoice and retainage fee invoice for the Warehouse Building #3 roof replacement project had been received from Centurion Industries, Inc. Copies of the invoices were placed with today's invoice payments for approval. Mr. Dufresne said all work done by Centurion was completed, and the port's engineer, Jim Ragland, had reviewed the work and signed the certification documents recommending payment of both invoices.

## **3. Warehouse Building #2 – update**

Patrick Dufresne, Executive Director told the Commissioners that the contractor is now working on the south end of Warehouse Building #2 and once the purlins were removed, they noticed shifting in some of the rafter beams that were not visible until everything was exposed. Mr. Dufresne said the contractor recommended replacing three (3) sections that will need to be manufactured, and there would be additional costs for labor, equipment and materials to do the work. Mr. Dufresne introduced structural engineer Jim Ragland of Ragland, Aderman and Associates, who attended the meeting to review the findings. Drawings of the building received last night were printed and placed in the meeting folders.

Before Mr. Ragland began to speak, port attorney Andre Coudrain said he wanted clarification regarding Warehouse Building #3, that the engineer certified all work had been completed, and said “we need to accept the work, start a lean period, then the contractor would give the warranty.” Mr. Ragland said that he and the engineers inspected the roof and said the roof had been exposed to several storms by now. He said there had been one issue with some insulation that needed to be replaced and had been resolved. Mr. Ragland said the roof is functioning and “all is good”. Mr. Coudrain said that he would prepare the acceptance documents for Centurion. A motion was made by Commissioner Sims and seconded by Commissioner DePaula to accept the work completed by Centurion Industries, Inc., for the Port Manchac Warehouse Building #3 roof repair project. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 2 Roper, Schliegelmeier, Jr.

Mr. Jim Ragland continued with his report on Warehouse Building #2. He explained that when the contractor started taking the purlins out, they discovered an additional section of rafters that needed to be replaced. Mr. Ragland displayed the drawings on a screen that showed the rafters, where the damage was, and what needed to be replaced. He pointed out that one of the rafters had an embrittlement fracture, and it looked of a recent origin. Mr. Ragland said this repair was not included in the initial scope of work because it was not visible initially. He said this is complicated in that there are a lot of columns in the building that have been hit over the years. President Ferrara stopped Mr. Ragland for a moment and asked the ports attorney, Andre Coudrain, who would be responsible, assuming the columns are going to be hit again? Mr. Coudrain said essentially you would deal with the details at that time, but now we are aware we have a problem, this is the port's responsibility. Commissioner DePaula asked Mr. Ragland if the cost for repairs presented by L King Company, LLC was reasonable, and he replied “Yes, it looks reasonable.” Commissioner Sims asked Mr. Ragland if there were any “blind spots” in the building that we haven't been able to see yet. Mr. Ragland said there would be an additional cost associated with that. He said this part of the building was the worst hit section of the property and said that an embrittlement crack is something you wouldn't see ahead of time, and it could have been when the hurricane took place. He said it's almost good that it was found now, as this is the highest stress point in the entire building. Mr. Ragland then said, “So answering your question, there shouldn't be, but it's always best to keep eyes open.”

A resolution was introduced by Commissioner DePaula for a change order to fund removal and replacement of three (3) rafter beams in Warehouse Building #2.

At a regular meeting of the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commissioner held on Wednesday, July 12, 2023, the following resolution was introduced and unanimously adopted; to wit:

Moved by Commissioner DePaula seconded by Commissioner Sims, that the Commission authorize Patrick J. Dufresne, Executive Director to execute a change order, not to exceed \$54,187.00, to the contract agreement with L King Company, LLC for STPPC Project NR: 2023-01-B2 Structural Repair of Warehouse Building #2. The change order amount will be utilized to fund removal and replacement of 3 rafter beams, as part of the roof installation and structural repair work. The total amount for the project including the change order item will not exceed \$610,087.00.

Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 2 Roper, Schliegmeyer, Jr.

#### 4. **Barge Dock Repair – update**

Patrick Dufresne re-introduced structural engineer Jim Ragland, who was here to provide an update on his findings with the barge dock repair assessment. Mr. Dufresne told the Commissioners that FEMA money had been received to cover the preliminary findings report. Mr. Ragland started by saying that two (2) meetings back he had forwarded his initial report and the preliminary design. Using his laptop, Mr. Ragland presented several drawings on a large screen that showed the dock and the repairs he recommended should be done. He gave a very lengthy explanation of the damage to the dock, saying the observed damages included wood rot, termite damage or a combination of both. He said the damages are primarily limited to the timber cap beams located underneath the dock's concrete slabs and said the cap beams are no longer capable of carrying the design of the dock. He said heavy vehicle loading should not be allowed until the repairs are completed. Commissioner Sims asked Mr. Ragland what his recommendations are for the repairs, and what would the potential cost be. Mr. Ragland proceeded to give a detailed explanation of the repairs, of how steel would be used to replace the cap beams and how vinyl connections would be used. He recommended finding a contractor to do this kind of work, including replacing cap beams with steel, taking the concrete slabs off, joint sealing the ends and putting them back on. Mr. Ragland showed photos of the fender timbers on the face of the dock, stating the timbers take hits from barges dragging along on the face of the dock, and on the West End of the dock the timbers are gone but he thought that was due to the hurricane. Commissioner Sims asked Mr. Ragland again about the recommendations and wanted to know "Is the dock usable or not usable?" Mr. Ragland said he was going to answer his questions, and said, "There are some big items that you should consider before you just replace what's there." Continuing, he said the breasting dolphins needed some maintenance and showed photos of 7-pile timber dolphins that had some signs of deterioration, noting there was one dolphin on each end of the dock. He said companies such as Air Products will have specific requirements for the dock and said STPPC should confirm their requirements. Mr. Ragland said, "In my opinion, you probably will spend less than \$1,000,000.00 for the repairs that would include the steel beams underneath the dock." Patrick Dufresne said he would forward Mr. Ragland's report to FEMA to see if the port would be eligible for additional funding for the repairs. Commissioner Joubert asked if there were any current safety issues. He was reminded that the dock had been closed until the repairs were completed. He asked if we needed to extend the safety zone at the dock. Mr. Ragland said we know there are companies who want to use the dock, and they can bring vessels in to offload some things on the side, but there should be no highway vehicles on the caps. Mr. Dufresne said the current tenant companies can use the side of the dock for transloading. Mr. Ragland said once Air Products gets into full scale there will be more activity at the dock, and, that we need to discuss what the future will be. Mr. Dwight Williams of Ponchartrain Conservancy said the Commission

should “definitely” talk to Air Products, that he doesn’t think their project will be stopped. He said “The worst-case scenario is someone will take them to court that might hold you up for another year” but he thinks it will go through. He said Air Products is going to want to build two injection well sites and about 24 smaller platforms, and this is going to be “a very big project.” President Ferrara thanked Mr. Ragland for his presentation and said it will certainly move us to some action soon.

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

Mr. Dufresne told the Commissioners there was no update today.

#### **6. Insurance Package for FY 2023-2024 – update**

Patrick Dufresne, Executive Director told the Commissioners there was no update from Jackson Vaughn since the previous STPPC meeting. He said that a couple of other local companies had been contacted to find coverage for wind and fire at the port. Commissioner DePaula had assisted in contacting other local agencies and the port received some responses but no actual numbers. Commissioner DePaula said these companies seem to be getting back the same kind of information as Jackson Vaughn had. Commissioner DePaula said he and Mr. Dufresne were scheduled to meet today with one of the insurance representatives, however he was not certain that they would provide any better information.

#### **7. Official Journal of Record – RFP update**

##### **a) Resolution**

Mr. Dufresne told the Commissioners that the bid opening for the Official Journal of Record was held on June 30, 2023, and two (2) bids were received from The Daily Star and The Ponchatoula Times. The proposals were the same, however The Ponchatoula Times had stated in their proposal “The Times is the largest weekly newspaper in this 5-parish region (7,930 households subscribing).” Based on that information, the proposal from The Ponchatoula Times was accepted, and a resolution was introduced by Commissioner DePaula.

At a regular meeting of the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission held on July 12, 2023 the following resolution was introduced and adopted; to wit: Moved by Commissioner DePaula, seconded by Commissioner Joubert, that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission accepted the proposal submitted by Melissa Gueldner, Publisher of The Ponchatoula Times, LLC, dated May 31, 2023 to serve as its Official Journal, for the period beginning August 1, 2023 and ending July 31, 2024 and is hereby designated and authorize to represent the contractual rates as stated in the proposal, meeting all state law requirements, LA R.S.43:142, with regards to port related business/public notices.

Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 2 Roper, Schliegmeyer, Jr.

#### **8. Invoice Payment Approval**

President Ferrara presented the current invoices for payment approval.

1. AECOM – Port Manchac Site Improvements – Phase IV  
For professional services May 20,2023 – June 16, 2023  
Inv# 200070768 Amt. \$4,995.00
2. A-Lert Roof Systems (Centurion Industries, Inc.)  
Project – Port Manchac Warehouse Bldg. #3

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|-----------------|-------------|------------------|
| Inv# 65622      | Pay App 3   | Amt. \$63,207.90 |
| Inv# 611783-Ret | (retainage) | Amt. \$33,937.00 |
3. Cashe Coudrain & Bass  
Services rendered through June 30, 2023  
Inv# 125543 Matter # 4623-1 Amt. \$640.60
  4. CN – Illinois Central  
Private Road Crossing – Base Rent 08/01/23 – 07/31/24  
Inv# 9500252501 Amt. \$3,000.00
  5. Jackson-Vaughan Agency, Inc.  
Insurance policy renewals –  
Policy# POL0956027-01 Policy# ZOL-41M59737-ND  
Policy#PD-91M99607-23-ND Policy# 01-195-35-59  
Policy# CA 4360195300 Policy# CPS7818529  
Customer# 1255 Amt. \$69,654.87
  6. L King Company, LLC  
Project # STPPC 2023-01-B / LKC 23-007  
Pay App 3 Amt. \$83,269.91

Executive Director Patrick Dufresne told the Commissioners that the insurance invoice from Jackson-Vaughn can be paid as half now (\$34,827.43), and half in 30 days. Andre Coudrain instructed the Commission to hold the retainage fee payment for A-Lert Roof Systems (Centurion Industries, Inc.) pending completion of the 45-day lean period.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sheridan and seconded by Commissioner Sims that the Commission approve for payment the invoices presented today by President Ferrara for AECOM, A-Lert Roof Systems, Cashe Coudrain & Bass, CN – Illinois Central, Jackson-Vaughan Agency, Inc., and L King Company, LLC. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 2 Roper, Schliegmeyer, Jr.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Investment Plan – update**

President Ferrara introduced to the Commissioners and guests Mr. Sean McArthur, Financial Advisor with Edward Jones. Mr. McArthur provided handouts to the Commissioners regarding the existing STPPC investments that showed the current holdings and notable highlights for the Money Market account and the CD's. He said that he was asked to provide recommendations for \$500,000.00, \$750,000.00 and \$1,000,000.00 investments in order to take advantage of current rates that are now between 4% and 5%. A discussion was had by the Commissioners as to which would be the better option. Commissioner DePaula said he wondered if the STPPC checking account should be moved to Edward Jones. Mr. McArthur told the Commissioners that he understood that the Hancock Whitney and Edward Jones

accounts were connected, and that the money can be easily transferred via ACH from one account to the other within a 24-hr. period. Mr. McArthur said that “through the end of the year and early next year, you’re still going to be able to capture 4% – 5%” and, “based off projections and expectations around February, March next year you will start seeing a steady decline, but you are still getting yield in the short term.” After continued discussion among the Commissioners, it was decided to transfer a large portion of the money from the Hancock Whitney bank account to the money market account with Edward Jones. A motion to proceed was not necessary, according to legal counsel, Andre Coudrain. President Ferrara stated that he would contact Mr. McArthur once a decision was made regarding the actual amount to be transferred.

**Remarks:**

Executive Director Patrick Dufresne thanked everyone for attending today. Having no further business, a motion for adjournment was made by Commissioner Sheridan and seconded by Commissioner Sims. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 2 Roper, Schliegmeyer, Jr.

The meeting adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

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Tina Roper, Secretary STPPC

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Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC