SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY JUNE 14, 2022 12:00 NOON

110 W. Hickory Street

CITY HALL ANNEX BUILDING

President Daryl Ferrara called the Regular Meeting to order Tuesday, June 14, 2022 at 12:00 Noon.

Held at the City Hall Annex Building, located at 110 W. Hickory Street, Ponchatoula, LA.

Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant gave the invocation. Commissioner Daryl Ferrara followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioners Present: Daryl Ferrara, William “Bill” Joubert, James Nelson, Tina Roper and Jimmy Schliegelmeyer, Jr. James Wes Daniels II arrived 20 minutes after the start of the meeting.

Commissioners Absent: None

President Ferrara welcomed the attendees. Others Present: Patrick Dufresne, Director; Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant; Andre Coudrain, Cashe Coudrain & Bass Law Firm; Andy Parker, Premier; Lee Barends, ITL Accounting; Paula Sziber, Jackson Vaughn; Jim Ragland, Ragland Aderman & Associates; Melissa Bordelon, President and CEO Tangipahoa Chamber of Commerce; Dwight Williams, Ponchartrain Conserving.

Visitors were introduced and welcomed.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES:**

It was moved by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Nelson that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the Meeting Agenda for June 14, 2022 as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, Nelson, Roper and Schliegelmeyer, Jr.

Nays: 0 Absent: 0 – (Daniels II -late arrival)

President Ferrara announced that the minutes of May 16, 2022 were sent to the Commissioners by e-mail for their review prior to this meeting and a copy was also presented in the meeting folders, as well. After reviewing the minutes the following motions were made.

It was moved by Commissioner Nelson and seconded by Commissioner Schliegelmeyer that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission adopt/approve the May 16, 2022 minutes as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Joubert, Nelson, Roper and Schliegelmeyer, Jr. Nays: 0 Absent: 0 (Daniels II -late arrival)

**TREASURER’S REPORT:**

Commissioner/Treasurer James Nelson informed the Commissioners that the financial reports for the period ending May, 2022 were e-mailed to the Commissioners by Ms. Lee Barends with ITL Accounting for their review prior to this meeting. He also stated that he had included a report in the Commissioners meeting folders relative to his financial summations for period ending May, 2022. Commissioner Nelson reported the Financial Summation for May, 2022 showed the Operating income was $23,900.00, and the Operating expense was $36,197.47. Negative net income was $12,241.53 (including non-operating income). He suspected the negative net income in May was due to no income from Warehouse # 2, which was more damaged after Hurricane Ida than the other buildings, however, the lease payment was received for May, 2022. Also, there was no rail storage income. Director Patrick Dufresne stated the $7,000.00 payment from Crown Castle (cell tower lease) and at least one of the railcar storage tenants was not received/posted on the bank statement for the month of May. This was confirmed with ITL Accountant Lee Barends. Lee reviewed the financial reports with the commission. Lee stated there was some redundancy in the reports and suggested adding a Year to Date (YTD) column so the commission can see the annual budget year to date and not just one month at a time.

Commissioner Nelson reported Year to Date (YTD) net income was $58,319.18. He also reported the Balance Sheet with current liquid assets (less receivables and utility deposits) was $2,289,341.63, and current liabilities was $14,022.83. Hurricane Ida claims income was unchanged from the previous month, $1,733,468.71. Hurricane Ida liability (income less expenses to date) was $1,535,515.65, also unchanged from the previous month.

It was moved by Commissioner William “Bill” Joubert and seconded by Commissioner Tina Roper that the Commission accept/approve the financials, as presented, by Treasurer Nelson for the month ending May, 2022. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Daniels II, Ferrara, Joubert, Nelson, Roper and Schliegelmeyer, Jr. Nays: 0 Absent: None

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**1. LA DOTD Port Priority State H. 011927-(322) Transload Improvements**

Patrick Dufresne, Port Director, reviewed with the Commissioners the estimate for the series of projects that included the rehabilitation of the truck scale, floodwall protection, asphalt paving and site grading. A document with the original bidding information and cost estimate was placed in the Commissioners’ folders for review. Before Hurricane Ida, twelve (12) companies were interested in the projects. However after Hurricane Ida the port only received four (4) bids. Pricing for these projects has substantially increased and the floodwall pricing is substantially more. The Port Director suggested that the truck scale repair should be the primary project and other projects, including the flood wall, should be secondary. Commissioner Roper did not agree that the truck scale repair should be primary project. Commissioner Roper asked how much income the truck scale would generate. The Port Director stated having the truck scale onsite attracts companies to come to the port, however he could not estimate how much money would be generated. Commissioner Roper said she felt flood protection was more important for the port than a truck scale that generates minimal income for the port. Andy Parker with Premier Chemicals/Purus was asked how frequently they use a scale. He said a scale is used 4 – 6 times per day. They are currently using scales at public truck stops. Commissioner William “Bill” Joubert asked if the port is obligated to provide a truck scale. Port Director Patrick Dufresne stated the port is responsible for the foundation, the under structure and correct calibration of the scale; beyond that it is the tenant’s responsibility. The Port Director stated that he has applied for FEMA funding to assist with payment for electronics in the truck scale house. The port’s investment is 10%. He stated the truck scale is a routine part of port infrastructure. Other companies on site also use the truck scale.

Commissioner William “Bill” Joubert asked about the next grant opportunity. The Port Director said it would be at least 2 years before the next LA-DOTD funding opportunity. Also, they would need an engineering plan to justify the request to FEMA. The Port Director recommended that they proceed with truck scale, then the other projects secondary. Certain money is already dedicated to these projects - scale, asphalt and site grading. The Port could also possibly wait for the flood wall for prices to come down. After much discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Nelson and seconded by Commissioner Joubert to make the Truck Scale priority. President Ferrara asked for a roll call. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Schliegelmeyer, Jr., Nelson, Joubert, Daniels II. Nays: 1 Roper. Absent: None

**2. Prospective Tenant (s) Update**

Patrick Dufresne, Port Director, informed the Commission that a request was received from Restore the Earth Foundation, a non-profit organization, to review a lease draft to store and trans-load trees at the terminal as part of a project to plant trees in the Lake Maurepas area. They would like to start sometime next year. He stated that there would be a dedicated space where they can store the trees in the pending lease agreement. They will also need some parking space. Legal counsel Andre Coudrain drafted an agreement and will keep the commission posted before signing. Commissioner Roper asked if the renewed agreement with Octavia had been signed and the Port Director confirmed that the agreement extension had been signed. Copies of the signed agreement will be sent to the commissioners.

**3. Invoice Payment Approval**

Commissioner/Treasurer James Nelson presented the May, 2022 invoices for payment approval.

1. Cash Coudrain & Bass – services rendered through May 31, 2022

Inv. # 122817, Matter 4623-1 Amount $600.00;

Inv. # 122818, Matter 4623-4 Amount $240.00;

Inv. # 122819, Matter 4623-7 Amount $540.00.

It was moved by Commissioner Nelson and seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Schliegelmeyer, Jr., that the Commission approve for payment the May, 2022 invoices as presented by Treasurer Nelson. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Daniels II, Ferrara, Joubert, Nelson, Roper and Schliegelmeyer, Jr. Nays: 0 Absent: None

**4. Port Manchac Priority Discussion Update/National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR)**

Commissioner William “Bill” Joubert stated that the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) has the NERR project on the agenda for their next meeting. He is hopeful for an announcement very soon as to who will be awarded the NERR project.

**5. Hurricane Ida Damage Repair Update**

Patrick Dufresne, Port Director, informed the Commissioners that the pre-bid meeting for contractors planning to submit bids on the project for the roof repair on Warehouse Bldg. #3 was held on June 9, 2022. Four (4) contractors were in attendance. Also in attendance was Tom Pittman, Port Engineer for the project. The bids are due on June 30, 2022 by 2:00PM and the bid opening will be held at the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission/Port Manchac Business Office, 163 West Hickory St. Ponchatoula, LA 70454.

The Commission had previously requested that the Port Director contact a structural engineer to evaluate damages at the port from Hurricane Ida. Jim Ragland, Structural Engineer, with Ragland, Aderman & Associates was hired by the Port Director to evaluate damages to Warehouse Bldg. #2. Mr. Ragland presented his findings with the commissioners and made recommendations for repairs. Commissioner Roper asked if the building was safe for normal use. Mr. Ragland said, “It’s safe right now for normal use.” Mr. Ragland was asked how the cost of construction is estimated. Mr. Ragland stated that they will use the inspection drawings and work with a contractor to get a general estimate. It was moved by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Nelson to get a cost estimate for repairs. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Daniels II, Joubert, Nelson, Roper and Schliegelmeyer, Jr. Nays: 0 Absent: None

**6. Premier Chemicals Lease Agreement Update**

Patrick Dufresne, Port Director, informed the Commission that Premier Chemicals is still in the process of reviewing the draft update of the lease agreement to include both warehouse buildings into the same lease. There are two (2) primary issues pending update of the lease, including an RFP for the repair of the roof on warehouse building #3, and the status of repairs for warehouse building #2 pending the structural engineering report. The engineer report is pending cost analysis for warehouse building #2. An update is anticipated at the July 12th STPPC meeting.

**7. New office computer equipment**

Patrick Dufresne, Port Director, notified the Commission that new computer equipment had been ordered from the Port’s IT company of record, RAM Computer Services, and that installation was scheduled. The cost is approximately $1,800.00. Commissioner Roper had questions about the operating system. Administrative Assistant Robyn Pusey told her Windows 10 was ordered with the option to upgrade to Windows 11 at no cost. Bitdefender anti-virus program was added, as well as I-Drive to save documents to the cloud. Commissioner Roper recommended the port office use Google Workspace and Microsoft 365 and asked that we order these programs for the new computers.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Sexual Harassment Training – Employee Handbook update**

Per recommendations from the Port’s auditor, Commissioners were advised that Sexual Harassment training must be done annually, and that certificates of completion must be sent to the Port office. Training information was requested from LA Civil Service, however the current computer system would not allow for this information to be downloaded. The commissioners will receive more information regarding training when the new computer equipment is installed. Details regarding annual training must also be added to the employee handbook.

1. **Insurance Coverage FY 2022-2023**

Paula Sziber with Jackson Vaughn Insurance presented the insurance proposal for the port. Information was sent to the commissioners prior to the meeting. Before hearing the proposal, Commissioner Roper asked if other ports had been contacted to determine if other insurance options may be available to the port. Patrick Dufresne, Port Director, said he did this the previous year, and the options are limited. He stated that several of the other ports hire a consultant to review insurance options.

Ms. Sziber began her presentation and told the Commissioners that wind and hail coverage were not included in the proposal. Lloyds of London will no longer underwrite for wind and hail. A policy with Louisiana Citizens was the only option for wind and hail coverage. It was moved by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Schliegelmeyer, Jr., to approve the insurance proposal for FY 2022-2023 from Jackson Vaughn Insurance. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Daniels II, Joubert, Nelson, Roper and Schliegelmeyer, Jr. Nays: 0 Absent: None

Before the final remarks, President Ferrara introduced Melissa Bordelon, President and CEO of the Tangipahoa Chamber. Ms. Bordelon thanked Dr. James Nelson for his outstanding service with STPPC representing the Tangipahoa Chamber. President Ferrara thanked Dr. Nelson and asked if he would attend the July meeting for a formal presentation. Port Director Patrick Dufresne also thanked Dr. Nelson for his community service with the commission.

**Remarks:**

The Port Director thanked everyone for attending today. He announced that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022.

Having no further business, a motion for adjournment was made by Commissioner Daniels, II and seconded by Commissioner Joubert. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Daniels II, Ferrara, Joubert, Nelson, Roper and Schliegelmeyer, Jr. Nays: 0 Absent: None

Meeting adjourned 2:15 pm.

James Wes Daniels II, Secretary STPPC Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC