**SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2025 9:00AM**

**CITY HALL ANNEX BUILDING - 110 W. HICKORY ST., PONCHATOULA, LA**

President Daryl Ferrara called the regular meeting to order on Monday, April 7, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. The meeting was held at the City Hall Annex Building, located at 110 W. Hickory Street, Ponchatoula, LA.

The invocation was given by Administrative Assistant Robyn Pusey, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Timothy DePaula.

Commissioners Present: Daryl Ferrara, Tina Roper, Timothy DePaula, William Sims

Commissioners Absent: Rhonda Sheridan

President Ferrara welcomed the attendees to the meeting this Monday morning, which included Patrick Dufresne, STPPC Executive Director; Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant; Andre Coudrain, Cashe Coudrain and Bass; Richard Meek, Action 17 News and Chloe Williams, The Daily Star.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES**

President Ferrara said that he made a change in his schedule, and he would need to leave the meeting early. He asked for agenda items that required a vote be moved to the beginning of the agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner DePaula to move agenda item #3, *Audit Engagement FY 2024 – Compliance Questionnaire* and the *resolution*, to agenda item #1; and agenda item #5, *Invoice Payment Approval* be moved to agenda item #2. A roll call vote was taken. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, Sims, DePaula. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan. Motion passed.

President Ferrara stated that the minutes from February 12, 2025 had been sent to the Commissioners electronically for review and a copy was in their meeting folders. He said there were no minutes from March because there was no meeting. After a brief review, a motion was made by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sims to adopt/approve the minutes from the regular meeting on February 12, 2025. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

President Ferrara announced that the port’s accountant was unable to attend the meeting today and asked Treasurer DePaula to review the financials with the commission. Starting with the financials for the month of February, he said the total revenues were $163,357.14, and after expenses, the net income was $136,726.09. He said everything else in the packet (balance sheet and general ledger) looked straightforward, and the Edward Jones statement that showed the account values also appeared straightforward. There were no questions regarding the financial reports from February, 2025.

A motion was made by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sims to accept/approve the financials for the month ending February 28, 2025. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

Treasurer DePaula then reviewed the March financials, telling the Commissioners that the total revenues from March were at $131,821.37 and after the expenses the net income was $106,638.49 A brief discussion was had regarding the difference in the net income between February and March, noting that the rental income was a little lower in March, and FEMA project money was received in February. President Ferrara said that he noticed fewer rail cars at the port. Executive Director Patrick Dufresne said that all 3 rail companies are reorganizing their logistics people and believes that this reorganization and the economy makes the difference for the rail cars. The Commissioners asked questions regarding the rental income, that there are only 2 tenants at the port and didn’t understand why the amounts would fluctuate. Mr. Dufresne said he would discuss this with the port’s accountant.

It was moved by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sims that the Commission accept/approve the financials for the month ending March 31, 2025. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

**OLD BUSINESS**



Note: As approved by the Commission, agenda item #3 has been moved to agenda item #1, and agenda item #5 moved to agenda item #2. The other agenda items follow in order.

1. **Audit Engagement FY 2024 – Compliance Questionnaire**
2. **Resolution**

Executive Director Patrick Dufresne told the Commissioners that a resolution for the Compliance Questionnaire FY 2024 is a requirement of the annual audit process.

Commissioner Sims introduced the resolution:

WHEREAS, the South Tangipahoa Parish Commission as part of its financial and compliance audit as of December 31, 2024, and for the year then ended, is required to complete the Systems Survey and Compliance Questionnaire furnished by the Louisiana Legislative auditor, and,

WHEREAS, upon completion, the questionnaire must be presented to and adopted by the board of commissioners of the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission, by means of a formal resolution in an open meeting and,

WHEREAS, the completed questionnaire and a copy of its adoption must then be given to the auditor at the beginning of the audit. The auditor will, during the course of his attestation engagement, test the accuracy of the response in the questionnaire.

WHEREAS, this Systems Survey and Compliance questionnaire was reviewed and all questions answered by the Board of Commissioners of the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission hereby adopts this resolution on April 7, 2025 by the following roll call vote: Ferrara – Yes; Roper – Yes; DePaula – Yes; Sims -Yes.

A motion to adopt the resolution for approval of the Compliance Questionnaire for FY 2024 was made by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner DePaula. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan.

1. **Invoice Payment Approval**

The following invoices for payment were presented today by Treasurer DePaula. A vote was taken for each invoice when presented.

**Cashe Coudrain and Bass**

Services rendered through February 28, 2025

Inv# 130386 Matter # 4623-1 Amt. $ 600.00

Inv# 130387 Matter # 4623-4 Amt. $ 260.00

Inv# 130385 Matter # 4623-13 Amt. $ 441.00 Total Amt. $ 1,301.00

Services rendered through March 31, 2025

Inv# 130638 Matter # 4623-1 Amt.$ 40.00

Inv# 130639 Matter # 4623-4 Amt.$ 40.00

Inv# 130784 Matter # 4623-13 Amt.$ 2,485.00

Total Amt. $ 2,565.00

A motion was made by Commissioner/Vice President Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sims that the Commission approve payment for the invoices presented today for Cashe, Coudrain & Bass. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

**Rail Technical Services, LLC**

Inv# 19141

Repairs of railroad track - furnish & install switch ties, dig out switch to bottom of the ties, clean out and grease the rest of the switches, clean up and mob out.

Total Amt. $ 8,340.00

A motion was made by President Ferrara and seconded by Commissioner Sims that the Commission approve payment for the invoice presented today for Rail Technical Services, LLC. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

**GIS Engineering, LLC**

Inv# 70017066

Port Priority Program Application Total Amt. $ 20,000.00

A motion was made by Commissioner/Vice President Roper and seconded by Commissioner/Treasurer DePaula that the Commission approve payment for the invoice presented today for GIS Engineering, LLC. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

**Ragland Aderman & Associates**

Inv# 492023021.24.1

Structural engineering services for preparation of cost estimates of Dock Repairs Option 1 and Option 2 for presentation to FEMA, construction design plans of the repair option, professional concrete/wood material boring examination services cost, the RFP & bidding process, construction phase/monitoring/invoice process and final inspection process Total Amt. $ 32,532.50

Inv# 492023021.24.2

Structural engineering for Design Development of Dock Repair Option 3 and preparation of detailed cost estimate of Option 3 for presentation to FEMA

Total Amt. $13,227.50

A motion was made by Commissioner/Vice President Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sims that the Commission approve payment for the invoices presented today for Ragland Aderman & Associates. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

After all the invoices were approved, President Ferrara noted that the recent maintenance repair work by the railroad tracks had been completed and hoped that no additional maintenance work would be needed for some time. Vice President Roper mentioned she recently visited the port with a group of individuals and had a discussion with Mr. Dufresne about the standing water between warehouse buildings 2 and 3. She said when the water gets high in the pass it doesn’t drain, and “the water is just sitting there”. She suggested to Mr. Dufresne that if the port priority application doesn't address the issue, the STPPC could fund a solution for draining the water between the warehouses without needing a full engineering study. Mr. Dufresne agreed to research the issue.

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

Port attorney Andre Coudrain said that he is still in discussion with Andy Parker of Premier Chemicals regarding the lease agreement, and when asked, said that he had not heard any feedback about the leases from Beezie Landry or Daniel Laborde with the Tangipahoa Economic Development Foundation. Vice President Roper said she would speak to them about their review of the leases. There were no questions.

1. **Prospective Tenant (s) – update**

Mr. Dufresne said there was no prospective tenant update today.

1. **LA-DOTD Port Priority program – discussion**

Mr. Dufresne told the Commissioners that since the last meeting the LA-DOTD Port Priority Application had been approved by the Joint Legislative Committee, and the next step would be for the full project list to be approved by the legislature. Upon approval, the STPPC would be eligible for the reimbursement process. Mr. Dufresne said he expects to receive some documentation about this process when approved. Vice President Roper asked for a list of the projects that were submitted, and the administrative assistant said she would email a list to the Commissioners. President Ferrara said he hoped to receive some good news soon, and Mr. Dufresne said routine things are typically done at the beginning of the session, and he hopes to have an update by the next STPPC meeting. Mr. Dufresne told the Commissioners that Senator Wheat attended the Joint Transportation Meeting. Mr. Dufresne said he thanked Senator Wheat for his help with the application process. There were no questions.

1. **Litigation – update**

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

**Docket # 20240004367**

1. **Executive Session**

Mr. Coudrain recommended that the Commission enter into an executive session to discuss the next steps and provide a litigation update. A motion was made by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sims to go into executive session to discuss the litigation matter. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 0

Approximately 20 minutes later the meeting resumed back into regular session. There were no votes or action taken during the executive session. A motion was made by Commissioner DePaula and seconded by Commissioner Roper to accept the council’s recommendations. Motion passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**REMARKS**

None

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 AM.

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Rhonda Sheridan, Secretary STPPC Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC