**SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2025 9:00AM**

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

The regular meeting was held on Thursday, August 14, 2025 at the City Hall Annex Building, located at 110 W. Hickory Street, Ponchatoula, LA. President Daryl Ferrara called the regular meeting to order at 9:08 A.M.

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

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

Commissioners Absent: Rhonda Sheridan

President Ferrara welcomed the attendees to the meeting this Wednesday morning, acknowledging Ginger Cangelosi and Jason Richard with the Tangipahoa Economic Development Foundation, and Richard Meek with Action 17 News. Others in attendance included Patrick Dufresne, Executive Director, and Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant.

Former commissioner William Joubert was unable to attend the meeting today for the plaque presentation and said maybe he could attend next month. The administrative assistant will reach out to him prior to the next meeting.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES**

It was moved by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the regular meeting agenda for August 14, 2024, as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims. Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

President Ferrara told the commissioners that the minutes from the July 23, 2025 meeting were sent electronically and the administrative assistant said 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 July 23, 2025. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

Port accountant Lee Barends was unable to attend the meeting today. Treasurer DePaula reviewed the financial reports with the commissioners. He said the revenues for July were $129,366.66 and expenses were $218,717.32, that while it was negative for the month, overall, the year was positive. Vice President Roper reminded Treasurer DePaula that the commission agreed to pay the insurance premium in full last month since there were funds in the bank, and this is why the insurance expense was so high this month. There were no questions on the revenue reports. He continued with the Edward Jones report and said that one CD would be due in October, and that there was $87,791.42 available to be moved from the operating account to the Edward Jones account. A motion to move the money from the operating account to the Edward Jones account was not necessary due to the investment policy in place. There were no questions. A motion was made by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula to approve the financial reports for July, 2025. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

**OLD BUSINESS**



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

The port’s attorney, Andre Coudrain was unable to attend the meeting today. Mr. Dufresne said Mr. Coudrain would give his report at the next meeting.

1. **LA-DOTD Port Priority Program Application – update**
2. **Resolution**

Mr. Dufrene reminded the commissioners that at the last meeting the port engaged an engineer to address the warehouse building #2 track drainage issue. He said there is a LA-DOTD resolution that starts the process to advertise the project once the engineering work is completed.

A resolution was introduced by Treasurer DePaula as follows:

WHEREAS, South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission has submitted an application for funding of the Port Manchac Site Improvement and Infrastructure Improvements & Rehabilitation, Building 2 Rail Track Drainage port improvement project under the Port Construction and Development Priority Program; and

WHEREAS, the State’s share of the project funds have been made available and the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission has available its local matching share of the project funds in an amount of not less than ten (10%) percent; and

WHEREAS, at the request of this South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission, GIS Engineering, LLC has prepared plans and specifications for said project, which plans and specifications are designated by State Project No. H.016453 (321); and

WHEREAS, this South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission has reviewed the plans, specifications and cost estimate and has submitted them to the Department of Transportation and Development. The South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission will accept the final plans and specifications **contingent** on the Department of Transportation and Development’s final approval inasmuch as they comply with the requirements of the Port Construction and Development Priority Program; and

WHEREAS, all necessary servitudes, rights-of-way, spoil disposal areas, rights of ingress and egress and the means thereof have been acquired by this South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission, and the titles thereto are valid and indefeasible; and

WHEREAS, this South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission has obtained all necessary permits required for the construction of this project; and

WHEREAS, South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission has agreed to accomplish all necessary utilities, fence and other facilities relocations and alterations made necessary by this project; and

WHEREAS, the Official Journal for the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission is The Tangi Times, whose mailing address is 1579 US-51, Ponchatoula, LA 70454, and whose telephone number is (985) 467-0096; and

WHEREAS, this South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission desires to advertise for competitive bids, in accordance with LRS 38:2212, et seq., for the award of a contract in the name of the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission, and furnish engineering services during the progress of the work.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission, in Regular session assembled on this 14th day of August, 2025, that the Department of Transportation and Development be and hereby is requested to authorize the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission to advertise for competitive bids in accordance with LRS 38:2212, et seq., for the award of a contract in the name of South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission, covering the aforesaid improvements.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development be and hereby is assured that all necessary servitudes, rights-of-way, rights of ingress and egress and the means thereof have been obtained by South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission, and the titles thereto are valid and indefeasible and South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission expressly agrees to defend any action for the failure of any servitude, right-of-way, right of ingress or egress, and South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission does hereby assume complete responsibility for providing engineering services during construction and the maintenance and upkeep of the project after construction.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development be and hereby is assured that all required permits have been obtained by South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development be and hereby is assured that South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission has available its local matching funds in an amount not less than ten (10%) percent of the total project cost to insure construction of this project.

BE IT RESOLVED that South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission will and hereby does assume complete responsibility for all utilities, fence, and other facilities relocations and alterations made necessary by this project.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission does hereby save and hold harmless the Department of Transportation and Development against any loss or damage of any kind incident to or occasioned by Activities undertaken in pursuance of this agreement and expressly agrees to defend any suit brought against the Department of Transportation & Development, and pay any judgment which may result from said suit as it relates to this project.

A motion was made by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula to approve the LA-DOTD resolution as introduced by Treasurer DePaula. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

**3. Barge dock repair project - update**

**a) Resolution**

Mr. Dufresne reminded the commissioners that the engineering agreement for the barge dock repair project was updated at the last meeting. He said there will also be a complementary geotechnical engineering agreement for the project, and that the original engineers had been identified, which will save some time and money, and they are reviewing the original data. Mr. Dufresne said the engineering company had indicated the need for one additional drilling bore, and this would add somewhat to the cost. He hoped to have the additional information at the next STPPC meeting, and because of this, the resolution would be withdrawn today. He clarified to the commission that the dock would be going from 33 wood piles to 11 steel piles that would take weight from the top and side, and this the why the engineering needs to be recalculated for the new fender system. He said this would make the dock stronger and be a good improvement. Treasurer DePaula asked if there was a timeline for the repairs, and Mr. Dufresne said there would be a little bit of a delay with the boring work, but hopefully the bidding process could start by the end of the year. Vice President Roper asked if this was included in the previously approved engineering costs and Mr. Dufresne said yes. He said he would send the proposal for the soil boring work for review, hopefully before the next STPPC meeting. He explained again that the resolution for today would be withdrawn until next month, as he is waiting for additional information from the engineering company.

**4. Invoice Payment Approval**

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

1. Cashe Coudrain & Bass

Services rendered through July 31, 2025

Inv# 131672 Matter # 4623-1 Amt.$ 620.00

Inv# 131671 Matter # 4623-13 Amt.$ 172.00

Total Amt.$ 792.00

Treasurer DePaula said the invoices were reasonable and made a motion, which was seconded by Vice President Roper, to approve payment for the invoices presented today for Cashe Coudrain and Bass. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

1. M&R Resources, LLC

Electrical repairs completed at the port

Inv# 4674 Amt.$ 13,000.00

Mr. Dufresne said this invoice was for work done on the Warehouse Building #2 roof repair project, which included taking down conduit and installing a new LED lighting system. He clarified to Vice President Roper that the lighting included the rail dock and inside the building itself. The repairs were approved in 2023 by the commission. A motion was made by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula to approve the invoice for M&R Resources, LLC. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

**5. Litigation – update**

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

**Docket # 20240004367**

1. **Executive Session**

The litigation update was not provided, as Mr. Coudrain was not at the meeting today. The commission did not go into executive session. No action was taken.

Before moving forward, several commissioners asked about an agreement found in their folders from Sheriff Gerald Sticker. Mr. Dufresne said that the agenda should be amended to add this request from the Tangipahoa Sherriff’s office for a “Memorandum of Understanding” (MOU) to engage with the port, that they are in process of applying for a grant to obtain a marine vessel that would be doing security patrols in the Port Manchac North Pass area. Vice President Roper made a motion to amend the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Sims, to add the Memorandum of Understanding agreement from the Tangipahoa Sheriff’s office as “new business” on the agenda for August 14, 2025. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff’s office**

Mr. Dufresne continued and said the MOU does not obligate the commission financially but will assist the Tangipahoa Sherriff’s office when they apply for a grant, that they have a connection to the port. He said maybe in the future the commission could utilize their services for future port funding. A discussion was had regarding the wording of the MOU agreement. Vice President Roper did not agree with some of the wording, but Treasurer DePaula and President Ferrara were both “OK” with the agreement. A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Commissioner Sims to enter into an agreement with the Tangipahoa Parish Sherrif’s office for the Memorandum of Understanding. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan.

**REMARKS**

Vice President Roper asked if there was a security plan at the port. Mr. Dufresne said that all first responders would be notified of any incidents, that there is a protocol in order of who to contact, namely the Louisiana State Police, Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff’s office, etc. Vice President Roper suggested that Mr. Dufresne review the security plan, to ensure everything is up-to-date, and to put the current date on the plan. Mr. Dufresne agreed and said that was a good idea.

Vice President Roper asked Mr. Dufresne about the 5-year Master Plan for the port and whether he had investigated getting this done. Mr. Dufresne said he had two quotes, and he is waiting for a third. He said that President Ferrara had suggested there may be someone with Small Business Development (SBD) at Southeastern that could help facilitate this task. The administrative assistant said she had reached out to Mr. William Ricks with the SBD office to ask for a meeting to discuss this possibility but was unsuccessful. Vice President Roper suggested reaching out to other ports for information. Mr. Dufresne said he had a couple of quotes and one quote for certain that could be utilized. Vice President Roper said she hoped it wouldn’t be over $25,000.00, and if it was, more quotes would be needed. Mr. Dufresne said he would talk to Mr. Ricks regarding his expertise with this kind of project, and Vice President Roper suggested not waiting on the SBD, holding up the quotes already received. Mr. Dufresne said he should have third quote by the next STPPC meeting to move forward, and that Hurricane Ida delayed getting this done.

President Ferrara asked about the gate at the port, and Mr. Dufresne said the new security system at the port it was working perfectly, and that it is cloud based ethernet and works quickly. President Ferrara asked about the truck scale, and Mr. Dufresne said that the truck scale was also working very well with no problems. Vice President Roper asked if there was a lot of traffic using the truck scale, and Mr. Dufresne said there many trucks coming in and out daily for Premier Chemicals. He also said the A/C is working well inside the container. President Ferrara also asked about the drainage project behind the buildings, and Mr. Dufresne said this would be addressed in the LA-DOTD project, as noted in today’s resolution.

A motion was made by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula to adjourn the regular meeting. Motion passed. Yeas: 4 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sheridan

Mr. Dufresne thanked everyone for coming. The meeting adjourned at 9:31 AM.

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Rhonda Sheridan, Secretary STPPC Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC