**SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025 9:00AM**

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

President Daryl Ferrara called the public hearing to order on Wednesday, February 12, 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 with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Rhonda Sheridan.

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

Commissioners Absent: None

President Ferrara welcomed the attendees to the meeting, which included Patrick Dufresne, STPPC Executive Director; Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant; Lee Barends, ITL Accounting; Andre Coudrain, Cashe Coudrain and Bass; Ginger Cangelosi, Tangipahoa Parish Economic Development Foundation and Richard Meek, Action 17 News. He also congratulated Commissioner Sims on the birth of his son, William Henry.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES**

It was moved by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sheridan that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the regular meeting agenda for February 12, 2025, as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan Nays: 0 Absent: 0

President Ferrara announced that the minutes of the regular meeting on January 8, 2025 had been sent to the Commissioners electronically for review, and a copy of the minutes had been placed in their meeting folders. After a brief review of the minutes, a motion was made by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner DePaula to adopt/approve the minutes from the regular meeting on January 8, 2025. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan Nays: 0 Absent: 0

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

The financial reports ending January 2025 had been emailed to the Commissioners for their review. Port accountant Lee Barends reviewed the financials with the Commissioners. Ms. Barends said for the month of January the total revenues were $165,819.33, and total expenses were $29,220.54, leaving a net income of $136,598.79. She said she found nothing out of the ordinary, that there was nothing outstanding. Ms. Barends asked if there were any questions or concerns about the income statements, and there were none. She also told the Commissioners that the administrative assistant was no longer collecting reimbursement from Air Products for the small Entergy bill at the port. The administrative assistant confirmed that reimbursement for the utilities would not be collected until Air Products returns to the port, by the decision of the port director.

Continuing with the balance sheet report, Ms. Barends said the total amount in the general operating account was $372,041.30, and that with approval today she would contact the port’s financial advisor, Shaun McArthur, to move any monies in excess of $250,000.00 from the general account to Edward Jones. Also, under current assets, the Edward Jones account is down to $111,467,68, as monies have been moved over to other assets, such as bonds, mutual funds, etc., and this is reflected in the report.

In general, Ms. Barends said she thought January financials “looked pretty good.” Ms. Barends reminded everyone that insurance for the port would be coming up in the summer, and that the Commission might want to hold transferring the overage monies to Edward Jones to have the cash available for the insurance premiums. The Commissioners agreed with Ms. Barends. There were no questions.

It was moved by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sheridan that the Commission accept/approve the financials for the month ending January 31, 2025. Motion passed.

Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan Nays: 0 Absent: 0

**2025 BUDGET – UPDATE**

Ms. Barends discovered an error on the 2025 Budget under the payroll tax expense. The amount shown is $23,000.00 but should be $2,300.00. She said the budget would need to be modified and amended. A motion was made by Commissioner Roper, seconded by Commissioner DePaula to amend the 2025 Budget to correct the payroll tax expense to show $2,300.00. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan Nays: 0 Absent: 0

**OLD BUSINESS**



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

Executive Director Patrick Dufresne said that the port’s attorney had been in touch with the tenant about the lease. Mr. Andre Coudrain said that Premier Chemicals is exploring the possibility of getting insurance on the buildings as a tenant. He said he had not yet heard back from them, that they may be having the same issues trying to find a market for the insurance. Mr. Coudrain said the rent, the term and the insurance option are still under negotiation. He said with the existing lease, the primary term goes to 2038, with extensions to push out another 20 years, and that the other lease (on warehouse building #2) is monthly. A brief discussion was had about the possibility of having some policy duplications. Mr. Coudrain said there are still a lot of moving parts with the lease, until we know more about where we are with the insurance.

Commissioner/Vice President Roper said she had attended a recent Tangipahoa Economic Development Foundation (TEDF) meeting and said Daniel Laborde and Beezie Landry offered to review the lease from a real estate point of view to give the STPPC feedback, if no objection from the board. Ginger Cangelosi, TEDF Executive Director, told the Commissioners that Daniel Laborde is the current TEDF President, and his background is in commercial real estate. She said Beezie Landry works for Stirling Properties, and both are very well versed in commercial real estate leases. There were no objections from the Commissioners. Mr. Coudrain said he would email Mr. Landry to discuss reviewing the lease.

President Ferrara asked about the maintenance plan with the tenant, and whether it was still ongoing. Mr. Coudrain said the maintenance had been completed, that a report with photographs had been provided, and that the tenant had an obligation to maintain it under this lease. He said the board could hire someone to perform an inspection and that previously the possibility of getting a baseline had been discussed. Commissioner DePaula said he thought it was important to get a baseline before the lease was signed, and the Commissioners agreed. There were no additional questions.

1. **Prospective Tenant(s) – update**

Mr. Dufresne said that since the last STPPC meeting he had been contacted by a company interested in doing a rail-to-truck transload project, and that the company is doing their research. He said he would provide an update at the next STPPC meeting.

1. **Invoice Payment Approval**

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

1. Cashe Coudrain & Bass

 Services rendered through December 31, 2024

Inv# 130184 Matter # 4623-1 Amt. $ 240.00

Inv# 130185 Matter # 4623-4 Amt. $ 200.00

Inv# 130320 Matter # 4623-13 Amt. $ 899.75 Total Amt. $ 1,339.75

A motion was made by Commissioner Sheridan and seconded by Commissioner Roper that the Commission approve payment for the invoices presented today for Cashe, Coudrain & Bass. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 0

1. Fontenot Benefits & Actuarial Consulting

Professional Services rendered in 2024 - Actuarial valuation of

post-employment benefits to comply with GASB 75 Amt. $1,750.00

President Ferrara asked what the invoice was for, and the port director explained it was part of the annual audit process.

A motion was made by Commissioner Roper and seconded by Commissioner Sheridan that the Commission approve payment for the invoice presented today for Fontenot Benefits & Actuarial Consulting. Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 0

1. Ports Association of Louisiana (PAL)

Annual membership dues 2025 Amt. $2,200.00

A motion was made by Commissioner Sheridan and seconded by Commissioner Sims that the Commission approve payment for the invoice presented today for Ports Associate of Louisiana (PAL). Motion passed. Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 0

Commissioner/Vice President Roper asked to be informed when the PAL meeting is scheduled for this year and encouraged the others to attend. Mr. Dufresne said the meeting would be held this coming March in Baton Rouge, LA. He said there would be an evening event and daytime meeting the following day, and said he would have the administrative assistant email the meeting information to the Commissioners.

1. **Litigation – update**

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

**Docket # 20240004367**

1. **Executive Session**

Mr. Coudrain recommended the Commission enter into Executive session to discuss the litigation update. A motion was made by Commissioner DePaula and seconded by Commissioner Roper to go into executive session to discuss the litigation matter. A roll call vote was held: Yeas: 5 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sims, Sheridan. Nays: 0 Absent: 0

Approximately 30 minutes later the meeting resumed back into regular session. There were no votes or action taken during the executive session.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**REMARKS**

Executive Director Patrick Dufresne thanked everyone for attending the meeting today.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 AM.

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Rhonda Sheridan, Secretary STPPC Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC