

Minutes of Port Commission Regular Meeting  
September 24, 2020  
Via Video/Teleconference

Notice is hereby given that in accordance with the order the Office of the Governor issued March 16, 2020, and due to imminent threat to public health and safety and urgent public necessity, the Port Freeport Port Commission will conduct a Regular Meeting on Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. by video/teleconference initiated from the Administration Building, 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, Texas. In order to meet CDC guidelines for social distancing and slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the public can join the video/teleconference meeting by following the instructions below. When the spread of COVID-19 is no longer an imminent threat to our community, in-person meetings will resume.

The meeting will not be open for the public to physically attend the meeting, but the Port welcomes the public to attend virtually. Public comment will be available at the beginning of the meeting on the agenda item indicated below. Following public comment, the public will not be permitted to communicate with the Port Commission.

This meeting agenda and agenda packet is posted online at [www.portfreeport.com](http://www.portfreeport.com)

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Commissioners present:

Mr. Shane Pirtle, Chairman  
Mr. Paul Kresta, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Rudy Santos, Secretary  
Mr. John Hoss, Asst. Secretary  
Mr. Ravi Singhania, Commissioner  
Mr. Dan Croft, Commissioner

Staff Members Present:

Mr. Jason Cordoba, Legal Counsel  
Ms. Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO  
Mr. Rob Lowe, Director of Administration/CFO  
Mr. Al Durel, Director of Operations  
Mr. Chris Hogan, Director of Protective Services  
Mr. Jason Hull, Director of Engineering  
Mr. Jason Miura, Director of Business & Economic Development  
Mr. Mike Wilson, Director of Economic Development & Freight Mobility  
Mr. Brandon Robertson, Network Systems Manager  
Ms. Missy Bevers, Executive Assistant

Ms. Mary Campus, Controller  
Ms. Jessica Follett, Public Affairs Manager

Also, present via teleconference:

Mr. Bob Arroyave, BGE, Inc.  
Mr. Tomas Lis, Horizon Auto Logistics  
Mr. Mike Hayes, Texas Port Ministry  
Ms. Jackie Ming, Weeks Marine  
Mr. Jeff Taylor, Freese & Nickols  
Mr. Joe Smith

Commissioner Pirtle stated the following information...

Today is September 24, 2020, and the time is 1:00 p.m. This is the regular meeting of the Port Commission. I am Shane Pirtle, Chairman. We are conducting this meeting by video/telephone conference pursuant to Governor Abbott's order suspending certain provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act in order to minimize the impact of the coronavirus outbreak. This meeting is being recorded as required by the Texas Open Meetings Act.

With the posting of today's meeting a toll-free call in number was indicated on the agenda, along with the agenda packet. Both may be found on the Port's website [www.portfreeport.com](http://www.portfreeport.com). Additionally, the public may join the meeting from a computer, tablet or smartphone or by phone using the toll-free call in number.

This meeting will not be open for the public to physically attend the meeting, but the Port welcomes the public to attend virtually. Public comment will be available at the beginning of the meeting as indicated on the agenda. Following public comment, the public will not be permitted to communicate with the Port Commission.

In the event any member of the public is having any technical difficulty during the meeting, please call (979) 233-2667, and someone will assist you.

Being considerate of all participants on this call today, we respectfully request everyone "mute" their phones unless you are speaking.

An Executive Session was noticed on the published agenda and will occur unless otherwise indicated during the meeting. It will be announced prior to this body going into Executive Session. During Executive Session the public will not be permitted to hear the meeting, as is the case under the Texas Open Meetings Act.

1. CONVENE OPEN SESSION in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:
2. Invocation – Mr. Mike Hayes, Texas Port Ministry
3. Roll Call – Commissioner Pirtle stated that Commissioner Singhanian and Commissioner Hoss were present online. Those present in the board room (at a safe distance) included himself, Commissioners Kresta, Commissioner Croft, Phyllis Saathoff – CEO and Jason Cordoba – Legal Counsel. He noted Commissioner Santos will be joining the meeting later. Ms. Saathoff noted additional staff in the room.
4. Public Comment – There were no public comments.

5. Approval of minutes from a Regular Meeting held September 10, 2020.

A motion was made by Commissioner Croft to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kresta with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

6. Receive reports from Executive Staff on activities and matters related to COVID-19 health safety matters, administrative affairs, financial results, facility engineering matters, operations and vessel activity, port safety matters, port security matters, Port tenant updates, USCOE, and other related port affairs.

A. Executive Director/CEO

Ms. Saathoff reported on Tropical Storm Beta and the coordination efforts by the Port Freeport team in advance of the storm. Outreach efforts continue in Washington, DC with virtual meetings scheduled with the Port's delegation, ASA's office as well as the USACOE to bring them up to date on Port's channel project. The Galveston District awarded contract for Reach 3 to Great Lakes Dredge and Dock. A project schedule has been requested. Asst. Secretary of the Army RD James was recognized as the Port Person of the Year during the virtual AAPA Annual Convention this week. Alan Clarke with HGAC is retiring and will be recognized during tomorrow's Transportation Policy Council meeting. Ms. Saathoff participated in the virtual AAPA Annual Convention this week and noted that Chris Connor, President and CEO of AAPA will join the Port's next virtual commission meeting to discuss changes in the organization and explain his vision moving forward. Ms. Saathoff will participate virtually in the Port Authority Advisory Committee meeting and Texas Ports Association meeting next week. Ms. Follett, Public Affairs Manager gave an update on the Port's Annual Golf Tournament scheduled for October 19 at the Wilderness which will benefit Texas Port Ministry. 55 sponsors have been secured and committed a total of \$55,600. 33 teams have been filled and due to the current environment, the tournament is limited to 36 teams with a single-flight format.

B. Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Lowe gave a presentation regarding the financial results for August.

C. Director of Engineering

Mr. Hull reported on the progress of the Berth 8 project. He also shared a picture of the new bollard that will be installed at Dock 5. Additionally, he noted that Dr. Edmund Russo has been promoted and will be leaving the team at the Galveston District. Byron Williams is currently serving as the temporary interim deputy district engineer.

D. Director of Operations

With regard to tropical storm Beta, Mr. Durel reported on the status of the ship channel which was opened to limited draft vessels the afternoon of September 22 with normal operations resuming the morning of September 23. For the month of August, the Port handled 15 Ro/Ro vessels and 11,196 vehicles. The YTD vessel total is 106 and 10 vessels are scheduled for September. LNG has 3 vessels, expecting 10 in September and 74 YTD. The Port handled 11 containers vessels in August bringing the total to 141 YTD with 12 expected this month. In addition to monitoring storms and participating on PCT calls, Mr. Hogan continues to stay active with the Port and all agencies regarding COVID-19 and keeping staff up to date. Mr. Durel noted that Mr. Joe Williams with the Velasco Drainage District will begin participating on the Lone Star Harbor Safety

Committee and will be included on the notification list with the PCT. Commissioner Pirtle requested staff to include a more detailed report with regard to safety incidents.

E. Director of Business & Economic Development

In addition to his written report, Mr. Miura noted that Port Freeport has 750 total vessel calls port wide this year, which is a 12% increase over 2019 YTD numbers. He also noted that today is World Maritime Day.

7. Receive report from Commissioners on matters related to:

A. September 23 Finance Advisory Committee

Commissioner Singhanian reported the committee discussed Cemex and plan moving forward.

B. September 23 Operations, Safety & Security Advisory Committee

Commissioner Hoss reported the committee had an executive session discussion regarding property evaluations.

C. Meetings and conferences attended, Port presentations, Rail District and other related Port Commission matters.

Commissioner Singhanian reported attending several virtual chamber luncheons and the Port Visit by Mayor Zimmerman and Cody Vasut. He also participated in the virtual AAPA Annual Convention this week as well.

Commissioner Pirtle also reported participating in AAPA Annual Convention and the 36A Coalition Townhall.

Commissioner Hoss reported participating in various virtual meetings including Angleton Chamber and Port of Galveston.

Commissioner Croft reported participating in the 36A Coalition Townhall, Economic Development Alliance meeting and the Jones Creek Volunteer Fire Department BBQ Fundraiser.

8. Approval of financial reports presented for the period ending August 31, 2020.

A motion was made by Commissioner Singhanian to approve the reports. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hoss with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION in accordance with Subchapter D of the Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:

A. Under authority of Section 551.072 (Deliberation Concerning Real Property Matters) for discussion regarding:

1. Discussion regarding the potential exchange, lease, or value of real property located in Freeport, Texas, including but not limited to the are known as the East End of Freeport and bordered by or adjacent to the following streets: FM1495; East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street; Terminal Street and East 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Freeport, Texas.

2. The potential purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property located at Port Freeport, including but not limited to the real property located at and contiguous to Berths 1, 2, 5 and 7.
  3. The potential exchange, lease, or value of real property located at Port Freeport, including but not limited to Parcel 14 and Surfside Lots.
- B. Under authority of Section 551.074 (Deliberation of Personnel Matters) for discussion regarding:
1. Discussion regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties of a public officer or employee, including but not limited to: Executive Director/CEO.

10. RECONVENE OPEN SESSION:

Ms. Saathoff noted for the record that Commissioner Santos joined the meeting during executive session at 2:32 p.m.

11. Adjourn.

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 PM.