

Minutes of Pilot Commission  
Port Freeport  
October 8, 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 Pilot Commission will conduct a Special Meeting on Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, Texas in part by video/teleconference in order to advance the public health goal of limiting face-to-face meetings (also called "social distancing") to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

The meeting agenda and agenda packet are 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/Treasurer  
Mr. John Hoss, Commissioner  
Mr. Ravi Singhania, Commissioner  
Mr. Dan Croft, Commissioner

Staff Members present:

Mr. Jason Cordoba, Legal Counsel  
Ms. Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO  
Mr. Al Durel, Director of Operations  
Mr. Rob Lowe, Director of Administration/CFO  
Mr. Brandon Robertson, Network Systems Manager  
Ms. Missy Bevers, Executive Assistant  
Mr. Jason Hull, Director of Engineering  
Mr. Jason Miura, Director of Business & Economic Development  
Ms. Mary Campus, Controller

Also, Present:

Capt. Daniel Blanton, Brazos Pilots Association  
Capt. Ross Coviello, Brazos Pilots Association  
Mr. Chris Noble, Dole Fresh Fruit

Commissioner stated the following...

Today is October 8, 2020, and the time is 12:00 p.m. This is a special meeting of the Pilot 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. Roll Call.  
Commissioner Pirtle stated that those present in the board room (at a safe distance) included himself, Commissioners Kresta, Commissioner Croft, Commissioner Hoss, Phyllis Saathoff – CEO and Jason Cordoba – Legal Counsel. Commissioner Singhania and Commissioner Santos were present online.
3. Public Comment.  
There were no public comments.
4. Approval of minutes from the Special Meeting held July 23, 2020.

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

5. Receive update from the Brazos Pilots Association regarding 2020 vessel traffic, financial report, pilot boat fee collection and expenditures and other pilot matters.

Captain Blanton updated the Board on the boat fee funds collected as well as the loan balance stating the funds received YTD total \$297,673.60 while the monthly average is at \$33,460.57. The boat loan balance is \$1,894,451.14 and the checking account balance (held in case of business interruption) is currently \$143,019.96. The last draw amount was \$107,987 and the monthly payment is \$17,912.07. YTD the education fund has received \$29,496.86 with a monthly average of \$3,304.22. Currently the balance in the account is \$69,488.78. Monies are generated from a \$17.22 flat fee charged for each vessel transfer. The education fund has been used to train pilots in the past using a budget that allows training to that budget. Moving forward, Captain Blanton wants to target training and create a budget that will accomplish this. This would include more training outside of core skillsets for pilots. Additional training would also include refine skills in water rescue, deckhand specific training, CPR and AED training for all employees and media training. Captain Blanton also updated the Board on Noah Niday's progress in the Deputy Pilot program sharing a slide of his trip log summary noting that YTD he has 617 on the channel and is working out very well.

6. Receive presentation from the Brazos Pilots Association regarding their request for adjustment to the pilot tariff submitted October 1, 2020.

Captain Blanton gave a presentation regarding the Pilots 2020 request for tariff adjustment. He discussed in detail the proposed changes which include the following...

- Communications Fee
- Increase in Pilotage Rates for 5 years
- 2nd Pilot Boat
- Adding Deck Hands
- Change in Education Fee
- Minimum Draft
- Minimum Units
- Deep Draft Charge

7. Review and discuss a tentative meeting schedule for Pilot Commission's consideration of the Brazos Pilot Association's application for rate adjustment.

Ms. Saathoff clarified that the last day a written objection could be filed with the Pilot Commission would be October 21. The last day the Commission can act on rate request. After discussing dates, the Commission proposed October 29 to hold a meeting to discuss the rate adjustment or hold a hearing in the event an objection is timely filed. At this time, no objections have been filed.

8. 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 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney):

1. Consultation with attorney regarding legal matters related to Brazos Pilots Association request for adjustment to pilot tariff dated October 1, 2020.

9. RECONVENE OPEN SESSION:

10. Adjourn.

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 1:59 p.m.