

October 15, 2021

These are the minutes of the regular meeting of the Port Authority Advisory Committee (the Committee) held on October 15, 2021, via in-person and conference call due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was called to order at 9:10 am by acting Chair Phyllis Saathoff with the following committee members present:

Port Authority Advisory Committee:

Phyllis Saathoff	Chair - Port Freeport – In Person
Chris Fisher	Port of Beaumont - In Person
Roger Guenther	Port Houston - Online
Ron Mills	Port of Port Mansfield - Absent
Rodger Rees	Port of Galveston - Online
Walker Smith	Port of Harlingen - Absent
Sean Strawbridge	Port of Corpus Christi - Online
Alan Ritter	Speaker of the House Appointee - Absent
Michael Plank	Lt. Governor Appointee - Absent

A Public Notice of this meeting containing all items on the proposed agenda was filed in the Office of the Secretary of State at 1:18 pm on September 10, 2021, as required by Government Code, Chapter 551, referred to as “The Open Meetings Act.”

ITEM 1. Call to order.

The Port Authority Advisory Committee Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Phyllis Saathoff at approximately 9:10 am.

ITEM 2. Introduction of committee members and TxDOT staff.

Phyllis Saathoff, Chair, asked committee members, TxDOT, and guests to introduce themselves. All present PAAC members are listed above; four members were absent.

ITEM 3. Approval of the June 11, 2021 meeting minutes. (Action)

Sean Strawbridge, Port of Corpus Christi, requested an amendment to the June 2021 meeting minutes; the statement questioning whether the State of Texas should start their own state Port Authority was taken out of context. The June 2021 minutes were amended to reflect his intended meaning that in the absence of a state-wide port authority, Texas ports should be better coordinated when competing for federal dollars.

Rodger Rees seconded the motion for amendment of the June 11, 2021 meeting minutes.

ITEM 4. Presentation on U.S. Maritime Administration Grants

Mr. Brian Hill, Western Gulf Gateway Director, MARAD, presented on U.S. Maritime Administration Grants, providing an overview of the program, funding, and eligibility.

- America's Marine Highway Grant Program
- Port Infrastructure Development Grants
- Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program
- USDOT's Build America Bureau (Loan & Credit Programs available)

Mr. Hill announced that the President appointed Ann Phillips to serve as the Administrator of the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD). Ann Phillips is a retired U.S. rear admiral and currently the first Special Assistant to the Governor of Virginia for Coastal Adaptation and Protection. At the Maritime Administration, we will have Ann Phillips as Administrator and Lucinda Leslie as Deputy.

There were no questions for Mr. Brian Hill.

Please see attachment 4 for more details.

ITEM 5. Update on the Federal Infrastructure Package and Appropriation Bills

Melanie Alvord, State Legislative Affairs, TxDOT, presented the presentation.

In August, the Senate passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which includes five years of funding for the highway reauthorization program, currently known as the FAST Act. This infrastructure bill is now sitting in the House while progressives wait to see if the Build Back Better Act, a \$3.5 trillion bill for social programs, passes before passing the infrastructure bill.

Infrastructure Investment and Job Act (IIJA)

- Federal-Aid Highway
 - Reducing Truck Emissions at Port
- Multimodal and Freight Transportation
 - Improving State Freight Plans
- Appropriations Title III
 - Energy & Water Development & Related Agencies

MARAD & Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) and
Marine Highways Program (MHP)

Build Back Better Act (Reconciliation)
Title IX, House Transportation Committee

FY 22 Energy & Water Appropriations Act (USACE Funding)

There were no questions for Ms. Melanie Alvord.

Please see attachment 5 for additional details.

ITEM 6. Update on the 2023 Texas Freight Mobility Plan.

Sherry Pifer, TxDOT Freight System Branch Manager, presented the presentation.

Ms. Pifer will go over a few things about the upcoming Texas Freight Mobility Plan that kicked off in August.

- New Freight Mobility Plan
- Adding in a supply chain input
- Stakeholder engagement
- Schedule
- Next steps

Ms. Pifer will send out an invitation to join the Gulf Coast Regional Workshop on Tuesday, November 2, 2021 from 1:00pm-3:00pm and the Texas Freight Advisory Committee (TxFAC) meeting on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 from 8:00am-12:00pm (Virtual Only).

There were no questions for Ms. Sherry Pifer.

Please see attachment 6 for more details.

Phyllis Saathoff, Chair, encourages PAAC members and other ports that are being represented online to be engaged in this process and be at the table. It's important to our respective ports and the State of Texas.

ITEM 7. Update on the 2022-2023 Texas Port Mission Plan.

Chris Levitz, PE, CFM AECOM, made the presentation.

Mr. Levitz spoke on the Mission Plan.

- Port Mission Plan Overview
- Port Connectivity Report
- Port Capital Program Report
- Ship Channel Improvement Report
- Schedule

Geir Eilif Kalhagen, TxDOT Maritime Division Director, addressed the real-time value the PMP brings and assured that old information is not influencing new decisions. Another component he would like to

document is items previously on the plan that have fallen off. Was it a lack of funding opportunities or not being able to follow through with the project? These details are valuable information and should be available to the readers of this report.

Phyllis Saathoff, Chair, included that the report is only as good as the input we provide to AECOM, so it's all up to us, The Ports, to deliver to them what they need to produce a quality report that hopefully helps us all achieve our goals and brings more funding to the State of Texas so the 9th Largest economy in the world can be appropriately supported.

Please see attachment 7 for more details.

ITEM 8. Approval of Rider 37 project list (Action).

***Phyllis Saathoff, Chair, requested to reorder ITEM 8. Approval of Rider 37 project list (Action) to occur before ITEM 4. Presentation on U.S. Maritime Administration Grants. ***

Geir Eilif Kalhagen, TxDOT Maritime Division Director, introduced the recommended project list for PAAC consideration scoring matrix that addresses the following,

- Connectivity,
- Congestion,
- Safety
- Economic impacts
- Project development status
- Regional and state benefits

Mr. Kalhagen read, in order, each port's name, Biennium year of the award, the submitted entity, and the Rider request.

Roger Guenther, Port Houston, noted that the month-old draft listing looked the same to him. No visual reports were sent out to explain how the final score or ranks were determined. Mr. Guenther just received the final report of the ranking and scoring for all projects.

Travis Milner, TxDOT, Maritime Division, explained that the process is very similar to how it was handled in the past but included a more comprehensive scoring matrix that focused on congestion, connectivity, safety, and economic impact in terms of potential job and business growth. It also reviewed whether projects provided additional regional or state benefits and if the Rider 37 funding would provide that gap filler to get a project out the door. The final category was whether a project was included in the current mission plan.

Mr. Guenther stated he was not questioning the process but would like to see why any port's project didn't make the list and how it was scored. Mr. Kalhagen addressed Mr. Guenther with acknowledgment of the request and stated that a list could be provided.

Chris Fisher, Port of Beaumont, agreed that it is good to follow up on this to see what projects were presented and know where the cut-off was.

Chris Fisher, Port of Beaumont, made a motion to approve the Rider 37 Project List. Phyllis Saathoff, Chair, Port Freeport, asked if Mr. Fisher wanted to include the 20% contribution variant on Port Isabel? This is in recognition that Port Isabel requested a lower match of 20% on their project rather than what was requested of 25% on the Rider application.

Mr. Fisher agreed. Sean Strawbridge 2nd to approve Rider 37 project with the Port Isabel Rehabilitation project variant with a 20% match. All PAAC panel members present agreed.

Phyllis Saathoff, Chair, Port Freeport, thanked everyone for their cooperation in moving this action item up on the agenda.

ITEM 9. Public Comments

Phyllis Saathoff, Chair, Port Freeport, opened the floor to those in the room.

Geir Eilif Kalhagen, TxDOT Maritime Division Director, congratulated Phyllis Saathoff, Chair, and the TPA, on hosting the AAPA Conference in Austin. The entire Western hemisphere came to Texas and got a taste of what the Texas ports were doing and walked away in awe. Mr. Kalhagen also wanted to acknowledge Sean Strawbridge being elected to the Board of Directors of the AAPA and he is proud to have a strong voice from the State of Texas at the national level.

Mr. Strawbridge suggested a new business item on the agenda to allow any PAAC member to introduce any new business items, particularly related to the development of interim charges. Not only funding but also policy. The question was asked for Mr. Strawbridge to articulate that in an email so it can be placed on an agenda.

Ms. Saathoff informed Mr. Strawbridge that he could introduce items under the public comment agenda item for discussion, but there would be no action.

ITEM 10. Adjourn.

With no further business, Phyllis Saathoff, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 11:02 am.

APPROVED:

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Phyllis Saathoff, Chairperson

Port Authority Advisory Committee