



6000 Doug Attaway Blvd. | Shreveport, LA 71115 | P (318) 524-2272 | F (318) 524-2273 | port@portcb.com | www.portcb.com

CADDO-BOSSIER PARISHES PORT COMMISSION
Special Board Meeting
Regional Commerce Center, 3rd Floor Board Room
6000 Doug Attaway Blvd., Shreveport, LA 71115
July 19, 2022 at 11:30 a.m.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER / OPENING REMARKS:** Commission President Walter O. Bigby, Jr. called the meeting to order at approximately 11:34 a.m. in the 3rd Floor Board Room of the Regional Commerce Center, 6000 Doug Attaway Blvd., Shreveport, Louisiana and welcomed everyone.
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Vice President William “Bill” R. Altimus led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3. ROLL CALL:** The roll was called by Executive Port Director Eric England. Commissioners in attendance included: Walter O. Bigby, Jr., William “Bill” R. Altimus, Sam N. Gregorio, Roy Griggs, and James D. Hall. Absent: Joshua K. Williams, Erica R. Bryant, Capt. Thomas F. Murphy (Ret.), and Rick C. Prescott. A quorum was present.
- 4. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:** Commissioner Bigby asked if there are any public comments on agenda items. Hearing no public comments, Commissioner Bigby moved on to the next agenda item.
- 5. LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:** Commissioner Bigby asked Ginger Adam Corley to present her report to the Commission.

Ms. Corley began by thanking the local Louisiana legislative delegation for its support during the legislative session. There were three legislative sessions this year, two special sessions for redistricting and one regular session, and her report focuses on the regular session. The state had an estimated \$2.9 billion in one-time money to spend which included \$1.4 billion in federal pandemic money, \$700 million in surplus funds from the last fiscal year, and \$853 million in current year excess funds. Most of the money spent by the Legislature was used on debt payments and road and bridge work, focusing on the Baton Rouge bridge, the Lake Charles bridge, and I-49 north and south.

As it relates to I-49 north, Senate Bill 277 takes vehicle sales tax money, up to \$160 million, and applies it to one of the following four projects: the Baton Rouge bridge, the Lake Charles bridge, I-49 north, and I-49 south. This is new funding that would allow for debt service for any entity that wants to issue bonds.

For this region, the lead discussion centered around the Jimmie Davis Road Bridge rehabilitation and what to do with the “old” bridge concerning the maintenance. Four local governing bodies have signed a memorandum of understanding and have transmitted it to the Department of Transportation for the smaller maintenance items like litter control. The Lieutenant

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.”

MEMBERS: *Walter O. Bigby Jr., President; Bill Altimus, Vice President; Joshua K. Williams, Secretary Treasurer; Erica R. Bryant; Sam N. Gregorio; Roy Griggs; James D. Hall; Capt. Thomas F. Murphy; Rick C. Prescott*

Governor is interested in it being converted into a linear park. It is currently up to DOTD as to how to use the allocated funding and a decision has not been made yet.

Moving on to Port Priority funding, which has \$39 million allocated for this year. The Port currently has a pending application for some of those funds. Next year, there is a plan to file for capital outlay, which has not been done in the past. Once a project has been identified, an application for capital outlay will be submitted.

There have been changes to the public bid law this year, as it relates to materials and supplies and vehicle purchases for law enforcement purposes. Other changes of note were to public records, regarding the custodian of records and the fees to be charged for records; a meeting will be set up with legal to discuss that in further detail.

Representative Mark Wright passed House Concurrent Resolution 107 which created a joint subcommittee of the House and Senate Transportation Committees to study port infrastructure strategies. The study is designed to collectively look at each port's purpose and how they benefit their region instead of competing with each other. Meetings will be held with Chairman Wright to discuss our Port's purpose as an industrial park and a transportation hub with rail, water, and trucking.

There have been many discussions regarding efforts and funding for a passenger railway from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. A bill was introduced to direct DOTD to proceed with this project and included talks on using money from north Louisiana. Consequently, there will be movement from DOTD to explore this project for our area. Benefits would include tourism and promotion of our industries.

Senator Patrick McMath passed Senate Resolution 191, which creates the Legislative Advisory Council on Public Contracts, Works, and Improvements. This study focuses on how political subdivisions perform its RFP process and public bids. Ms. Corley will be participating in this study to include the Port's input.

Last year, the largest focus was passing the Port's enabling legislation that solidified the Port's authority to operate as a port in both Caddo and Bossier Parishes. Additionally, the airports passed legislation that excluded security infrastructure and information from the public record. This includes blueprints, floor plans, and any rendering of security infrastructure that would no longer be a matter of public record. In hindsight, our legislation should have been amended to include this as a matter of security for ports. In the end, our sister ports were contacted and encouraged to start this initiative with the introduction of a new bill. The Ports Association of Louisiana endorsed House Bill 249 introduced by Representative Mark Wright and it was passed without opposition.

Ms. Corley went on to discuss several bills that did not pass during the legislative session that would have been of interest to the port.

Ms. Corley welcomed any questions from the Board and there were none.

Representative Larry Bagley was in attendance and had some comments regarding the bill he supported to provide \$1 million grant program for site development and improvements. This bill disperses its allocated funds to the eight regional economic development organizations. Next year, he will ask the legislation to fund this bill annually. Representative Bagley also traveled to Washington D.C. this year to discuss funding for I-49, I-69, and the passenger rail.

Commissioner Bigby asked Mr. England if he had any comments to include. Mr. England mentioned that the trip to Washington D.C. solidified the Port's need to submit an INFRA grant application as soon as possible to request funds to offset the 100% increase in construction costs on the I-69 service road project. We anticipate hearing some news this fall on the outcome of that INFRA grant application. Additionally, the I-69 project connector of SIU-15 was roughly a \$2 billion project, which qualifies it for the "mega" category in applying for funding under the infrastructure bill. The Port has received a proposal from an outside engineering firm to assist in the preparation of a grant application with the "mega" designation for the I-69 project. Mr. England thanked Representative Bagley in his support of the Port and economic development our area and for driving home the message of the importance of the transportation projects for the region. Roadway connectivity and rail are two of the most important concerns for economic development prospects and the I-69 project is of great interest for these prospective industries looking to locate to our region.

6. ADJOURN: Hearing no other comments or questions to come from the Board, Commissioner Bigby adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Joshua K. Williams

Joshua K. Williams
Secretary-Treasurer