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CADDO-BOSSIER PARISHES PORT COMMISSION
Special Board Meeting
Regional Commerce Center, 3rd Floor Board Room
6000 Doug Attaway Blvd., Shreveport, LA 71115
December 9, 2024 at 3:45 p.m.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER / OPENING REMARKS:** Commission Vice President Joshua K. Williams called the meeting to order at approximately 3:45 p.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:** Commissioner Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3. ROLL CALL:** The roll was called by Executive Port Director Eric England. Commissioners in attendance included: Joshua K. Williams, Judge Stephen V. Callaway (Ret.), Walter O. Bigby, Jr., Erica R. Bryant, Sam N. Gregorio, Roy Griggs, and Rick C. Prescott. Absent: William "Bill" R. Altimus and James D. Hall. A quorum was present.
- 4. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:** Commissioner Williams asked for any public comments on agenda items. Mr. England stated one public comment was received from Mr. David Hackney who wishes to speak on the agenda and meeting format. Mr. Hackney stated he reviewed the minutes of this meeting from one year ago and two years ago for the Update on Port Projects. Mr. Hackney asked if the format of the meeting will be to present the projects and then allow public comment? Mr. England noted this is the Commission's meeting to update adjoining landowners on the current projects in accordance with state law. It is the will of the Commission if comments are taken after the discussion of the Port projects. Mr. Hackney also asked how the adjacent landowners were notified of this meeting. Also, to comment on the meeting agenda, Mr. Hackney said none of the projects are listed on the agenda as items for discussion. Mr. Hackney suggested the topics of discussion should be listed on the agenda so that the landowners would know which items of interest will be discussed ahead of time. Hearing no further public comments, Commissioner Williams moved on to the next agenda item.
- 5. IN ACCORDANCE WITH La. R.S. 34:3159 (B)(2): UPDATE ON PROJECTS AFFECTING ADJACENT LANDOWNERS.** Mr. England began by stating this meeting is to update the Commission and local landowners of the current and upcoming Port projects. Using Google Earth, a map of the Port complex was shown on the screen as a visual aid during the presentation. The industrial complex was pointed out with the occupied sites outlined in red and the "available for lease" sites outlined in green. In 2011, when Benteler Steel came to the Port, the last remaining "mega" site was leased for industrial development. The Commission set forth with an expansion study which identified 23,000 acres in Caddo and Bossier Parishes suitable for industrial development. It was then the Port began acquiring an additional 2,000 acres between Highway 1 and Ellerbe Road, and the master planning for the newly acquired land began. This acreage also includes a mega site and multiple smaller sites for the Port's inventory. The Franks property, purchased a few weeks ago, is comprised of approximately 560 acres. Upon completing the due diligence for the purchase of the Franks tract, another adjacent 360-acre tract was identified with willing sellers. The closing on this 360-acre tract is scheduled for later this month.

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

MEMBERS: *Bill Altimus, President; Joshua K. Williams, Vice President; Judge Stephen V. Callaway (Ret.), Secretary Treasurer; Walter O. Bigby Jr.; Erica R. Bryant; Sam N. Gregorio; Roy Griggs; James D. Hall; Rick C. Prescott*

Together with the Franks property, this 360-acre tract will increase the Port's footprint by an additional 1,000 acres. The Commission will now have in its inventory 3,000 acres available to offer prospects for industrial development. With the expansion study, the Commission's goal was to acquire an additional 2,000-3,000 acres and that goal has now been completed.

The primary reason behind the purchase of the 560-acre Franks property is the **Heirloom Project**. The Heirloom site of 300+ acres is located on the Franks property and is part of a joint project for a carbon capture facility called Project Cypress. The remaining acreage on the Franks tract will be available for other development.

The **Red River Expressway** may also be located on the Franks property. Although at this time, the route has yet to be determined. At a recent meeting with DOTD, the area around 3132 and Flournoy Lucas Road appears to be LADOTD's desired intersection for the expressway. It will most likely travel somewhere in the general area, but will avoid the Project Cypress/Heirloom site.

The **newly acquired 1,000 acres** will require a Master Plan and is scheduled for 2025. Given its proximity to Flournoy Lucas Road and its residential area, the Port's typical heavy industrial sites will be avoided for this area to make way for commercial development. Several years ago, commercial development was explored for the eastern side of the Port's complex and it was quickly realized that area was not the ideal site. Commercial development will be complementary for the 360-acres, due to its proximity to the residential neighbors.

For 2025, on the west side of Highway 1, the 2+ miles of **UP railroad project** will be built in compliance with Union Pacific specifications to accommodate unit trains. A unit train is comprised of 100+ railcars and can be delivered to the Port without interrupting the main line railroad. Port staff has been working to finalize the details on the 99-year lease of the LSU Pecan Station Research property for this project.

The **Bossier Water Line** was recently completed which runs along Doug Attaway Boulevard, under Highway 1 and the railroad, and stubs out in the Robson property. According to the Master Plan and the budget, the water line will be extended westerly towards the MFE property. The funding is being held in escrow to be spent on this project. Recently there have been discussions for additional infrastructure on the Bossier side for a booster station to increase the reliability of the water pressure to the Port's sites.

The **I-69 Service Road** will connect the Port complex to I-49, approximately near the location of the Marketplace Chevrolet off of I-49. This project is currently in design with the Stanley Group and LADOTD. Staff recently attended a meeting to discuss the path moving forward. The INFRA grant funding was awarded this quarter in the amount of \$22 million and triggers an additional \$32 million in State funds to put toward this project. This project will be conducted with the right amount of evaluation but needs to move quickly in order to avoid the inflationary pressure on the amount of money spent. The sooner this project moves forward to bid, the better off we are with the current level of funding.

The **site optimization project** is one that will not affect adjacent landowners. One tract of land purchased included an airstrip which was a former crop-dusting operation. During the due diligence to purchase the property, the Phase I environmental site assessment indicated herbicides and pesticides were present in that area. Working with the LADEQ, an extra step will be taken in order to reduce any future environmental issues. The site will be capped to alter the purpose of the site and requires no further action from the Department of Environmental Quality or the EPA.

Also, **other projects not affecting other landowners**, road shoulder repairs within the Port complex and the newly completed 40,000 square foot warehouse will need rail access. Also, there are some General Cargo Dock repairs scheduled for 2025.

With gathering information for prospects, certain information on available sites is usually necessary to provide. A **cultural resources study** on the new property will need to be completed in order to be prepared for any new prospect. These studies are time consuming and very thorough but will put the Port one step ahead when prospects are interested in these sites.

Commissioner Gregorio asked about the I-69 Service Road path and whether or not the map shown on the screen was the “old” path, where one section changed to a more sweeping curve instead of a hard 90-degree angle shown on the screen. Mr. England stated the map has not been updated with a more recent design which changed to a more sweeping curve in that section. The difference is minimal, and the final design still has some leeway before the design engineers make the final decision. This area has already been studied for the Record-of-Decision for I-69 and as a result, minor changes to the Service road design have been identified.

Commissioner Williams asked for any questions from the public. Mr. David Hackney asked with respect to the I-69 Service Road project, are there at least two at-grade railroad crossings at Robson and another at Highway 1? Also, he asked for clarification on the new rail line and whether it would be closer to Highway 1 or further out to intersect with the I-69 Service Road. Mr. England stated the I-69 Service Road has the two current railroad crossings described and once the new line is built, it will also intersect with the I-69 Service Road. Mr. Hackney noted a news interview with Mr. England from October 17th this year, where Mr. England is quoted saying the I-69 Service Road will alleviate traffic on Highway 1 and 3132 by having a direct shot to the Port to I-49 so 18-wheelers can access the interstate system. If the I-69 Service Road will alleviate traffic on Highway 1 and 3132, why build the “Tim James road” through the newly acquired acreage and through 12 Oaks and Esplanade to connect with 3132? In the CEA with Caddo Parish, Mr. James says the road will be built on “private land”, but land owned by the Port is public land, which seems like a problem. From the minutes of this same meeting from 2022, it is mentioned the rail project will be in the \$20-25 million range and is necessary for Port operations on the western Port property. The 2023 meeting minutes state “tying into the Union Pacific railroad on the west Port property will bring rail access to these sites for future industries”, the budget states..... Commissioner Williams interrupted Mr. Hackney to ask if he had any direct questions on projects discussed during this meeting. Mr. Hackney asked if this railroad project was so important for the Port, why has there not been any progress on this project? Is it because all the available money has been spent on land acquisition instead? Mr. England noted the laws governing public entities require “design-bid-build” procedures. Governing authorities are strictly prohibited from commencing a project if all necessary land has not been acquired along with the proper servitudes as well as the necessary funding. The Port has not been able to move forward with the rail project without the executed lease for the LSU Pecan Station property. Staff has been on top of this project, but can only move as swiftly as the counterparty to that agreement. The Port cannot force another governing authority to sign a document. Commissioner Bryant noted money is placed in the budget for capital projects as an estimate for that time to give the initial funding to begin the process. That does not mean the project has been abandoned and further investigation has not been done to put additional funding in the budget for that project. Capital projects can take years to get started but begin by putting money in the budget for them. As earlier discussed, once the project begins, it may be determined the funding is inadequate due to inflation costs. The process for capital projects is lengthy and may not start the same year placed in the budget. Commissioner Bryant suggested that Mr. Hackney submit further questions to Mr. England. Commissioner Williams noted the public comment period was concluded.

6. **ADJOURN:** Hearing no other comments or questions to come from the Board, Commissioner Williams entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Callaway made the motion to adjourn, and Commissioner Griggs seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Stephen V. Callaway

Judge Stephen V. Callaway (Ret.)
Secretary-Treasurer