

**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE PORT OF NEW ORLEANS  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2024**

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**A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE PORT OF  
NEW ORLEANS, HELD IN THE FIRST FLOOR AUDITORIUM AT ITS OFFICE  
LOCATED AT 1350 PORT OF NEW ORLEANS PLACE, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA,  
WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN JOSEPH F. TOOMY AT 1:44 P.M.**

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**MEMBERS**

Joseph F. Toomy, Chairman

**PRESENT:**

Sharonda R. Williams, Secretary-Treasurer

Walter J. Leger, Jr., Member

Jeanne E. Ferrer, Member

Darryl D. Berger, Member

**MEMBER**

James J. Carter, Jr., Vice-Chairman

**ABSENT:**

Todd P. Murphy, Member

**STAFF:**

R. Wendel, Acting President & Chief Executive Officer

S. Porteous, Chief of Staff

J. Escudier, Executive Counsel

A. Evett, Chief of Infrastructure

A. Coates, Head of Business Development

Chief M. Montroll, Harbor Police Department

G. Brown, Chief of People & Culture

K. Gilmore, Director, Real Estate

C. Rollins, Director, Financial Reporting & Forecasting

B. Skaggs, Manager, Environmental

E. Lecompte, Manager, Environmental

S. Gauthier, Director, Cruises

J. Gommel, Manager Berthing

E. Gondek, Manager, Terminal Operations

A. Romanov, Manager, Engineering

S. Schexnayder, Director, Marketing & Communications

K. Curth, Press Secretary

K. Mills, Manager, Communications & Community Engagement

A. Randolph, Manager, Communications & Community Engagement

M. Singley, Board Secretariat

J. Fields, Marketing & Communications Officer

**GUESTS:**

T. Bryant, NOPB

C. Kocur, NOPB

S. McKenney, Global Maritime Ministries

P. Vandercook, Global Maritime Ministries

B. Rousselle, P.E.E.C.

E. Tesfaye, WWNO/WRKF

Cicada, NOSHIP

Sebastian, NOSHIP  
I. Heller, NOSHIP  
S. Miller  
G. Kessec  
A. Nash, NOSHIP  
S. Khan  
F. Allen  
K. Khandawdy  
H. Awyan

## **I. Roll Call & Determination of Quorum**

Following a roll call of Board members, Chairman Toomy confirmed a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:44 p.m.

## **II. Report by the President and Chief Executive Officer**

Mr. Wendel gave an overview of the July 2024 volumes and productivity statistics as well as a summary of the month's main events. He also congratulated the Employees of the Quarter as well as the three Harbor Police Officers who were recently promoted to the rank of lieutenant.

## **III. Public Comment**

Chairman Toomy called for public comment and Ms. Singley announced that seven (7) individuals had requested to make public comments on matters listed in the meeting agenda and seven (7) on matters of a general nature.

Prior to inviting the speakers to the podium, Ms. Singley read the Board's public comment parameters. Afterwards, Chairman Toomy read the following statement, issued on behalf of the Board, in response to some of the claims made by public speakers during previous Board meetings:

“This Board was formed by an Act of the State Legislature over 125 years ago and is charged under State law with the duty to facilitate the commerce and traffic of the Port of New Orleans. In that respect, under the State laws by which this Board is created, this Board's mission is to promote Louisiana's economy and create jobs both locally and in the region by driving international commerce through our port.

Under law, we do not have any control over the ports of origination nor of ultimate destination for vessels that call on our facilities. In fact, we cannot have any such control, as we are also subject to federal law with regard to international commerce. The power to set foreign policy lies exclusively with the federal government, and the power to enforce such policy, including the regulation of international commerce, is specifically granted under the Constitution to the United States Congress -- not this Board.

Over the past few months, this Board has listened to claims about instruments of war being moved through Port of New Orleans facilities. We have found nothing to confirm the assertions through the International Trade Commission data portal or otherwise. In fact, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection researched their export data for all shipments from Louisiana to Israel during the last year and could not validate any of the items referenced during public comments. Further, although in response to public comment we checked with federal agencies for information on this topic, to be clear, restrictions on the transit of international cargo are under the purview of the federal government, not this Board.

With regard to the non-binding letter of intent with the Port of Ashdod, this is similar to numerous other such agreements that the Board has signed with many ports worldwide. Again, under the State and Federal laws by which this Board is created and regulated, we have no power or authority to make political or moral judgements with respect to which ports or countries trade through the Port of New Orleans.”

Saya Miller, Keana Khandawdy, Soofia Khan, Israel Heller, Gina Kessec, Sebastian and Cicada expressed their opposition to Board Agenda Item C.

Felix Allen, Sebastian, Soofia Khan, Gina Kissec, Cicada, Heather Awyan expressed their opposition to the war in Gaza, the Innovation Embassy and any business partnership with the Port of Ashdod or Israel, and asked that all charges against Felix Allen be dropped by the City Attorney.

#### **IV. Approval of the Meeting Minutes for July 2024**

Chairman Toomy called for a motion to approve the public meeting minutes for July 2024, as previously circulated. Commissioner Leger moved to accept the minutes and Commissioner Williams seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **V. Action Items:**

##### **A. Acceptance of the Consolidated Financial Statements for July 2024**

Ms. Rollins presented the consolidated financial statements for the month of July, a copy of which is made a part of these minutes.. Commissioner Ferrer moved to approve the consolidated financial statements and Commissioner Williams seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

##### **B. Consider Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the President and Chief Executive Officer to Accept Project Completion with Orion Industrial Construction, LLC, Under the Port Construction and Development Priority Program for the Nashville Terminal Conversion to Container and Crane Rail Extension: Wharf Pile Repairs and Warehouse Demo and Crane Rail Extension Project.**

Ms. Evett presented and recommended approval of the resolution. Commissioner Berger moved to approve the resolution and Commissioner Ferrer seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

- C. Consider Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the President and Chief Executive Officer to Enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the State of Louisiana in Connection with all Matters Pertaining to the Louisiana International Terminal (LIT) Drainage, Site Preparation, Mitigation, Roadway and Rail Improvements, Planning, and Construction Project.**

Mr. Evett presented and recommended approval of the resolution. Commissioner Williams moved to approve the resolution and Commissioner Ferrer seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

- D. Consider Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the President and Chief Executive Officer to Amend the Contract with Maintenance Dredging I, LLC for Maintenance Dredging Services to Increase the Not-to-Exceed Cost by \$115,088.24.**

Mr. Evett presented and recommended approval of the resolution. Commissioner Ferrer moved to approve the resolution and Commissioner Williams seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

- E. Consider Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the President and Chief Executive Officer to Enter into a Contract with New Orleans Public Facility Management, Inc. to Utilize the Convention Center's Property for Overflow Parking on an As-Needed Basis, at a Cost of \$11 per Car per Day, for a Period of One Year Starting on January 1, 2025.**

Mr. Gauthier presented and recommended approval of the resolution. Commissioner Berger moved to approve the resolution and Commissioner Williams seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

- F. Consider Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the President and Chief Executive Officer to Enter into Agreements for the Acquisition of Three Separate Properties in an Amount Not to Exceed the Cumulative Sum of \$700,000.**

Mr. Gilmore presented and recommended approval of the resolution. Commissioner Berger moved to approve the resolution and Commissioner Williams seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **VI. Chairman and Commissioners' Comments**

Chairman Toomy announced that he attended to the Joint Transportation Committee in Baton Rouge earlier this month and reported that several significant port related items were discussed during that meeting.

## **VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Toomy called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Berger so moved and Commissioner Ferrer seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** and Chairman Toomy adjourned the meeting at 3:12 p.m.