



OCEAN HIGHWAY & PORT AUTHORITY

Robert Sturgess – Commissioner, District 1
Danny Fullwood – Chairman, District 2
Scott Hanna – Secretary/Treasurer, District 3
Carrol Franklin – Commissioner, District 4
Mike Cole – Vice Chairman, District 5

Monthly Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2020

The Ocean Highway and Port Authority of Nassau County held its Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at the County Commissioners Chambers at the James S. Page Government Complex, 96153 Nassau Place, Yulee, Florida 32097.

The meeting was called to order at 6:13 PM by Chairman Fullwood.

The invocation was given and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Franklin. Roll call was conducted by Mrs. Barbara Amergian. All Commissioners were present, Commissioner Sturgess added via video conference. Also in attendance were Jeb Branham, Port Attorney; Pierre LaPorte, Port Accountant; and Chris Ragucci, Port Director/Operator.

Chairman Fullwood recognized Jason Session, Nassau Tradeplex business owner, during the public comment section. Mr. Sessions proposed to the Board that he would repaint and landscape the sign at the Nassau Tradeplex in lieu of paying any rental fee associated with having his business posted on the sign. The County has executed a quit-claim deed and The Ocean Highway & Port Attorney has clear title to the sign.

Discussion followed regarding financial gain for OHPA by renting out space on the Nassau Tradeplex sign to the Tradeplex businesses that are interested.

Commissioner Cole made the motion to allow Jason Sessions six months of rent-free business signage for Southeastern RV & Boat Storage in exchange for cleanup, painting, and landscaping of the Nassau Tradeplex sign. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hanna. Commissioner Sturgess opposed the motion. The motion passed by majority.

Commissioner Cole made the motion to accept the August 12, 2020 monthly meeting minutes and the July 15, 2020 Mediation with City of Fernandina Beach minutes as written. Motion passed with no discussion.

Port Accountant Pierre LaPorte presented the monthly financial report to the Board. He informed the Board that the monthly payment from Worldwide in the amount of \$20,973 had been received. The only unusual expense for August was the payment of \$1,878 to the Mediator. He also reported that \$100,000 had been moved from the Operating Account into the Money Market Account at First Federal Bank. Mr. LaPorte also discussed the Audit Engagement letter from Mauldin & Jenkins that will require signature from the Chairman.

Commissioner Sturgess made the motion to allow Chairman Fullwood to execute the Mauldin & Jenkins engagement letters. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hanna. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. LaPorte discussed the final version of the FY 20/21 Budget proposal. Chairman Fullwood asked that \$3,000 be allocated to the Economic Development Board. Mr. LaPorte informed him that doing so would create a deficit in the budget of \$18,000. An additional \$11,000 would be added to cover costs at the Customs House.

Commissioner Hanna suggested reducing the Commissioner salaries to cover the deficit. Chairman Fullwood point out that the reserves were sufficient to cover budget. Commissioner Sturgess commented that Commissioner Hanna could take a reduction in his salary if his wished.

Commissioner Franklin made the motion to approve changes to the FY 20/21 budget to include reducing the Florida Ports Council dues from \$20,500 to \$15,500 and adding \$3,000 for the Economic Development Board. Motion passed unanimously.

Port Attorney Jeb Branham presented his report to the Board. Mr. Branham had no new information on the law suit filed by the City of Fernandina Beach regarding the PILOT payment. He informed the Board that the City of Fernandina Beach plans to move forward with the Interlocal Agreement for the Channel re-alignment. The date of October 9, 2020 has been set for private mediation with TranSystems and OHPA/Worldwide Terminals. Mr. Branham suggested Chairman Fullwood attend the meeting which will be held via video conference.

Commissioner Hanna made the motion to allow Chairman Fullwood as the designee to attend the private mediation on behalf of the Commissioners between TranSystems and OHPA/Worldwide Terminals via video conference. Commission Cole seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Port Director Chris Ragucci presented the Port Director report to the Board. He informed the Board that FSTED has awarded the Port of Fernandina \$201,000 out of a share of the \$25,000,000 allocation to be split amongst the Florida ports. The request was for the Port of Fernandina was \$7.5 million. Florida Secretary of Transportation Kevin Thibault did a virtual visit to the Port and they discussed the needs of the Port.

Mr. Ragucci then presented the Port Operator report to the Board. Tonnage for August was flat but tonnage is still ahead of last year's figures. The Deputy Fire Marshall of Fernandina Beach conducted a fire inspection and Mr. Ragucci reported that no discrepancies were found and that Worldwide Terminals was in compliance with fire codes on the existing warehouses. He informed the Board that the Big Top fabric warehouse was slated to begin installation on or around September 28th.

Additional documentation was presented to Port Attorney Jeb Branham regarding the MARAD Grant requirements. Attorney Branham would like all Commissioners to have a copy to review

and he will make recommendations to the Board. He also suggested that a professional grant administrator may need to be hired.

Unfinished Business

Commissioner Franklin made the motion to accept the estimate from Design It Wraps and Graphics for the new Port of Fernandina signage at a cost of \$470.80. Commissioner Hanna seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Commissioner Hanna made the motion to authorize the closing out of First Federal Account 7287 with a balance of \$912.04. The funds to be moved to the First Federal Operating Account. Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Port Security – Commissioner Fullwood – Nothing new to report.

Customs House – Commissioner Franklin – Nothing new to report

Army Corp of Engineers – Commissioner Sturgess – Great Lakes Dredging was awarded the contract for the channel maintenance dredging and is expected to begin in December 2020.

Economic Development – Commissioner Cole – New Economic Development Board President is Jimmy Weaver.

Emergency Management – Commissioner Franklin – a report on Hurricane season preparations was given.

Technical Coordinating Committee – Commissioner Hanna – Nothing new to report

TPO – Commissioner Cole - Nothing new to report

Nassau Chamber East Side – Commissioner Sturgess - Nothing new to report

Nassau Chamber West Side – Commissioner Cole - Nothing new to report

The Administrative Office Manager's report was included in the packet. There was one public records request from Richard Bruce.

With no other business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 PM



Danny Fullwood, Chairman