

Mississippi State Port Authority Community Advisory Committee

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is established by the Mississippi State Port Authority (Port) to represent and articulate community interests, providing an effective channel for communication between the Port and its diverse community stakeholders. The CAC will operate concurrently with the Tenant and Partner Advisory Committee (TPAC), which will consist of key tenants and stakeholders who provide expertise in business and logistical areas.

Together the CAC and TPAC will play essential roles in advising on critical issues and projects brought before them by Port leadership. This collaborative input will enhance stakeholder relations, operational efficiency, and integrate community health and well-being into the Port's strategic objectives.

- I. CAC Mission Statement:** To serve as a bridge between the Port and its community stakeholders, providing a forum for education, information exchange, and collaborative dialogue. This committee is dedicated to enhancing understanding of the Port's operations, projects, and impacts, thereby fostering a well-informed and engaged community.

II. Objectives of the Committee

1. Educate and Inform
 - To provide insight and information about the Port's activities, projects, and plans to the community stakeholders.
 - To organize educational sessions, workshops, or tours to enhance community understanding of the Port's role, operations, and contributions to the region.
2. Gather and Provide Feedback
 - To solicit and compile community input, concerns, and feedback on various Port-related projects, including grant projects, workforce development issues, and environmental plans.
 - To serve as a sounding board for the Port leadership, offering community perspectives and informal advice on proposed projects and initiatives.
3. Enhance Communication and Collaboration
 - To facilitate open and ongoing communication between the Port and its community stakeholders, ensuring transparency and mutual understanding.
 - To encourage dialogue and collaboration, enabling the Port to align its activities more closely with community interest and needs.

4. Support Community Relations

- To contribute to building a positive and constructive relationship between the Port and the community it serves.
- To identify and recommend opportunities for the Port to engage with and contribute to the community.

5. Advise and Support

- To provide Port leadership with informal, non-binding advice and recommendations based on community feedback and insights.
- To support the Port in identifying and understanding the community's perspective, expectations, and concerns.

III. Scope of Participation

1. Decision-Making

Participation in the MSPA Community Advisory Committee offers a valuable opportunity to share insights and feedback. However, it is important to note that the committee members do not hold decision-making authority over MSPA activities. The role is advisory in nature, aimed at providing informed perspectives to MSPA staff without the expectation of issuing directives.

2. Spokesperson

While the contributions of committee members are highly valued, official communication on behalf of the MSPA, including interactions with the press, public, or political leaders, is managed by designated MSPA representatives. Committee members are encouraged to support the MSPA's mission through their advisory role while respecting these communications boundaries.

IV. Membership

The Advisory Committee shall be comprised of 15-20 members, reflecting a diverse cross-section of the Port community. This includes general residents, representatives from community organizations, educational institutions, environmental groups, and local union representation.

Members are thoughtfully selected by Port Leadership to ensure a broad range of perspectives and expertise. Each member will serve a term of one year, with the possibility of renewal. This approach will allow for flexibility and responsiveness to the evolving needs of the Port and community.

To uphold the effectiveness and integrity of the committee, consistent participation is highly valued. Members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings to the best of their ability.

Should a member be unable to attend three consecutive meetings without reasonable cause, the non-attendance will be reviewed by the Port leadership. Continued inability to participate may lead to discussion about reassigning the seat, with the aim of maintaining active and engaged participation in the committee's activities.

While the Port values the commitment and contributions of each member, it's understood that circumstances may require Port leadership to make changes to the committee composition. This could include replacing or reassigning members as necessary to best serve the committee's objectives and community's interests. Such decisions will be made with careful consideration and respect for the individual's contributions.

Port leadership believes that the collective expertise and diverse viewpoints of the committee members are crucial in guiding the MSPA towards a future that aligns with the needs, health, and economic vitality of the community.

V. Meeting Guidelines and Communications

1. **Meetings:** The committee will meet regularly on a bi-monthly basis. If the Port determines a necessity for a meeting outside of the regularly bi-monthly meeting schedule, the Port may call a special meeting in alignment with member availability. Written notices for upcoming meetings will be provided to members in a timely manner. Meetings will be held at the MSPA administrative offices on the 14th floor of the Hancock Whitney Tower or other prearranged locations.
2. **Quorum:** A quorum of the Committee is defined as more than 50% of the current committee members. In instances where one or more committee seats are vacant, these seats will not be counted in determining the quorum - the quorum will be calculated based on the number of filled seats only.
3. **Meeting Recording and Minutes:** Each meeting will be recorded and documented through minutes, creating a formal record for the MSPA.
4. **Formal Opinions and Voting:** At its discretion, the MSPA may request a formal, non-binding opinion on matters it brings before the committee. Any such opinion will be established through a voting process during the meetings, ensuring each member's voice is heard and recorded. This approach will guide the MSPA in considering the committee's collective viewpoint on upcoming projects and important matters.
5. **Electronic Input:** In the event the MSPA wishes to seek timely input, but it is not feasible to convene a formal meeting with a quorum, the MSPA may seek input from committee members via email. This will allow for timely consultation and decision-making, ensuring that MSPA's actions are informed by the committee's insights.

VI. Commitment to Transparency

Under the Mississippi Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), all communications of the Committee, including electronic communications, meeting minutes, and other documents related to the Committee's activities, are accessible to the public upon request, except as otherwise exempted by law. The Port is committed to upholding the principles of transparency and accountability. Committee members are advised to conduct their communications with the understanding that they may be made publicly available, in compliance with FOIA.