

**MISSISSIPPI PORT AUTHORITY**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

**March 14, 2024**

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Minutes of the Mississippi State Port Authority Board of Commissioners Meeting, Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 2510 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1450, Gulfport, Mississippi at which the following Commissioners and staff were present:

Commissioners: John Rester, President  
Cowles Symmes, Vice-President  
Mark Loughman, Secretary  
Robert J. Knesal, Treasurer  
Kathryn Dennis Spear, Commissioner

Staff: Jon Nass, CEO  
Jennifer Smith, Chief of Staff  
DeeDee Wood, CFO  
Shawn Meyer, COO  
Kim Purchner, Executive Asst./HRO  
Teresa Ehrlich, Project Manager  
Gary Pitcovich, Deputy Director of Operations  
Hannah Milliet, Public Affairs Officer  
Allison Chimenya, Marketing & Educational Coordinator  
James Buras, Port Engineer  
Errol LaRue, General Counsel  
Cindy Ford, Contract/Administrative Assistant  
Angie Shortt, Sr. Accounting Specialist  
Mary Nelson, Receptionist/Office Coordinator

Brant Pettis, Legal Counsel

Others: Philip Carter, MDA  
Nick Moody, MP Designs  
Michael Letort, MP Designs  
Joey Beattie, Cadence Insurance  
Chelsea Paige, Hilton Garden Inn Gulfport  
Greg Schruoff, SSA Gulf  
Howard Page, Citizen  
Chris Kirby, USM  
John Johnson, North Gulfport, Inc.  
Colin MacPherson, E.N. Bisso  
Kelby Cuevas, DOLE

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Commissioner Rester noted the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Rester.

The invocation was given by DeeDee Wood, MSPA.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

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Commissioner Symmes moved to approve the Minutes from the February 15, 2024 Board Meeting. Commissioner Loughman seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Symmes moved to approve travel (March 8 - 12) – Nass to Boston, MA; Commissioner Spear seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Symmes moved to approve the disbursements listed below. Commissioner Knesal seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

DISBURSEMENTS THROUGH FEBRUARY 29, 2024  
 BILLS FOR THE MONTHS OF JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2024 APPROVED AND PAID  
 FROM THE GROSS REVENUE FUND OF THE MS STATE PORT AUTHORITY AT GULFPORT

| CHK#  | VENDOR                              | DESCRIPTION   | CHK AMT   |
|-------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 60570 | Kentwood Springs                    | Drinking Water                                      | 361.24    |
| 60571 | AGJ Systems & Networks, Inc.        | Computer Equipment                                  | 1,630.28  |
| 60572 | All Safe Technologies, LLC          | Fire Alarm Monitoring and Fire Alarm Repairs        | 1,509.60  |
| 60573 | Boot Outlet, LLC                    | Employee Safety Boots                               | 399.90    |
| 60574 | Sparklight                          | Internet Services                                   | 93.18     |
| 60575 | CenterPoint Energy                  | Natural Gas Services                                | 35.61     |
| 60576 | City of Gulfport                    | Water   | 7,255.28  |
| 60577 | Sun Coast Business Supply           | Office Supplies                                     | 268.99    |
| 60578 | Coburn Supply Company, Inc.         | Gate Valve for Shed 50 Fire System                  | 1,411.60  |
| 60579 | Continental Battery Company         | Battery for Unit #14                                | 95.26     |
| 60580 | Cresco Inc.                         | Crowley Bldg HVAC Repairs/Dole Bldg HVAC Inspection | 2,586.42  |
| 60581 | C Spire Business Solutions          | Telephone/Internet Services                         | 1,692.55  |
| 60582 | Dept. of Finance & Admin.           | MMRS Quarterly Charges                              | 241.50    |
| 60583 | Federal Express Corp.               | Express Mail Services                               | 21.38     |
| 60584 | Fuelman                             | Fuel for MSPA Vehicles                              | 179.55    |
| 60585 | Glasdon, Inc.                       | Life Rings and Life Ring Cabinets                   | 4,487.50  |
| 60586 | Graystone Locksmiths & Safe Company | Locksmith Services for Street Sweeper               | 180.00    |
| 60587 | John W. Harmon                      | Annual Elevator Inspections                         | 771.80    |
| 60588 | Newell Paper Co.                    | Janitorial Supplies                                 | 848.98    |
| 60589 | Lowe's Home Center, Inc.            | Maintenance Supplies                                | 798.33    |
| 60590 | Magnolia Printing Co.               | Business Development Brochures                      | 135.30    |
| 60591 | McClatchy Company, LLC              | Advertising   | 1,631.29  |
| 60592 | Shawn Meyer                         | Business Expenses                                   | 45.98     |
| 60593 | MS DHS - State Disbursement Unit    | Employee Deductions                                 | 263.56    |
| 60594 | MS Pub. Employees Credit Union      | Employee Deductions                                 | 445.00    |
| 60595 | MSPA Petty Cash Fund                | Replenish Petty Cash                                | 129.68    |
| 60596 | Jon T. Nass                         | Travel Expenses                                     | 131.32    |
| 60597 | Pass Road Mini Storage, LLC         | Storage Unit Rent                                   | 185.00    |
| 60598 | The Port Employees Assoc.           | Employee Deductions                                 | 108.00    |
| 60599 | Stericycle, Inc.                    | Document Shredding Services                         | 165.18    |
| 60600 | Norma Jean Soroe                    | Transcription Services                              | 469.48    |
| 60601 | Southeastern Overhead Door Inc.     | Weatherseal Brushes for Dock Levelers               | 1,620.00  |
| 60602 | Swetman Security Services, Inc.     | Security Guard Services                             | 32,787.00 |
| 60603 | Timeless Designs of Lucedale LLC    | Interior Plant Maintenance                          | 279.69    |
| 60604 | Trane U.S., Inc.                    | A/C Repair Parts for Marine Research Facility       | 316.46    |

|       |                              |  |        |
|-------|------------------------------|--|--------|
| 60605 | United Way of South MS, Inc. | Employee Deductions  | 171.42 |
| 60606 | Union Auto Parts             | Transmission Fluid and Battery Assembly for Street Sweeper | 500.00 |
| 60607 | Zoro Tools, Inc.             | Janitorial and Maintenance Supplies                        | 402.38 |

CHECKS DATED 02/21/24 AND RELEASED PRIOR TO SCHEDULED CHECK RUN

|       |                |   |          |
|-------|----------------|---|----------|
| 60564 | Sparklight     | Cable Services  | 248.44   |
| 60565 | Card Services  | Subscriptions, Office Supplies, Repair Parts and Maintenance Supplies | 1,146.47 |
| 60566 | Card Services  | Registration Fees and Travel Expenses                                 | 3,676.87 |
| 60567 | Guardian       | Employee Deductions   | 1,367.49 |
| 60568 | Hostpapa, Inc. | Website Hosting and SSL Certificate Renewal                           | 164.96   |
| 60569 | Newk's         | Food for Community Advisory Committee Meeting                         | 256.00   |

TRANSFERS

|          |                       |  |                     |
|----------|-----------------------|--|---------------------|
| 02/23/24 | Deferred Compensation | Employee Deductions                          | 1,395.00            |
| 02/28/24 | Federal Tax Deposit   | Payroll Tax Deposit                          | 29,027.50           |
| 02/29/24 | Connected Oceans      | Business Development and Consulting Services | 24,494.25           |
|          |                       | Total  | <u>\$126,432.67</u> |

FINAL CHECKLIST FOR MARCH 14, 2024

BILLS FOR THE MONTHS OF FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2024 APPROVED AND PAID  
FROM THE GROSS REVENUE FUND OF THE MS STATE PORT AUTHORITY AT GULFPORT

| CHK#  | VENDOR                                 | DESCRIPTION  | CHK AMT    |
|-------|--|--|------------|
| 60608 | AFLAC                                  | Employee Deductions  | 1,255.52   |
| 60609 | AGJ Systems & Networks, Inc.           | Computer Maintenance   | 4,565.00   |
| 60610 | AirGas Gulf States                     | Acetylene, Oxygen and Argon Cylinders                                  | 196.57     |
| 60611 | Apple, Inc.                            | Computer Equipment   | 1,734.00   |
| 60612 | City of Gulfport                       | Water  | 1,330.16   |
| 60613 | Copy Products Mailing Systems, LLC     | Postage Machine Service Call   | 185.00     |
| 60614 | C Spire Wireless                       | Cell Phone Services  | 995.82     |
| 60615 | C Spire Business Solutions             | Telephone/Internet Services  | 1,780.28   |
| 60617 | Federal Express Corp.                  | Express Mail Services  | 18.17      |
| 60618 | Fuelman                                | Fuel for MSPA Vehicles   | 348.87     |
| 60619 | Great Southern Club                    | Monthly Dues and Business Expenses                                     | 2,586.60   |
| 60621 | Whitney Bank Divisional Property       | April Lease for Suite 1450   | 27,664.17  |
| 60623 | MS State Treasurer Fund 3360900000     | Telephone/Internet Services  | 97.95      |
| 60624 | MS-JS, Inc DBA Johnstone Supply of Gpt | HVAC Repair Parts for Operations                                       | 221.50     |
| 60625 | KLDiscovery Ontrack, LLC               | Professional Services  | 1,477.00   |
| 60626 | FinQuery LLC                           | Software Subscription  | 3,820.00   |
| 60627 | Mark P. Loughman                       | Per Diem   | 80.00      |
| 60628 | Lowe's Home Center, Inc.               | Maintenance Supplies   | 222.06     |
| 60630 | Mark Dunning Industries, Inc.          | Waste Removal Services   | 1,295.00   |
| 60631 | McClatchy Company, LLC                 | Advertising  | 357.39     |
| 60632 | MS DHS - State Disbursement Unit       | Employee Deductions  | 263.56     |
| 60633 | MS Power Company                       | Electricity  | 122,044.38 |
| 60634 | MS Power Company                       | Electricity  | 13,476.06  |
| 60635 | MS Pub. Employees Credit Union         | Employee Deductions  | 445.00     |
| 60636 | Jon T. Nass                            | Business Expenses  | 243.12     |
| 60637 | Gary Piteovich                         | Space Heaters for Emergency Heating at Crowley Administration Building | 235.31     |
| 60638 | Portable Services, Inc.                | Portable Restroom Services   | 425.00     |
| 60639 | PRAM                                   | Membership Dues  | 190.00     |
| 60640 | Legal Shield                           | Employee Deductions  | 30.91      |
| 60641 | Kim Purchner                           | Refreshments for Staff Update with IAMPE                               | 33.14      |
| 60642 | Redd Pest Solutions                    | Pest Control Services  | 163.50     |
| 60643 | RJ Young Company, Inc.                 | Printer Maintenance  | 540.00     |

|                  |                                     |   |                     |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 60644            | SBL Strategies, LLC                 | Professional Consulting Services                                | 10,000.00           |
| 60645            | Sorg Printing, LLC                  | Business Cards  | 76.00               |
| 60646            | South Mississippi Business Machines | Copier Maintenance  | 569.00              |
| 60647            | Southern Printing & Silkscreen      | Logos and Names for Employee Uniforms                           | 75.00               |
| 60648            | Southern Exteriors Fence Co.        | Fence Repair Parts and Installation of Fence at Cotton Compress | 1,929.58            |
| 60650            | Southern Admin. and Benefits        | Monthly Service Fee   | 209.00              |
| 60651            | Kathryn Dennis Spear                | Per Diem  | 80.00               |
| 60652            | Sterling Solutions LLC              | Professional Services   | 12,500.00           |
| 60653            | Swetman Security Services, Inc.     | Security Guard Services   | 33,778.80           |
| 60654            | Cowles Edgar Symmes                 | Per Diem  | 80.00               |
| 60655            | Trane U.S., Inc.                    | Labor to Repair HVAC for Marine Research Facility               | 10,562.92           |
| 60656            | Union Auto Parts                    | Maintenance Supplies  | 663.50              |
| 60658            | Zoro Tools, Inc.                    | Sump Pump   | 554.99              |
| 60659            | City of Gulfport                    | Water   | 3,738.56            |
| 60660            | Norma Jean Soroe                    | Transcription Services  | 394.48              |
| <b>TRANSFERS</b> |                                     |   |                     |
| 03/05/24         | State School Insurance Fund/DFA     | 02/2024 Employee Health and Life Insurance                      | 15,741.80           |
| 03/07/24         | Public Employment Retirement        | Retirement Match and Withheld                                   | 60,810.30           |
| 03/08/24         | Prestadora De Servicios Aniern      | Association Dues  | 1,700.00            |
| 03/08/24         | Deferred Compensation               | Employee Deductions   | 1,395.00            |
| 03/13/24         | Federal Tax Deposit                 | Payroll Tax Deposit   | 28,884.62           |
| 03/14/24         | MS Department of Revenue            | Employee Deductions   | 7,331.00            |
| Total            |                                     |   | <u>\$379,395.59</u> |

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Commissioner Loughman moved to approve the Port User Licenses, pending receipt of all fees and insurance documents. Commissioner Symmes seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

The following items were approved:

RENEWAL LICENSES:

Steamship Agents: Transmarine Navigation Corp.; Tricon Steamship Agency, Inc.

Stevedore: SSA Gulf

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Commissioner Symmes moved to approve the following progress payments: Balch & Bingham (\$19,836.05); Gulf Regional Planning Commission (\$388.13); MP Design Group (\$70,722.18); Southern Earth Sciences (\$ 2,687.50); and Warren Paving (\$204,683.24). Commissioner Loughman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

*Commissioner Spear left the meeting.*

Commissioner Symmes moved to approve the following progress payments: DNP, Inc. (\$124,782.50); and Hopkins Construction & Maintenance, LLC (\$8,845.75). Commissioner Loughman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioner Symmes moved to award the Deep Water Wharf Contract to the lowest and best bidder, DNP, Inc. DNP, Inc. was the only bidder with a bid of \$9,353,385.00. Commissioner Loughman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Spear returned to the meeting.

Commissioner Symmes moved to authorize the close out of Sub-Grant R115-06-02. All applicable administrative actions and all required work on the Hurricane Katrina Disaster Recovery project has been completed. Commissioner Loughman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Commissioner Rester commented on the significance of this action

Commissioner Loughman moved to approve the First Amendment to the Professional Agreement with SBL Strategies, Inc. for consulting services related to government affairs in Washington, DC. The amendment extends the term of the agreement by one year under the same terms and conditions. Commissioner Symmes seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Symmes moved to approve the First Amendment to the Professional Agreement with Hancock Whitney Bank for investment advisory services. The amendment exercises the optional two-year extension and equates to a 17.4% reduction in fees. The new term is through May 27, 2026. Commissioner Knesal seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Loughman moved to approve the First Amendment to the Professional Agreement 21-FD-05 with South MS Business Machines for copier leasing services. The amendment exercises the optional two-year extension at a discounted rate of 10.5% as compared to the current pricing. The contract not to exceed amount remains the same at \$42,000.00. Commissioner Symmes seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Loughman moved to approve Modification No. 1 to Work Order No. 9 with MP Design Group under Contract No. 23-EN-01. Modification No. 1 revises the scope and has an increase of \$258,822.00 and adds 360 days for construction. Commissioner Spear seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Symmes moved to authorize the advertisement for bid the East Pier Shed 50 Repairs Project. Commissioner Loughman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Symmes moved to approve Work Order No. 5 under Contract No. 24-EN-03 with WSP, Inc. Work Order No. 5 provides a PIDP Grant Application and has a not to exceed amount of \$50,000.00. Commissioner Knesal seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Symmes moved to approve Work Order No. 2 under Contract No. 24-EN-04 with HDR Engineering. Work Order No. 2 provides a Clean Ports Program Grant Application and has a not to exceed amount of \$51,976.00. Commissioner Loughman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

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ENGINEERING UPDATE:

James Buras reported on current engineering projects.

OPERATIONS REPORT:

Shawn Meyer reported on the maritime activity for February of 2024:

|                    |           |  |          |         |
|--------------------|-----------|--|----------|---------|
| Vessels            | 14        |  | Vehicles | >12,000 |
| Tugs               | 6         |  | Railcars | 661     |
| Tonnage (YTD)      | 1,241,727 |  | Barges   | 26      |
| TEU's (short tons) | 14,933    |  |          |         |

The Tonnage number reflects a 16% increase and the TEU number reflects a 11% decrease.

We currently have a military vessel in port, and it will create 2400 labor hours. We recently had a LOLO (lift on-lift off) military vessel in port for 6 days and this type of vessel is rare. The LOLO vessel used 4,000 labor hours and was headed to Poland and Italy.

Due to fog issues, Dole unloaded an entire vessel, skipping Freeport and Tampa. This vessel consisted of 1,300 moves and 900 labor hours.

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

Hannah Milliet was recognized as Rookie of the Year by the Chamber Coastal Young Professional Association.

Angie Shortt was recognized for her exemplary efforts during the post Katrina CDBG HUD Grant process.

Commissioner Kate Spear was presented with a framed certificate on her completion of the IAMPE Class on Maritime Achievement and the Governor's Appointment as a Mississippi State Port Authority Commissioner.

Capt. Jeff Monroe, IAMPE recently briefed the entire staff on the State of the Industry. Director Nass spoke to the group as well, highlighting the renewed emphasis on human resources capabilities, offering professional development to staff, and on safety and security. Three new employees have been hired to help in this effort.

We have had recent community engagement initiatives – one with the NAACP and another with representatives of communities that live near port operations and talked about key concerns.

Part of ongoing initiatives is our partnership with TTI regarding emission reduction efforts.

We are going after some heavy federal funding - a Clean Ports Grant. WSP, Inc. will be here next week to make sure we have a good application. We are also looking at a PIDP Grant and how that can help us get some funding for improving the East Pier. WSP will also help with our workforce development and safety initiatives.

We will be hosting a Congressional Round Table with Representative Ezell and his staff on March 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss MSPA's role in the movement of freight.

We have formed a tenant/partner advisory committee and a community advisory committee. We hope to stagger these meetings every other month and will produce a standing calendar for Commissioners so they can choose to attend any or all events.

We will have a work session with Dole next week as Director Nass and Commissioners visit Dole's operations in Costa Rica.

The USACOE will be here in April, and meetings will be held, continuing their role in communities and environmental justice that is required for the widening and deepening effort.

#### GENERAL COUNSEL'S COMMENTS:

Brant Pettis joined in on the congratulations on the closing of the Port Restoration Program.

#### MDA'S COMMENTS:

Philip Carter also commented on the closing of the Port Restoration Program. In the midst of many challenges, a great partnership was formed between the Port and the MS

Development Authority. In April of 2023, HUD released the Economic Revitalization Guide for CDBG Grantees, and the Port of Gulfport Restoration Project is highlighted as a case study for how to implement a successful project under CDBG Disaster Recovery. That speaks volumes.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

There were no Commissioners' comments.

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Commissioner Symmes moved to close the meeting to discuss the need for an Executive Session. Commissioner Loughman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Symmes moved to enter Executive Session to discuss a legal (litigation) matter and a personnel matter. Commissioner Loughman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

(THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ENTERED INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT APPROXIMATELY 10:50 A.M.)

Commissioner Symmes moved to come out of Executive Session. Commissioner Spear seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Rester stated that no action took place during Executive Session.

Commissioner Symmes moved to amend the agenda to hire outside counsel to assist in personnel matters. Commissioner Spear seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Symmes moved to hire outside counsel to assist in personnel matters. Commissioner Spear seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Symmes moved to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:15 p.m.

Approved and Attested

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Rester  
President



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Mark Loughman  
Secretary

