

Minutes of a meeting of the Plaquemines Parish Council, as the Sole Governing Authority of the Plaquemines Port, Harbor & Terminal District, held in Pointe-a-la-Hache Council Chambers, 18055 Hwy. 15, Pointe-a-la-Hache, Louisiana on Thursday, July 24 2025 at 3:59 p.m., pursuant to notice to all members with a quorum present as follows:

PRESENT: Commissioner Chris Schulz, Chairman  
Commissioner Brian Champagne  
Commissioner Ronnie Newsom  
Commissioner Carlton M. LaFrance, Sr.  
Commissioner Mark Cognevich

Kim M. Toups, Secretary

ABSENT: Commissioner Tyronne Edwards  
Commissioner Stuart Guey  
Commissioner Patricia L. McCarty  
Commissioner Mitch Jurisich

Charles Tillotson and the Port Staff were present.

The following items were deferred:

- Item 6a(1), “An Ordinance authorizing Charles Tillotson, Executive Director of Plaquemines Port, Harbor and Terminal District to purchase land and property, more fully described in Exhibit A, owned by Point Celeste Farms; and otherwise, to provide with respect thereto.”; and
- Item 6b, “A Resolution authorizing Charles D. Tillotson, Executive Director of the Plaquemines Port Harbor & Terminal District, to enter into discussions with various Port tenants to activate Federal Trade Zone (FTZ) sites within the boundaries of FTZ 300; and otherwise to provide with respect thereto”.

Agenda Item 6e, “An Ordinance to provide for the hiring of unclassified employees; and otherwise to provide with respect thereto” was withdrawn.

There were no matters to address under Agenda Item 2, “Executive Session”; therefore, Commissioner Schulz moved to Agenda Item, Item 3, “Status Report by Executive Port Director”. Without objection, so ordered.

### **June 24, 2025, Board Meeting Executive Director Port Update**

#### **Projects:**

##### **Peters Road Bridge Project:**

The LA Port Investment Commission introduce Legislation Resolution proposing \$250 million for the Peters Road Bridge Project to be approved during the 2026 LA Legislative Session.

The Peters Road Vehicle Bridge project is progressing well due to strong collaboration between the Louisiana DOTD and BKL. Project directors and managers maintain close communication to ensure coordination. Preliminary design will finish in 18 months, after which detailed design begins. As a crucial link between Plaquemines and Jefferson Parishes, the bridge is a top infrastructure priority for state agencies.

##### **Peters Road Rail Bypass:**

The Peters Road Rail Bypass project is 30% designed and moving forward in coordination with Union Pacific, CSRS, the City of Gretna, and Jefferson Parish. A stakeholder meeting with UP is planned for next month. The project will reroute rail traffic from downtown Gretna to an industrial corridor to improve safety. It will keep above-grade crossings at Highway 23 and 4th Street and create the Hero Rail Yard near the Navy Base for intermodal use, boosting regional freight efficiency.

##### **11 Mile Rail Extension Project:**

The 11-Mile Rail Extension Project is wrapping up its 30% design phase and moving toward 60%. Project leaders are coordinating with engineers to avoid impacts on the Ironton Community and maintaining regular contact with stakeholders to minimize disruptions while improving rail

services. NEPA environmental review is ongoing, with the process expected to finish by December 2025 after recent meetings with the STB and Venable.

### **Land Purchase & Rezoning Efforts:**

Over half of the required land acquisitions are committed, and rezoning efforts are advancing. A meeting with Port Ship discussed a possible land swap for the Consolidated Dock and Pointe à la Hache Ferry Landing projects. Dwyer Cambre continues to assist with rezoning and acquisition tasks.

### **LGP Admin Building Renovation Project:**

Renovations to the Admin Building continue, with roof work underway and weather conditions monitored. The generator bypass switch will be installed by month's end. HVAC system design is in progress, with the bidding set for early September and a full replacement planned. Design work for both interior and exterior has started. Full completion is scheduled for Q2 2026.

### **PALH Access Road Project:**

The Pointe à la Hache (PALH) Access Road Project focuses on improving safety by upgrading lighting and adding parking from LA Highway 23 to the ferry landing. Inspectors and surveyors assessed road conditions this week, and project leaders are working with engineering and security teams to maintain progress.

### **PALH Ferry Landing Emergency Repair Project:**

The PALH Ferry Landing Emergency Repair Project is nearly finished, with the contractor's final punch list due soon. After completion, the Port will begin barge electrical upgrades and replace both barge aprons, improving safety and extending the landing's service life before the new replacement facility opens.

### **PALH Ferry Landing Replacement Project:**

Work on the Pointe à la Hache (PALH) Ferry Landing Replacement Project is underway, with monthly meetings involving engineers and the Louisiana DOTD. The project will construct a new ferry landing next to the current one, which recently had emergency repairs. The exact site will be chosen within 60 days.

### **New Diesel / Electrical Ferry Build Project:**

The New Diesel/Electric Ferry Boat Build Project is moving forward, with vehicle layout options under review by commissioners. DOTD will meet with Pelican Marine later this month, and MiNo Marine will work with project leaders to assess the design before advancing to the preliminary phase. The hybrid ferry aims to meet the Port's needs while reducing fuel use and providing an eco-friendly transport solution.

### **Communications:**

The Communications Department continues momentum in public relations and advertising efforts. A press release highlighting the Port's Economic Impact Analysis was successfully distributed via the newswire on Monday, and ads in American Ports Resource Guide and City Business are published. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is underway, with new content and backlinks being added monthly to enhance digital visibility. Media relations are ongoing, with a focus on securing earned media segments. Invitations have been sent for **Port Night**, scheduled for August 12th at Woodland Plantation, with sponsorship from Infinity Engineering and ES2. Additionally, design work has commenced on direct mail flyers per Mr. LaFrance's approved Ordinance.

### **Human Resources Update:**

**Departure of the Director of Vessels and Security** for two years for a US Army Reserve Deployment requirement. The position will be backfilled with an existing employee for six months.

**Civil Service Meetings and Staffing (August 2025)** The tentative Civil Service meeting for August 2025 is in planning. Staffing updates include the onboarding of a new HR Analyst who began on July 14, and a Legal Secretary scheduled to start later this month. Final interviews are underway for the General Counsel position. Additionally, recruitment efforts continue for the unclassified role of Special Assistant to the Executive Director, with advertising and resume reviews currently in progress.

**Finance Update:**

**Financial and Single Audit for FY 2024** The audit continues to progress. At this time, we are working to resolve the remaining open items and finalize the report.

Port Meeting Summary		7/24/25 Port Meeting		
		7/10/2025	7/24/2025	
Description		Board Meeting	Board Meeting	Difference
Net Position		\$111,934,362	\$113,639,745	\$1,705,383
Unrestricted Fund Balance		\$3,367,469	\$5,072,852	\$1,705,383
Land Fund Restricted Fund Balance		\$2,115,433	\$2,115,433	\$0
Budget Revenue		\$37,335,071	\$39,040,454	\$1,705,383
Actual Revenue		\$13,486,314	\$13,673,892	\$187,578
Budget Expenses		\$40,162,193	\$40,162,193	\$0
Actual Expenses		\$18,054,645	\$20,877,866	\$2,823,221
Budgeted Revenue Differences:				
ORD - Accept FY24 and FY25 WRRDA Funding				\$1,705,383
Total				\$1,705,383
Budgeted Expense Differences:				
Total				\$0

There were no matters to address under Agenda Item 4, “Bids and Advertisements”; therefore Commissioner Schulz moved to Agenda Item 5, “Introduction of Ordinances and Resolutions”. Without objection, so ordered. The following legislation was introduced:

1. An Ordinance to amend the 2025 Operating Budget of the Plaquemines Port Harbor and Terminal District to appropriate funds to the Ferry Department for the emergency repair to the M/V Pointe a la Hache ferryboat and to authorize the expenditures by Charles D. Tillotson, Executive Director; and otherwise provide with respect thereto. COMMISSIONER SCHULZ
2. An Ordinance authorizing Charles Tillotson, Executive Director of Plaquemines Port, Harbor and Terminal District to purchase land and property, more fully described in Exhibit A, owned by Plaquemines Parish Government with respect to Parcel 8453924 W Pointe ala Hache to AmoreWL; and otherwise to provide with respect thereto. COMMISSIONER SCHULZ
3. An Ordinance to amend the 2025 Operating Budget of the Plaquemines Port Harbor and Terminal District to appropriate Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) funding; and otherwise provide with respect thereto. COMMISSIONER SCHULZ
4. A Resolution authorizing the Plaquemines Port Harbor & Terminal District to enter into an replacement agreement with the State of Louisiana, Department of Transportation and Development under the Louisiana Port Construction and Development Priority Program for assistance in the implementation of a port improvement project; providing for the necessary documentation of the need for the port improvement; and providing for other matters in connection therewith; and otherwise provide with respect thereto. COMMISSIONER SCHULZ
5. A Resolution authorizing the Plaquemines Port Harbor & Terminal District to enter into an replacement agreement with the State of Louisiana, Department of Transportation and Development under the Louisiana Port Construction and Development Priority Program for assistance in the implementation of a port improvement project; providing for the necessary documentation of the need for the port improvement; and providing for other matters in connection therewith. COMMISSIONER SCHULZ
6. A Resolution adopting the quarterly updates and additions to the Policies and Procedures for Plaquemines Port Harbor & Terminal District (the Port); and otherwise, to provide with respect thereto. COMMISSIONER SCHULZ

- 7. An Ordinance to amend the 2025 Operating Budget of the Plaquemines Port Harbor and Terminal District to appropriate Louisiana Port Construction and Development Priority Program funding; and otherwise provide with respect thereto.  
COMMISSIONER SCHULZ
- 8. A Resolution creating a one-time holiday on August 29th, 2025, in remembrance of 20th anniversary of the landfall of Hurricane Katrina for the Plaquemines Port Harbor and Terminal District; and otherwise, to provide with respect thereto.  
COMMISSIONER SCHULZ

Commissioner Schulz moved to Agenda Item 6a, “Ordinances and Public Hearings pursuant to Article 6, Section 6.01 E of the Plaquemines Parish Charter”. Without objection, so ordered.

ORDINANCE NO. 25 -145

The following Ordinance was offered by Commissioner Schulz who moved its adoption:

An Ordinance to amend the Plaquemines Port, Harbor and Terminal District Manpower Structure and Operating Expenditure Budget for the classified position of Ferry Captain III; and otherwise provide with respect thereto.

*DIGEST:* The Port continues to enhance its ferry service by building its talent pool with additional ferry captains. *The digest is for informational purposes only and is superseded by the language of the actual ordinance or resolution.*

WHEREAS, the Port has determined the need to expand the operational capacity and leadership oversight within its Ferry Department; and

WHEREAS, the addition of a Ferry Captain II position will improve operational flexibility, provide additional leadership coverage, and ensure compliance with U.S. Coast Guard licensing and safety standards;

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE PLAQUEMINES PARISH COUNCIL AS THE SOLE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE PLAQUEMINES PORT, HARBOR & TERMINAL DISTRICT THAT:

SECTION 1

This ordinance authorizes Charles Tillotson, Director of Plaquemines Port, Harbor, and Terminal District, to amend the Manpower Structure and Operating Expenditure Budget for the classified position of Ferry Captain III.

SECTION 2

The 2025 Port, Harbor and Terminal District, Operating Expenditure Budget, Ferry Division is amended by appropriating \$135,029.31 from the Unrestricted Fund Balance as follows:

<b>Fund:</b> 445 Port Harbor Fund			
<b>Dept/Div:</b> 490-2463 Ferry Division			
Object	Description	Inc/Dec	Amendment
510.005	Salaries & Wages Regular	Inc	\$95,643
515.005	P/R Taxes-FICA Taxes	Inc	\$1,386.82
516.105	Retirement-PERS	Inc	\$10,540.73
517.005	Group Insurance	Inc	\$27,479.76

SECTION 3

The Secretary of this Council is hereby authorized and directed to immediately certify and release this Resolution and that Parish employees and officials are authorized to carry out the

purposes of this Resolution, both without further reading and approval by the Plaquemines Parish Council.

Commissioner Cognevich seconded the motion to adopt the Ordinance.

The foregoing Ordinance having been submitted to a vote, the vote resulted as follows:

YEAS: Commissioners Brian Champagne, Chris Schulz, Ronnie Newsom, Carlton M. LaFrance, Sr., and Mark Cognevich

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Tyronne Edwards, Stuart J. Guey, Patricia L. McCarty and Mitch Jurisich

PRESENT BUT NOT VOTING: None

And the Ordinance was adopted on this the 24<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2025.

#### RESOLUTION NO. 25-218

On motion of Commissioner Schulz, seconded by Commissioner Cognevich, and on roll call all members present and voting “YES”, except Commissioners Edwards, Guey, McCarty & Jurisich who were “ABSENT”, the following Resolution was adopted:

A Resolution authorizing Charles D. Tillotson, Executive Director of the Plaquemines Port Harbor & Terminal District, to adopt the Port’s Security Plan, Vulnerability Assessment, and updated maritime policies; and otherwise to provide with respect thereto.

DIGEST: The Port contracted IEM International, Inc. (IEM) to update its Port Security Plan, Vulnerability Assessment, and maritime policies to enhance safety and security within the port district. *The digest is for informational purposes only and is superseded by the language of the actual resolution.*

WHEREAS, the Port is committed to maintaining the highest standards of maritime security, safety, and regulatory compliance; and

WHEREAS, IEM was engaged by the Port to conduct a comprehensive review and development of the Port’s Security Plan, Vulnerability Assessment, and associated maritime policies in accordance with applicable federal regulations, including those set forth by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA); and

WHEREAS, IEM has completed the Port’s Security Plan, Vulnerability Assessment, and supporting policy framework, designed to enhance the Port’s preparedness, operational security, and resilience against threats and hazards; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of these documents is critical to ensure compliance with federal security mandates and to guide the Port’s security operations moving forward;

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLAQUEMINES PARISH COUNCIL AS THE SOLE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE PLAQUEMINES PORT, HARBOR & TERMINAL DISTRICT THAT it hereby authorizes Charles D. Tillotson, Executive Director of the Plaquemines Port Harbor & Terminal District, to adopt the Port’s Security Plan, Vulnerability Assessment, and updated maritime policies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE PLAQUEMINES PARISH COUNCIL AS THE SOLE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE PLAQUEMINES PORT, HARBOR & TERMINAL DISTRICT THAT the Secretary of this Council is hereby authorized and directed to immediately certify and release this Resolution and that Port employees and officials are authorized to carry out the purposes of this Resolution, both without further reading and approval by the Plaquemines Parish Council.

Commissioner Schulz moved to Agenda Item 7, “New Business”; however, there were no matters to address. Therefore, Commissioner Newsom moved to Agenda Item 8, “Approval of minutes”. Without objection, so ordered.

RESOLUTION NO. 25-219

On motion of Commissioner LaFrance, seconded by Commissioner Newsom, and on roll call all members present and voting “YES”, except Commissioner Edwards, Guey, McCarty & Jurisich who were “ABSENT”, the following Resolution was adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLAQUEMINES PARISH COUNCIL AS THE SOLE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE PLAQUEMINES PORT, HARBOR & TERMINAL DISTRICT THAT it hereby approves the minutes from July 10, 2025, regular meeting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE PLAQUEMINES PARISH COUNCIL AS THE SOLE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE PLAQUEMINES PORT, HARBOR & TERMINAL DISTRICT THAT the Secretary of this Council is hereby authorized and directed to immediately certify and release this Resolution and that Parish employees and officials are authorized to carry out the purposes of this Resolution.

There being no further business to come before this Council, on motion Commissioner Cognevich, seconded by Commissioner Newsom, and on roll call all members present voting “YES, except Commissioners Edwards, Guey, McCarty, and Jurisich who were “ABSENT”, the meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

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Chairman

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Secretary

For a full transcript of discussions and presentations a video of this meeting is available for viewing on the Parish website [www.plaqueminesparish.com](http://www.plaqueminesparish.com) or on YouTube.