

Ocean Highway & Port Authority

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

Monthly Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2019

The Ocean Highway and Port Authority of Nassau County held its Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, July 10, 2019 the County Commissioners Chambers at the James S. Page Government Complex, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee, Florida 32097.

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Chairman Sturgess.

The invocation was given and Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Fullwood. Roll call was conducted by Ms. Barbara Amergian. All Commissioners were present. Also in attendance was Jeb Branham, Port Attorney; Laura DiBella, Port Director, Pierre LaPorte, Port Accountant; and Chris Ragucci, Port Operator.

Chairman Sturgess recognized Chip Ross, 210 N. Front Street, Fernandina Beach, Florida to speak to the Board. Mr. Ross has questions regarding the Fernandina Beach News Leader article on July 5th regarding the PILOT payment from OHPA to the City of Fernandina Beach. There was discussion about what city fund that the PILOT payment went into; he informed the Board that funds were deposited to the General Fund. There was further discussion about issues in the article.

Commissioner Franklin made the motion to accept the June 12, 2019 Monthly Meeting minutes with a correction. There was no discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board unanimously approved the purchase of a new printer/copier/scanner/fax machine for the OHPA office, purchase price not to exceed \$750.

Pierre LaPorte, Port Accountant, presented the June 2019 financials. There were no questions from the Board. Mr. LaPorte also presented the first draft of the 2019-2020 Budget to the Commissioners. There was discussion about the rent payments to OHPA from GSA for the Customs House; these payments will cease on April 20, 2020. Two proposed additional budget increases included increase in the commissioner's salaries and tablets/laptops for each of the commissioners to use for OHPA business.

A Budget Workshop was scheduled for Tuesday, July 30, 2019 at the OHPA Conference Room, 10 AM.

Jeb Branham, Port Attorney, presented his report. The quitclaim deed issue with Blue Lynx has been closed; Blue Lynx will reimburse OHPA \$920 for attorney fees. The issue of the PILOT payment due to the City of Fernandina Beach this month was discussed; there is concerned as to whether OHPA ever took action to approve the PILOT payment and what the end date was to the agreement. He is continuing to research the issue. There was discussion regarding the City recently rejecting the 2014 Strategic Master Plan at a City Commissioner meeting in June

and what the purpose was for that recent vote at the City Commissioners meeting. Mr. Branham is waiting for the minutes of that City meeting to become public so he can review. City Commissioner Ross offered that the rejection was done as a housekeeping matter for the City.

Laura DiBella, Port Director, presented her report to the Commissioners. She indicated that City Manager, Dale Martin, would be sending a letter requesting OHPA support to the Army Corp of Engineers as a channel sponsor in the channel realignment. Ms. DiBella also reported that six projects were report to FSTED for funding in the amount of \$3 to 4,000,000. Ms. DiBella reported that there is a grant still open for port security and working to submit to the grant with a 25% match. The question of the responsibility of the Nassau Tradeplex sign was resolved, the County has responsibility for it. Ms. DiBella gave an update on MARAD – still waiting for approval which is needed by 8/15/19; grants will need to be applied for and will have to move quickly if approval is granted. Ms. DiBella will be traveling to Singapore to represent the Port of Fernandina. She continues to work on new customers for the port. She reported to the Board that there are issues with the County and the Economic Development office and her relationship as the Port Director may change. Chairman Sturgess will draft a letter in support of Ms. DiBella's position as the Port Director.

Chris Ragucci, Port Operator, presented the monthly tonnage report to the Commissioners. He also reported that current trade negotiations with China are having an adverse effect on shipments. The Liebherr crane was damaged during a recent lightning storm and the repairs (\$40-50,000) have been completed. Dredging permits are progressing, currently waiting on the Army Corp of Engineers permits. Mr. Ragucci will meet in with Customs Official Steve Parrott and Commissioner Franklin to discuss the process of the housing the Customs agents when the GSA rent ends in April, 2020.

A recess was called at 8:00 PM. The meeting resumed at 8:08 PM.

Commissioner Hanna made the motion to authorize Chairman Sturgess to execute the Mutual Aid Agreement. Motion passed unanimously. Commission Fullwood made the motion to authorized Chairman Sturgess to execute the MOU with JaxPort. Motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion regarding partnering with Worldwide Terminals for a sponsorship level for the Right Whale Festival in November, 2019. The matter was tabled until the August meeting.

Commissioner Fullwood made the motion to accept Resolution 2019-10. A RESOLUTION OF THE OCEAN HIGHWAY AND PORT AUTHORITY OF NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA AUTHORIZING INCREASED FUNDING FOR A PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE REBAILITATION AND REFURBISHMENT OF PIER STRUCTURES AND BERTH MAINTENANCE DREDGING; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Port Security – Commissioner Fullwood – Nothing to report this month.

Customs House – Commissioner Franklin – The AC unit at the Customs House had repair work done. A new unit will eventually need to be installed. Two verbal quotes will be needed.

Economic Development – Commissioner Fullwood – Nothing to add to Ms. DiBella's report.

Emergency Management – Commissioner Franklin – Nothing to report this month.

Technical Coordinating Committee – Nothing to report this month.

TPO – Commissioner Cole – Nothing to report this month.

Nassau Chamber East Side – Commissioner Sturgess – Nothing to report this month.

Nassau County West Side – Commissioner Cole – Nothing to report this month.

In other items to be brought before the Commissioners: **Commissioner Fullwood asked for the Board's approval to dedicate the Customs House to former Commissioner Ronny Braddock. The motion was approved unanimously.** Chairman Sturgess asked Port Attorney Branham to check for any issues in dedicating a government designated building.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert H. Sturgess", written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and extends slightly below the line.

Robert H. Sturgess, Chairman