

**MANATEE COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY  
REGULAR MEETING  
PORT MANATEE INTERMODAL CENTER, THIRD FLOOR  
1905 Intermodal Circle  
Palmetto, Florida  
August 13, 2026**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4KFtzaC9Z87D5mn\\_SKKtBA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4KFtzaC9Z87D5mn_SKKtBA)

Present were:

Mike Rahn, Chairman  
Jason Bearden, First Vice-Chairman, attended by Zoom  
George W. Kruse, Second Vice-Chairman  
Amanda Ballard  
Dr. Bob McCann, attended by Zoom  
Tal Siddique

One Member seat is vacant

Also present were:

Carlos Buqueras, Executive Director  
Noah M. Daiker, Port Authority Attorney  
Denise Hege, Accounting, Clerk of the Circuit Court  
Robin Toth, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

 Chairman Rahn called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

2. **INVOCATION**

Chaplain Jeff Holton, Anchor House, delivered the invocation.

3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Member Kruse led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. **AUDIENCE INTRODUCTIONS**

 Audience introductions were skipped for this meeting.

**AGENDA**

PA20260813DOC001

5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** (All Agenda and Non-Agenda items)

 There being no public comment, Chairman Rahn closed public comment.

 Members Bearden and McCann acknowledged their presence by Zoom.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

 Carlos Buqueras, Executive Director, responded to questions regarding the scheduling of this meeting.

6.A. **PRESENTATION**

**MARK MEYER – PORT MANATEE RAILROAD**

 Mark Meyer, Marketing and Sales Director for Port Manatee Railroad (PMR) – Regional Rail LLC, utilized a slide presentation regarding the Regional Rail footprint, Regional Rail operates 17 railroads covering more than 800 miles of track, PMR operates four railroads

in Florida one of which is Port Manatee since 2021, PMR's role at Seaport Manatee, receives interchange from CSX Transportation, PMR Infrastructure and Service, some business moving by truck was converted to rail, customer value/service advantages, competitive transit times compared to other Florida ports, expanding import market cash, supporting diverse cargo markets through rail and major commodities handled by PMR, ability to support project cargo and handle oversized freight, PMR works with CSX to attract new customers and the amount of industrial development leads for potential business is increasing substantially, and PMR service-to-service commitment.

 Discussion ensued regarding focus on new rail development, looking to expand interchange tracks to handle all freight, speaking with the State on putting rail back in and bring markets back, opportunities to integrate rail with truck routes, transloading business in the past five years has grown exponentially, the rail network in Florida is very solid, and continuous investment is being made in railroad infrastructure. PA20260813DOC002

#### 6.B. **PRESENTATION**

##### **CRISTIANO BERBERT, DEPUTY CONSUL – GENERAL OF BRAZIL**

 Minister Cristiano Franco Berbert, Deputy Consul General of Brazil to Miami, utilized a slide presentation on the scale, history, and partnership with Brazil seen from Florida. Brazil is a country of continental scale, roughly the size of 50 Floridas and larger than the continental United States. Brazil is Florida's largest trade partner, 60 percent of Brazil's territory remains intact and has one of the world's cleanest power grids, is among the world's ten largest economies, is the second largest overseas market, Florida's largest export market, is the world's largest exporter of six foods and commodities and has the largest Brazilian community in the United States.

 Discussion ensued regarding how Port Manatee can position for more business to support Brazil's needs, trade that crosses Brazil's jurisdiction, Brazilian companies need to be kept informed of stronger assembly lines and industry opportunities, Port Manatee and Oxford Group USA partnership seeks to increase manufacturing opportunities around the Port, Port Manatee is the bulk gateway and desires more industry, Brazil on Florida's West Coast, the Port is working with all paper pulp manufacturers in Brazil, and maintain a cooperative agenda with the Consulate.

 Mr. Buqueras stated Port Manatee plans to attend the Rare Earth Industry Conference in November, and is invested in attracting Rare Earth as supply chain logistics and not as a manufacturer, using Port Manatee as a gateway to manage the production, transportation, and distribution of goods.

 Carlo Barbieri, President of Oxford Group USA, commented about Port Manatee as the gateway to Brazilian industry. PA20260813DOC003

#### **ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA**

No Consent Agenda items were pulled.

 Mr. Buqueras noted Consent Agenda Item 7.C, was updated to remove Line Item 2 from Budget Amendment Resolution PA-26-17.

 A motion was made by Member Siddique, seconded by Member Kruse, and carried 6

to 0, with Members Bearden and McCann by Zoom, to approve the Consent Agenda, incorporating the language as stated in the recommended motions on the cover sheets for the Consent Agenda, and as revised at this meeting.

7. **CONSENT AGENDA** PA20260813DOC004
- A. **WARRANT LIST**  
Accepted Warrant Listing from June 6, 2026, to July 30, 2026 PA20260813DOC005
- B. **MINUTES**  
Approved the Minutes of June 16, 2026
- C. **BUDGET AMENDMENT**  
Adopted Budget Amendment Resolution PA-26-17, budgeting \$3,344,769 capital contribution from the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, for the Berth 12 extension project PA20260813DOC006
- D. **DELETION OF PORT ASSETS**  
Authorized deletion of Assets as listed on attached Asset Deletion – August 13, 2026, Fixed Asset Listing PA20260813DOC007
- E. **INSURANCE RENEWALS FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2026-2027**  
Approved estimated insurance coverages for FY26/27 for the Port Authority, with possible increases/decreases due to changes in insurance coverage:  
  1. The Florida Municipal Insurance Trust (FMIT) for Real and Personal Property, for a premium of \$1,430,000. Boiler and Machinery and Crime included in Real and Personal Property coverage;
  2. The Inland Marine, Vehicle Liability and Workers' Compensation for premiums of \$128,281, \$47,471, and \$108,540, respectively; and
  3. The Port Liability – \$182,175, Umbrella – \$131,250, Public Officials (included in Port Liability) PA20260813DOC008
- F. **UNCOLLECTIBLE ACCOUNT**  
Approved a write-off totaling \$7,916.56, as identified in Manatee County Port Authority Uncollectible Accounts – August 13, 2026 PA20260813DOC009
- G. **KINDER MORGAN LEASE AMENDMENT THREE**  
Approved and authorized Chairman to execute Port Manatee and Kinder Morgan Lease Amendment Three to Agreement (9/22/22) between Manatee County Port Authority and Kinder Morgan Port Manatee Terminal LLC, for lease of approximately six acres located on Reeder Road, Reeder Lot Parcel, at a rate of \$4,000 per acre, and 4.9 acres (Zone B Parcel), at a rate of \$3,000 per acre, to commence on August 6, 2026, and terminate August 31, 2028 PA20260813DOC010
- H. **SOUTH DOCK STREET CONTRACT AWARD**  
Approved and authorized Chairman to execute contract between Manatee County Port Authority and Landmark Services of Southwest Florida, Inc., for \$1,422,773.63, and a contingency of \$59,528.85, for the South Dock Street Project, subject to receipt of all required bonds and insurance, and Florida Commerce approval, for total project cost of \$1,934,894.63, including previously executed Engineering contracts PA20260813DOC011
- I. **TARIFF NO. 3**  
Approved revised wording to Port Manatee Tarriff No. 3, Items 280 and 445, to change license expiration from December 31 to an annual term based on date of issuance PA20260813DOC012

J. **TAMPA BAY ESTUARY PROGRAM – THIRD AMENDED AND RESTATED INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT**

Approved and authorized Chairman to execute Amended and Restated Interlocal Agreement between Tampa Bay Estuary Program and Manatee County Port Authority, continuing the Port Authority's participation in the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, and reaffirms commitment of participating agencies to implement the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)

PA20260813DOC013

(End Consent Agenda)

(Depart Member Bearden)

8. **BUDGET PRESENTATION – FY2026/2027 PROPOSED BUDGET**

 Sheila McLean, Chief Financial Officer, utilized a slide presentation to present the FY 26/27 Proposed Port Authority Budget. Total FY27 revenue is projected at \$36.2 million, reflecting a modest net decrease of 0.9 percent compared to FY26. Total expenses of \$24,148,232 are projected to have a 14 percent decline, resulting in a 43 percent increase in net income of approximately \$12 million before depreciation. Port Operations are self-sustaining and receive no property tax support. Port fees and rates are structured to fund operational growth and capital needs.

 Revenues remain resilient with primary revenue drivers of waterborne (vessel and cargo-related operations), leases, cranes, storage, security fees, and other revenues. Compared to FY26, waterborne revenues are projected to increase by 5.6 percent, and security fees are projected to decrease by 17 percent. FY26 was the first year of crane revenue. Crane services were previously outsourced by Logitech, but the Port assumed the services, and it has become one of the greatest revenues brought on board, producing in excess of 33 percent over expenses.

 Total operating expenses for all department budgets are \$21.1 million, reflecting a decrease of 11 percent from 2026. Operations remain the priority comprised of seven departments. Salaries, wages, and benefits are the largest Port expense at 48.6 percent, followed by operation expenses of 38.9 percent. Total expenses decreased by 14 percent by evaluating some of the contracts for consulting services in 2026 and realizing it was more effective to utilize in-house personnel for efficiency and productivity. Some operational costs are being retracted and invested into salaries and staffing levels.

 The Port currently has two active bond issuances totaling \$38 million of which payments of \$2 million are made annually. One bond issuance has been paid, so there is very minimal debt. Net income of \$12 million reflects a 43 percent increase, which allows the Port to be competitive and increase the Port's blueprint in growth.

 Ms. McLean continued with FY27 Budget Highlights including six requested positions consisting of five security officers and one crane technician, for a total of \$397,000 with benefits. This was partially offset by a \$300,000 reduction in contracted security consulting services. In order to maintain some operations, there is a one-time capital request of \$515,000 for generators and vehicle replacements for security officers.

An eight percent health insurance premium increase is proposed for an \$84,000 impact, and adjustments are included for cost of living (COLA). FY26 changes affecting the FY27 budget include \$437,000 to support IT staff oversight of networks, cybersecurity, and GIS

structure, offset by decreased consultant costs.



Ms. McLean addressed Multi-Year Comparison of Revenues to Operating Expense. Revenues grew from \$18.2 million in FY20 to \$36.2 million in FY26, an estimated increase of 110 percent. Operating expenses grew from \$13.1 million in FY20 to \$20.0 million in FY26, reflecting a 52 percent increase supporting growth, maintenance, and operational needs.

Capital infrastructure investment and grant matching funds sustain momentum, and the Port's continued growth requires capital investment. Partnerships with federal and State agencies help the Port blueprint in growth. The Port's total capital investment strategy will be implemented by leveraging local dollars with outside investment. There are 17 active projects in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) totaling \$125.4 million funded 67.6 percent by grants.



John Glass, Director of Engineering and Construction, reviewed active projects of Berth 4 Extension (\$24 million), Berth 6 Pavement (\$3 million), Berth 10 Improvements (\$550 million), Container Yard Phase 3 with 16 acres of pavement and additional capacity (\$25 million), South Dock Street (\$2.2 million), and the Rail-Switching Yard with 7,000 linear feet of track (\$5.5 million). Future projects include two mobile harbor cranes, South Gate Security Interchange, Port Master Plan Update, Grove Street Design, and fish farm site improvements.



Amanda Tyner, Director of Communications and Project Development, summarized Economic Impact (23-25) of 11,855,828 million tons of cargo, \$10.5 billion of annual economic impact, 53,984 Direct-Indirect Jobs, and \$349.4 Million of State/local tax contributions.



Discussion ensued regarding the next step following the completion of the Port CIP, if potential land acquisition in North county is being considered for future Port growth, many ports are looking at dry inland ports to avoid congestion, Port Master Plan includes the ability to add two more berths, Port is looking to expand berthing north and south, what infrastructure can be considered to enable businesses in North county to serve potential Port expansion in North county, there is commercial and industrial space deficit, one of the Port's shipping lines purchased 460 acres across the street, the Port has 1,500 acres of available land to develop, seeing Port clients bring investments to Port Manatee, State and federal appropriations by levels, there are opportunities for Port Manatee to acquire land, Port vision is for a manufacturing Port-centric ecosystem network around the Port, and Port Manatee is located at County Line Road with Hillsborough County with the TECO property purchase.



A motion was made by Member Siddique, seconded by Member Ballard, and carried 5-0, with Member McCann voting by Zoom, and Member Bearden absent, to adopt Resolution PA-26-18, adopting the Manatee County Port Authority Budget for the period beginning October 1, 2026, and ending September 30, 2027, in the amount of \$36,186,707.

The Port Authority Budget will be included in the public hearing process before the Board of County Commissioners in connection with the adoption of the County budget.

PA20260813DOC014

9. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Carlos Buqueras, Executive Director, had no comments.

10. **AUTHORITY MEMBER COMMENTS**

There were no Member comments.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chairman Rahn adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Minutes Approved: October 13, 2026