

**The Portsmouth Port and Industrial Commission  
September 24, 2024**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Ronald Peterman – Vice Chair  
Arnette McSwain – Treasurer  
Benjamin Foster – Commissioner  
Peter Hansen – Commissioner  
Keith Rice – Commissioner

**ALSO PRESENT:** Brian Donahue – Secretary  
Kelsey Swieringa – Assistant City Attorney  
Mark Hugel – City Council Liaison

**GUEST:** Chris Gullickson – Port of Virginia  
Steve Edwards – City Assessor  
Dorothy Morgan – Deputy City Assessor

**ABSENT:** Angelia Allen – Chair  
Edward Barham, III – Commissioner  
Jeff Miller – Deputy City Attorney  
De’Andre Barnes – City Council Liaison  
Steven Carter – City Manager  
Flora Berisha – Finance  
Kyera Pope – Finance

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**Welcome & Call to Order**

- The Vice-Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

**Roll Call**

- Mr. Donahue called roll. A quorum was present.

**Minutes**

- The minutes from the August 27, 2024, Regular Minutes were approved.

**Action:** On a motion by Ms. McSwain and seconded by Mr. Hansen, the Commissioners approved the minutes from the August 27, 2024, Regular Meeting.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Peterman - yes; Ms. McSwain - yes; Mr. Hansen - yes; Ms. Allen-absent; Mr. Foster – yes; Mr. Rice – yes; Mr. Barham - absent. Approved 5-0 vote.

**Old Business**

- **Port of Virginia Update:** Mr. Chris Gullickson of the Port of Virginia stated that Portsmouth Marine Terminal continues to make great progress towards an end of year completion for improvements in support of Dominion Energy’s Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Project. The Port of Virginia has participated in stakeholder engagement activities with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). BOEM has begun the process of identifying additional offshore lease areas off the coast of the Mid-Atlantic. The Port of Virginia is continuing to work with the Virginia Maritime Association, providing input on where those areas might exist. The Port is expecting the arrival of four new ship-to-shore cranes this year.

- **0 Sixth St., 1603 Seventh St.:** Mr. Donahue provided an update on the transfer of the property at 0 Sixth Street and 1603 Seventh Street which is owned by the Portsmouth Redevelopment & Housing Authority. The property is being transferred to the PPIC for marketing and disposition. The PPIC has received approval from the Planning Commission for the vacation of the right-of-way that divides the properties, and the request is scheduled to go to City Council for final approval on October 8, 2024. Following City Council approval, the consolidation of the property to create one 2-acre property can proceed.
- **FY25 Port Host Community Grant – 1040 Virginia Ave.** – Mr. Donahue provided an update on the FY25 Port Host Community Grant application, which was approved by PPIC at its August 27, 2024 meeting. The application received is for the Norfolk & Portsmouth Beltline Railroad’s property at 1040 Virginia Avenue. The FY25 grant request is in the amount of \$1 million. The application is scheduled to go before City Council for consideration at its September 24, 2024 meeting. Following City Council approval, the application will be submitted to Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development for consideration. The funding will be utilized for a transloading facility, which will move product from railcar to container. This ultimately will reduce the number of trucks traversing Portsmouth roadways.

#### **New Business**

**Project Semper Melior** – Mr. Donahue briefed the PPIC on Project Semper Melior. He stated that General Dynamics is planning to expand their existing shipyard at 2 Harper Avenue. General Dynamics is planning to improve the property’s waterfront, including piers and the installation of new cranes to support larger vessels being serviced. Currently, Navy LHD vessels are not able to be serviced in Portsmouth due to their size. General Dynamics will be making modifications to accommodate those ships, which will allow for new contracting opportunities. This expansion will provide for approximately \$22 million in real estate improvements, machinery, tools, and support the creation of up to 200 new jobs. General Dynamics will qualify for several local and state incentive programs.

#### **Closed Meeting**

**ACTION:** At 9:19 a.m. Ms. McSwain, seconded by Mr. Hansen, move to go into a closed meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Subsection 2.2-3711 A.3 for the purpose of discussing the disposition of real property where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, specifically regarding the disposition of 3920 and 3930 Burtons Point Road.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Peterman - yes; Ms. McSwain - yes; Mr. Hansen - yes; Ms. Allen-absent; Mr. Foster – yes; Mr. Rice – yes; Mr. Barham - absent. Approved 5-0 vote.

#### **Open Meeting**

**ACTION:** At 10:19 a.m. Ms. McSwain, seconded by Mr. Hansen, I hereby move that each Commissioner certify that, to the best of his or her knowledge: (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting just concluded.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Peterman - yes; Ms. McSwain - yes; Mr. Hansen - yes; Ms. Allen-absent; Mr. Foster – yes; Mr. Rice – yes; Mr. Barham - absent. Approved 5-0 vote.

**Items Submitted by Commissioners**

- No Items Submitted

**Report Backs**

- Mr. Donahue stated that the Virginia Maritime Association’s 2024 International Trade Symposium will be held on October 8-10, 2024 at the Hilton Norfolk The Main. It was requested that any commissioners interested in attending notify Ms. Karen Williams. Ms. Williams will email additional VMA24 information to the PPIC.

**Adjourn**

- The meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Donahue  
Secretary

Ron Peterman  
Vice-Chair