

The Portsmouth Port and Industrial Commission

February 24, 2026

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Angelia Allen – Chair
Edward Barham, III – Commissioner
Benjamin Foster – Commissioner
Peter Hansen – Commissioner
Ronald Peterman – Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT: Brian Donahue – Secretary
Charles J. Bauman, III – Assistant Secretary
Mark Hugel – City Council Liaison
Dr. William Dodson – City Council Liaison
Steven Carter – City Manager
Jeff Miller – Deputy City Attorney
Kelsey Swieringa – Assistant City Attorney
Chris Gullickson – Port of Virginia

GUESTS:

ABSENT: Keith Rice – Vice Chair
Arnette McSwain – Treasurer
LaKeitha Forest – Finance

Welcome & Call to Order

- The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Roll Call

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

Minutes

- The minutes from the January 27, 2026, Regular Meeting were presented and adopted.

Action: On a motion by Mr. Barham and seconded by Mr. Hansen, the Commissioners approved the minutes from the January 27, 2026, Regular Meeting as presented.

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

Financials

- No financials presented; the PPIC's Quarterly Financial Report was presented during the December 23, 2025, meeting.

Old Business

- **Port of Virginia Update:** Mr. Chris Gullickson from the Port of Virginia reported that while volume levels were flat in 2025, the Port is the second fastest growing on the US East Coast over the past five years. Exciting developments include having four ultra-large container vessel berths now active, with a fifth coming soon, and the completion of dredging projects expected by spring, making it the deepest port on the East Coast.
- **DeLong Agricultural Transloading Facility:** Mr. Bauman discussed with the commission endorsing DeLong Company Inc.'s application for a BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation. A federal BUILD grant was submitted on February 24, 2026. The grant would support Phase 2 of the Portsmouth Agriculture Intermodal Export Facility, aiming to expand storage and handling capacity for U.S. farm products. The Commission will serve as the technical applicant, with DeLong as the sub-recipient, incurring no financial encumbrance on the PPIC or City.
- **3920-3930 Burtons Point Road:** Mr. Donahue advised the Commission Stonemont Financial Group has extended the feasibility period under the Purchase Agreement for 3920-3930 Burtons Point Rd. through April 17, 2026. Stonemont is currently in the environmental review process with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

New Business

- **Budget Committee:** Commissioner Peterman was appointed to the PPIC's FY27 Budget Committee alongside Treasurer McSwain.

Closed Meeting

Action: At 9:14 am Mr. Peterman, seconded by Mr. Foster, moved to go into a closed meeting: pursuant to Virginia Code Subsection 2.2-3711 A.6 for the purpose of discussion or consideration of the investment of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the governmental unit would be adversely affected, specifically regarding Project SeaArc and American Cruise Lines.

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

Open Meeting

Action: At 9:32 a.m. Mr. Peterman, seconded by Mr. Foster, moved 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. Barham - yes; Mr. Foster - yes; Mr. Hansen - yes; Ms. McSwain - absent; Mr. Peterman - yes; Mr. Rice - absent; Ms. Allen - yes. Approved 5-0 vote

- **American Cruise Lines:** Mr. Bauman announced that Economic Development staff presented a project to the Virginia Port Authority on February 12, 2026 to secure funding through the Local Aid to Ports grant program for waterfront docking improvements, aiming to support and increase American Cruise Lines' calls to Portsmouth. Mr. Bauman discussed the grant program's requirements for the provision of a 25% financial match. American Cruise Lines has committed to providing \$50,000 in matching funds and the City of Portsmouth will provide \$25,000. The Commission voted to authorize an additional financial contribution of up to \$25,00.

Action: On a motion by Mr. Barham and seconded by Mr. Foster, the Commission voted to authorize the contribution of up to \$25,000, to support the Virginia Port Authority grant to improve waterfront docking infrastructure.

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

Items Submitted by Commissioners

- Councilman Hugel advised the Commission of a February 23, 2026 meeting with the NNSY installation commander and commanding officer of Naval Support Activity Norfolk to discuss collaboration on the Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP). It presents an opportunity for grant funding for local capital improvement projects. The South Gate Annex was also discussed and it was stated that the property is currently being assessed under the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP) to determine future utilization needs for the property. Additional future engagement is planned.

Councilman Hugel also discussed meetings with Tidewater Community College to discuss new apprentice programs at the Skills Trade Academy and how that supports Portsmouth's Workforce Development initiatives.

Report Backs

- **Workforce Development Roundtable** – Mr. Donahue advised that the Economic Development Department will be convening a Workforce Development Roundtable with industry and education partners within the next 60-days to identify current employment demands and collaborate on the provision of career development and training resources for Portsmouth residents. Chair Allen volunteered to participate on the Roundtable on behalf of the PPIC.
- **New Team Member Introduction** – Mr. Donahue introduced new Economic Development team member Maya Keplinger, Business Development Specialist, and announced the resignation of Autumn Bailey, Sr. Business Development Specialist, who has accepted a new career opportunity.

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Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Donahue
Secretary

Angelia Allen
Chair