

## AGENDA

Port Freeport  
Pilot Commission  
Special Meeting  
Thursday, December 14, 2023, 3:15 pm - 3:30 pm  
In Person & Videoconference - Administration Building - 1100 Cherry Street - Freeport

This meeting agenda with the agenda packet is posted online at [www.portfreeport.com](http://www.portfreeport.com)

The meeting will be conducted pursuant to Section 551.127 of the Texas Government Code titled "Videoconference Call." A quorum of the Pilot Commission, including the presiding officer, will be present at the Commissioner Meeting Room located at 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, Texas. The public will be permitted to attend the meeting in person or by videoconference. The videoconference is available online as follows:

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88508154467?pwd=UU5Nb25CM0w2WHY0UGdtRHBvTTFqZz09>

Meeting ID: 885 0815 4467

Passcode: 983002

### Dial by your location

• 1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 885 0815 4467

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/ker7gCJldR>

1. CONVENE OPEN SESSION in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:
2. Roll Call.
3. Public Comment. (Public comment on any matter not on this Agenda will be limited to 5 minutes per participant and can be completed in person or by videoconference)
4. Public Testimony. (Public testimony on any item on this Agenda will be limited to 5 minutes per agenda item to be addressed per participant and can be completed in person or by videoconference. The participant shall identify in advance the specific agenda item or items to be addressed.
5. Approval of minutes from the Special Meetings held April 27, 2023 and October 19, 2023.
6. Review Procedures for Pilot License Renewal.
7. Receive update from the Brazos Pilots Association.
8. Adjourn.

***The Pilot Commission does not anticipate going into a closed session under Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code at this meeting for any other items on the agenda, however, if necessary, the Pilot Commission may go into a closed session as permitted by law regarding any item on the agenda.***

With this posted notice, Port Commissioners have been provided certain background information on the above listed agenda items. Copies of this information can be obtained by the public at the Port Administrative offices at 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, TX.



Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO

**PORT FREEPORT**

Minutes of Pilot Commission  
Port Freeport  
April 27, 2023

A Special Meeting of the Pilot Commission of Port Freeport was held April 27, 2023, beginning at 12:24 PM at the Port Freeport Administration Building, 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, Texas.

**This meeting agenda with the agenda packet is posted online at [www.portfreeport.com](http://www.portfreeport.com)**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86524755053?pwd=UVFSYk1aUmhRc1Z4WVo5c1IwdTR3dz09>

Meeting ID: 865 2475 5053

Passcode: 141122

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 865 2475 5053

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kepihA2jOI>

Commissioners present in person:

Mr. John Hoss, Chairman  
Mr. Rudy Santos, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Dan Croft, Secretary  
Mr. Rob Giesecke, Asst. Secretary  
Mr. Ravi Singhania, Commissioner  
Mr. Shane Pirtle, Commissioner

Staff Members present:

Ms. Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO  
Mr. Al Durel, Director of Operations  
Mr. Jason Hull, Director of Engineering  
Mr. Chris Hogan, Director of Protective Services  
Mr. Brandon Robertson, Network Systems Manager  
Ms. Missy Bevers, Executive Assistant  
Mr. Austin Seth, Operations Supervisor

Also, present:

Capt. Matthew Krohn, Brazos Pilots Association  
Capt. Ross Coviello, Brazos Pilots Association  
Mr. Brandon Heasley, Vopak  
Ms. Tammy Moss, Brazos Pilots Association  
Mr. Chris Moore, Texas Port Ministry  
Ms. Karla Clark

1. CONVENE OPEN SESSION in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:
2. Roll Call.

Commissioner Hoss noted that all Commissioners were present in the Board Room.

3. Public Comment.

There were no comments from the public.

4. Public Testimony.

There was no testimony from the public.

5. Approval of minutes from the Special Meeting held September 22, 2022.

A motion was made by Commissioner Santos to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Singhania with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

6. Receive update from the Channel User Advisory Group.

Captain Krohn began his update by covering the communication fund budget stating the ending balance for Q3 was \$86,628.37 with an ending balance of \$72,244.21 noting that fiscal year ends March 1<sup>st</sup>. He illustrated the profit and loss annual comparison from March 2022 through February 2023 showing the communication fee to be at \$517,516.08 prior to Freeport LNG incident vs. \$424,902.88 after the incident. He noted that expenses remained average, with equipment being a large contributor last year. He further illustrated the revenue, expenses and balance on the next slide showing that income was steady in Q1 with LNG online, dropping in Q2 (when LNG had their incident) and steady again in Q3 and Q4. Vessel movements decreased slightly because of Freeport LNG but with Phillips and the Port staying constant, there were plenty of movements with the fee being traffic driven vs. size driven. The average comms fee per vessel movement was \$189.95 vs. \$207.21 the prior year. The pilots are currently operating with a 4-dispatcher staff with different rotation schedules to accommodate staff needs. Capt. Krohn stated that within the next two months, there will be a new dispatcher/administration assistant who will be in charge of the administrative duties and serve as a backup dispatcher when needed. He also shared the list of agents and terminals registered for the dispatch system, noting the list is constantly growing. The final slide showed the 4 months reserve fund he spoke to earlier showing the average amount they are looking at is approximately \$146,000 noting as the average month changes, the total amount will decrease/increase as well.

Mr. Brandon Heasley, chairman of the Channel User Advisory Group and terminal manager for Vopak terminal in Freeport gave a brief update stating that based on the past year with Freeport LNG and performance of dispatch, the group voted to maintain for another six months at the \$65 base plus the 0.18 multiplier. This will give the Pilots more time to grow their reserve and the ability to fill the administrative assistant position.

7. Receive update from the Brazos Pilots Association.

Captain Krohn shared a vessel count by terminal for 2022 vs. 2021 showing how the numbers have maintained with the exception of LNG who went from 16% to 8%. Total vessel count was down 10.7% from 1253 to 1118. He then shared the balance for the boat loan as of December 2022 to be \$1,059,473.13 noting the beginning balance was \$2.6 million. Captain noted that prior to Covid, the pilots had increased their training and education. Once Covid hit, training ceased, and they were able to build their balance and perform other medical emergency training for situations such as a pilot falling onto a boat or over the side or a deckhand incident with a lot of medical potential needs. Captain Krohn noted \$38,000 was spent in 2021 with all expenses associated for staff improvement to better support the Port. Additionally, larger forthcoming expenditures will be for ship handling training for 2-3 three pilots. Captain Krohn shared a photo of the BPA Shipyard that is near completion. This will be the new docks for the pilot boats. Inside the facility is a 3,000 square foot open space to work on engines and different components of the pilot boat. An apartment is included upstairs for the deckhands and boatmen to sleep between jobs giving them the ability to stay in the area and increase their quality of life by providing a place to rest other than the boat. They will always have a radio on hand in case of a potential emergency on the channel. The building is located across the canal from the pilot station. Captain Krohn also reported that Brazos Harbor 8 is nearing completion with the fenders installed there as well as at Brazos Harbor 7, noting they are absolutely fantastic. With the new fenders, he stated there is a lot more error room, more safety percentage and more risk mitigation built into the maneuver, the pilots are very happy with them. Captain Krohn put out a notice in February about pilot ladder safety noting that in this industry, a pilot passes every month (in the world) due to pilot ladders. Pilots have been increasing awareness with terminal users, ship's agents, the vessels and the vessel operators to have a properly rigged pilot ladder. Lastly, the NOAA PORTS System went live at the end of 2022 and has been a huge asset for the Pilots.

Commissioner Giesecke inquired how often they have come across a non-compliant pilot ladder prior to the notice going out. Captain Krohn responded that as a pilot on a two-week duty period, he has seen this happen once or twice.

Commissioner Hoss inquired how the expanded facility may have impacted finances. Captain Krohn stated that a small loan was taken out for approximately 15% with the remainder covered in cash, adding that the decision and position was made prior to LNG experiencing its major decrease so the Pilots followed through with their plan.

Commissioner Hoss then asked for two motions from the Commission. The first motion is to approve the new and expanded maintenance facility the Pilots have built and christened. A motion was made by Commissioner Singhania to approve the facility. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Croft with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Hoss noted for the record that it states within the pilot code, the board must approve such facility.

The second motion is to accept and approve the reports, including financial reports as presented. A motion was made by Commissioner Pirtle to accept and approve the reports. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Giesecke with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

9. Adjourn.

With no further business before the Commission, a motion was made by Commissioner Singhania to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Santos with the meeting adjourned at 12:56 PM.

---

John Hoss, Chairman

---

Rudy Santos, Vice Chairman

---

Dan Croft, Secretary/Treasurer

---

Ravi Singhania, Commissioner

---

Shane Pirtle, Commissioner

---

Rob Giesecke, Commissioner

Minutes of Pilot Commission  
Port Freeport  
October 19, 2023

A Special Meeting of the Pilot Commission of Port Freeport was held October 19, 2023, beginning at 12:15 PM at the Port Freeport Administration Building, 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, Texas.

**This meeting agenda with the agenda packet is posted online at [www.portfreeport.com](http://www.portfreeport.com)**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87878763807?pwd=cHlCTDlEZCt1S3BZZHptMXNaSGtKZz09>

Meeting ID: 878 7876 3807

Passcode: 782238

Dial by your location

• +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 878 7876 3807

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcYJvqLlkG>

Commissioners present in person:

Mr. Rudy Santos, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Dan Croft, Secretary/Treasurer  
Mr. Ravi Singhania, Commissioner  
Mr. Rob Giesecke, Commissioner  
Ms. Barbara Fratila, Commissioner  
Mr. Kim Kincannon, Commissioner

Staff Members present:

Ms. Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO  
Mr. Rob Lowe, Chief Financial Officer  
Mr. Al Durel, Director of Operations  
Mr. Jason Hull, Director of Engineering  
Mr. Chris Hogan, Director of Protective Services  
Mr. Brandon Robertson, Network Systems Manager  
Ms. Missy Bevers, Executive Assistant  
Mr. Don Mullett, Crane Maintenance Manager  
Mr. Jesse Hibbetts, Operations Manager  
Mr. Austin Seth, Operations Supervisor

Also, present:

Capt. Matthew Krohn, Brazos Pilots Association  
Capt. Ross Coviello, Brazos Pilots Association  
Mr. Brandon Heasley, Vopak  
Mr. Paul Bridges, Paul Bridges & Associates  
Ms. Ann Poninski, P66

1. CONVENE OPEN SESSION in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:

2. Roll Call.

Commissioner Singhania noted that all Commissioners were present in the Board Room.

3. Public Comment.

There were no comments from the public.

4. Public Testimony.

There was no testimony from the public.

5. Approval of minutes from the Special Meeting held September 22, 2022.

Commissioner Singhania there would be no action on this item as there was an oversight and the wrong minutes were noted here.

6. Election of Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary/Treasurer for the period, June 2023-May 2025.

Commissioner Singhania stated this item is done every two years noting it has been common practice for the officers for the Pilot Commission to mirror the officers for Port Commission in an effort to keep continuity between the two commissions and reduce confusion. The officer positions for the Pilot Commission include Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary/Treasurer. Commissioner Singhania then asked for a motion to approve said positions with Commissioner Singhania as Chairman, Commissioner Giesecke as Vice Chairman and Commissioner Fratila as Secretary/Treasurer.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giesecke to approve the officers as stated above. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Croft with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

7. Receive update from the Channel User Advisory Group.

Captain Krohn began his update by sharing the mandate that was adopted during the last rate request in 2021 explaining the Channel User Advisory Group meets quarterly to go over anything happening in the channel to dispatch matters. The group then reports to the Commission semi-annually. He then went over the communication fund budget stating the ending balance for Q4 was \$72,244.21 (FY ends March 1<sup>st</sup>) noting it was a year of decline due to LNG being offline. He illustrated the profit and loss annual comparison from Sept. 2022-Feb 2023 (\$182,529.17) vs. Mar. 2023-August 2023 showing the communication fee to be at \$240,301.26. He further illustrated the revenue, expenses and balance on the next slide the highlighting the IT services explaining that anytime the Pilots have a customer who wants to see a change or see something new with the service, or they have a need that needs to be met by DataPoints or Metrix, they provide it immediately at a cost of approximately \$6,000-\$8,000 per task. He noted that payroll has stayed constant but did add an administrative assistant who is in charge of dispatch day-to-day. Vessel movements went up in March trending up from where they were last year with numbers extending across the board. Car carriers have come back up,

crude oil has steadied at about 10-16 ships monthly with LNG at 18, the Port averaging 25-30 ships and Phillips regular at 20-22 vessels. The pilots are currently operating with a 4-dispatcher staff with different rotation schedules to accommodate staff needs as well as the new administrative assistant. He also shared the list of agents and terminals registered for the dispatch system, noting the list is constantly growing with the dredge company being the newest addition which has helped their process tremendously being able to see movements, etc. Capt. Krohn stated that recently they had a situation at their old station where they found mold and needed to move dispatch to a new location. They explored different avenues for the most cost-effective place to move the dispatch center ultimately identifying a commercial rental in Lake Jackson. With room in the budget under comms fees, they were able to secure the rental for \$3,000/month noting that because of its location it insulates them from the storms and heavy weather that moves in at times and doesn't take them in and out of operation. It's a centralized location in Lake Jackson with approximately 2400 square feet. They presented it to the Channel User Advisory Group at their last meeting, had the location approved and moved in recently. However, he still needs to get it approved as a location on their portfolio for the Pilots. He noted the boat house is still there and the boats are stationed on the water so there is a presence there and available as a backup location should something happen with the Lake Jackson location.

Mr. Brandon Heasley, chairman of the Channel User Advisory Group and terminal manager for Vopak terminal in Freeport stated that in addition to the slides Captain Krohn presented, the group voted to maintain and approved the \$3,000/monthly rental fee for the dispatch center relocation. There were no other updates from the channel users.

#### 8. Approval of new location for dispatch center.

The Pilots have secured a building in Lake Jackson for \$3,000/month but is within the budget under the comms fee. They are not increasing the fee, but using the money that is currently coming in and earmarking it for the rental. Commissioner Santos inquired if the Lake Jackson location will be the permanent location for dispatch or temporary. Captain Krohn stated it could be a temporary situation, but they will need to see if it works for about 3-4 months. If all goes well; it will be permanent. If it does not, they will need to find something else. Plans for the old pilot station are undetermined at this time. The lease is for 3 years with different mitigating factors incorporated should they need to get out of it early if it doesn't work.

A motion was made by Commissioner Santos to approve the new location for dispatch center. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fratila with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

#### 7. Receive update from the Brazos Pilots Association.

Captain Krohn shared a YTD vessel count by terminal as of Sept 2023 showing BASF at 2%, Brazos Harbor 24% and Vopak 26% with LNG at 15%, Seaway 11% and Phillips at 22% for a total vessel count of 849 for this calendar year, expecting 1250 by calendar year end. He then shared the balance for the boat loan as of December 2022 was \$1,059,473.13 noting the new balance as of September 2023 is now \$796,839.37. With regard to education and training, Captain Krohn stated they grew the account back in 2020 noting that during Covid, training ceased, and they were able to build their balance. That has now changed with income into the



account at \$56,068.24 and expenses at \$118,432.18 for an ending balance as of Sept 2023 at \$55,763.27. Education and training this year has included the following:

- Medical/Trauma Training (Joint Exercise with Freeport Fire & EMS)
- Captain Krohn – Warsash Maritime Manned Models Shiphandling Training
- Captain Niday – Port Revel Manned Models Shiphandling Training
- Captain Coviello – Echelon Front/Maritime Pilots Institute Leadership Development Training

Captain Krohn also shared pictures from the training with Freeport Fire & EMS as well as trainings he and Captain Coviello attended.

Commissioner Croft inquired about the NOAA chart updates. Captain Krohn stated that it has been troublesome to have Berth 8 added to the chart with the regional contact from NOAA not as effective as the previous adding that he may have to fly to Washington, DC to have an in-person conversation with NOAA to have the chart updated. They have also been trying to work with NOAA as the new channel is implemented to have the chart updated as each portion is complete noting there seems to be about a 6-month wait before new items are added.

Commissioner Croft also inquired about the Rice’s whale issue asking if there were any new developments. Captain Krohn stated the subject has come up that eventually speed restrictions will be implemented outside the port area. The driver is to make sure the vessels are moving no more than 10 knots offshore which is terrible for operations an efficiency. They are also requiring the pilot boat to go 10 knots or less which is severely detrimental. This means a pilot is going on a pilot boat an hour and a half before he is needed on a ship, soaking up pilot hours, increasing fuel consumption just to get the same level of operations in place today. This is not a necessary task/step to solving the problem. The critical habitat area is currently not part of our waterway, but it is coming this way so we need to make sure it does not become part of our waterway so we can keep it efficient.

9. Adjourn.

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 12:54 PM.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ravi Singhanian, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rob Giesecke, Vice Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Barbara Fratila, Secretary/Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rudy Santos, Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Croft, Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kim Kincannon, Commissioner