

**Minutes of the Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District**  
**May 16, 2024**  
**Regular Meeting**

**A regular meeting of the Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation and Canal Commission was held on Thursday May 16, 2024, at 4:30 P.M., at the Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District (PISBND) Office, located at 250 Industrial Drive, Port Isabel, Texas 78578.**

**Commissioners Present were:**

Victor Barrera, Commissioner Chairman,  
Joe Martinez, Commissioner Secretary,  
Jose L Morales, Commissioner,

**Others in Attendance were:**

Steve Bearden, Port Director/General Manager,  
Ana V. Lopez, Office Manager,  
Deborah A. Morales, San Benito City Commissioner,

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Victor Barrera at 4:30 P.M.

Item #3 on the Agenda Public Comments had no one from the public desiring to speak.

The Minutes for the Regular April 17, 2024, were presented, and discussed the following motion was made:

**A motion was made by Mr. Martinez and seconded by Mr. Barrera to approve the above meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**

The Commissioner then discussed the windstorm insurance requirements to certify the roof on the LAMEC Building at 252 Industrial Drive. The roof is now 28 years old, and no windstorm inspector will certify the roof that is older than 10 years. Therefore, Mr. Bearden requested to have the Port Engineer prepare the bid documents and go out for bids to replace the roof to TWIA specifications. There being no additional discussion, the following action was taken:

**A motion was made by Mr. Morales and seconded by Mr. Martinez to approve advertising the roof replacement for bids as stated above. Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Bearden next discussed the concrete parking area for the main office and LAMEC asphalt parking lot, as the concrete parking area was built in 1986 and the LAMEC asphalt was built in 1995. Mr. Bearden recommended that the port employees repair the concrete expansion joints and that the Port Engineer prepare a bid package to place two (2) inches of new asphalt over the existing parking lots. The Commissioners decided to have the Port Director look for a paving company that could spray a sealer on the present asphalt and concrete and repair the concrete expansion joints and get an estimate on the cost. There being no further discussion the following motion was made and seconded by:

**A motion was made by Mr. Morales and seconded by Mr. Martinez to table action on this issue until the Port Director could bring back an estimate on cost of the sealant spray and expansion joint repairs. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Martinez abstained from voting on or deliberating about the following two (2) agenda matter(s), in accordance with Chapter 171 of the Texas Local Government Code (as to Conflicts of Interest). Mr. Martinez did not leave the room.**

Agenda items #7 and #8 were discussed together as the planned workshop of Wednesday May 15, 2024, was cancelled due to lack of a quorum. Two primary issues were discussed by Commissioners Barrera and Morales and those being insurance and rent abatement for the industry as they struggle through low prices of shrimp due to dumping of farm raised imports, high fuel cost and labor issues. The insurance issue was tabled until the Port Attorney could be present to discuss the issue from the legal standpoint and it was decided to give one last abatement through August 2024 to the three (3) shrimp tenants. There being no additional discussion on the subject, the following action was taken:

**A motion was made by Mr. Morales and seconded by Mr. Barrera to table the insurance issue and to abate rent to the three (3) shrimp tenants through August 2024. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Martinez rejoined the meeting at this time.**

Next was the update on the Port Road By-Pass Right-of-Way. Mr. Bearden spoke with the realtor and reported on the preliminary study that was done. There are wetlands and options on the possible road would require our engineer to do a scale version of the road. The discussion about the cost of the property and getting right-of-way from Hess' property as it is in a sell contract with Shell Oil for all of Hess' assets. The most logical position at this time would be not to pursue the right-of-way. After additional discussion, the Commissioners then took the following action:

**A motion was made by Mr. Morales and seconded by Mr. Martinez to take no further action on the item. Motion carried.**



Agenda item #10 was requested by Mr. Morales to be reimbursed for the \$50 per day per diem for four (4) days while attending and representing the PISBND at an event in Austin for a fallen San Benito Police Officer. There being no discussion the following action was taken:

**A motion was made by Mr. Martinez and seconded by Mr. Barrera to reimburse Mr. Morales for his per diem to above event for four (4) days at \$50 per day. Motion carried.**

Mr. Bearden updated the Commissioners on the Laguna Madre Water District potential lease of Property in North Turning Basin for Desalinization Plant Water Access. Mr. Bearden had a meeting with LMWD, about Laguna Madre Water District plans to build a plant with a 5 million gallon per day capacity and to operate the plant in the beginning at 2 million gallons a day. The Water District attorney reported that the water district would not pay a pass-through fee for water and will be using the condemnation rules to take the property. Mr. Bearden requested that the Water District attend the June meeting so the Port Attorney could be present. The water District agreed to be at the June 2024, meeting to discuss further with the Commissioner. Mr. Morales will be inviting State Senator LaMantia and House member Lopez to the meeting. The item was tabled until further discussions with the Water District and the Port Attorney take place. The Commissioner took no action:

**A motion was made by Mr. Martinez and seconded by Mr. Morales to acknowledge the report given by Mr. Bearden. Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Bearden informed the Commissioners of the update on completion of construction of Port Road Project. The TxDOT engineers punch list items have been completed and we are waiting for the final walkthrough by the TxDOT engineers on Friday May 17, 2024. There being no further discussion the following action was taken.

**A motion was made by Mr. Morales and seconded by Mr. Martinez to acknowledge the report. Motion carried unanimously.**

Next Mr. Bearden informed the Commissioners that the Property across the Shrimp Basin was still under contract and discussions until the end of June. After some discussion the commissioners took the following action:

**A motion was made by Mr. Morales and seconded by Mr. Martinez to acknowledge the report. Motion carried.**

Mr. Bearden informed the Commissioners that the PILOT EDA grant was in legal review and should have an affirmative reply soon to the grant disposition.

**A motion was made by Mr. Martinez and seconded by Mr. Morales to acknowledge the report given by Mr. Bearden. Motion carried unanimously.**

The US Army Corps of Engineers has exercised the first (1) option of three (3) options to renew the Lease Agreement as per the Lease Agreement for one (1) year.

**A motion was made by Mr. Morales and seconded by Mr. Martinez to acknowledge the report. Motion carried.**

In the Monthly Director's report Mr. Bearden reported that he will be painting the Army's boat barn with Port employees, discussed the interior of the LAMEC building metal beams and need to scrap and re-paint them during the winter months, meeting with Private Utility Co. on desal water plant, moving forward with estimate for moving General Pipe to new location and building out a building and dock space for Texas DPS to use, and informed the Commissioners of a future fix on Port Road concrete expansion joints. Next, he reviewed the June meeting date and time, and it is tentatively scheduled for Thursday June 20, 2024, at 2:00PM.

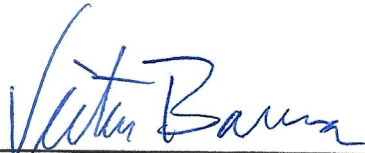
**A motion was made by Mr. Martinez and seconded by Mr. Morales to acknowledge the Director's Report. Motion carried unanimously.**

The previous month's bills were reviewed by the Commissioners. After questions and comments about some items, the following motion was made:

**A motion was made by Mr. Morales and seconded by Mr. Martinez to approve the payment of the bills, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

There being no further business to come before the Commissioners, the following motion was made:

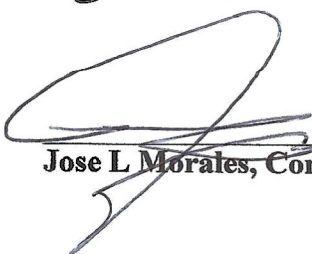
**A motion was made by Mr. Morales and seconded by Mr. Martinez to adjourn the meeting at 5:58 P.M. Motion carried unanimously.**



Victor Barrera, Commissioner Chairman



Joe Martinez, Commissioner Secretary



Jose L. Morales, Commissioner