



**For immediate release
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Port Houston Container Volumes Continue to Increase

HOUSTON-- An operations report for the first quarter report of 2017 showed that “Port Houston handled close to 10 million tons of total tonnage, reflecting an increase of eleven percent over 2016,” Port Houston Executive Director Roger Guenther announced today during the April meeting of the Port Commission of the Port of Houston Authority. During the first quarter of this year, Port Houston facilities handled 607,000 TEUs (the twenty-foot equivalent measurement of container cargo). Guenther stated that the “majority” of this increase is “largely due” to an increase in container volumes, which showed an increase of 18 percent.

A highlight of some actions taken by the Port Commission during its meeting included to support adding the inclusion of a coastal barrier system for the Houston/Galveston Bay area to the President’s national infrastructure plans. This approval provides Port Houston the opportunity to join the Texas Land Office Commissioner in his letter to the President, which is urging the President to include the coastal barrier system in the national infrastructure plans. The action also allows the option to submit one separately on behalf of the Port Authority.

The Port Commission also approved the Actuarial Valuation Audit Report of the Port of Houston Authority Restated Retirement Plan. The Independent Auditors Report prepared by Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company opined that the August 1, 2016 Actuarial Valuation prepared by Milliman, Inc. provides a fair and reasonable assessment of the financial position of the plan. The final actuarial report is available on the Port Houston website.

The commission approved entering into a multi-party Interlocal Agreement with Harris County, Galena Park, and Jacinto City for infrastructure improvements involving the design and construction of a sidewalk and pedestrian bridges for those communities.

During the meeting, the Port Commission acknowledged the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Houston-Galveston Change of Command with the retirement of Captain Peter Martin. He was commended for his service and leadership as Sector Commander. The new Captain of the Port, Captain Kevin Oditt has assumed command. The commission expressed its appreciation to the Coast Guard for their dedication and commitment to the safety, security and environmental stewardship of the Houston Ship Channel.

Forty years ago this month, the Barbours Cut Container terminal opened for business. Barbours Cut has grown to be one of the premier container-handling facilities in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico. A modernization program is under way to increase cargo-handling efficiency and capacity. Since the opening of Barbours Cut, and with the subsequent creation of its sister container facility at Bayport, the Port now handles 68 percent of all the container activity along the U.S. Gulf Coast and 95 percent of the container activity in Texas.

The Port Commission is scheduled to next meet on Wednesday, May 24.

About Port Houston

For more than 100 years, the port has owned and operated the public wharves and terminals of the Port of Houston – the nation’s largest port for foreign waterborne tonnage and an essential economic engine for the Houston region, the state of Texas, and the nation. It supports the creation of nearly 1.175 million jobs in Texas and 2.7 million jobs nationwide, and economic activity totaling almost \$265 billion in Texas – 16 percent of Texas’ total gross domestic product – and more than \$617 billion in economic impact across the nation. For more information, visit Port Houston’s website at: www.porthouston.com.

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Photo: Super Post-Panamax Ship-to-Shore (STS) Cranes being delivered to Barbours Cut Container Terminal, May 2015. New STS cranes are an important part of the \$700 million modernization project underway at Barbours Cut to accommodate the significantly larger vessels calling the terminal. On the waterside; the terminal channel has been deepened to 45 feet to match the depth of the federal Houston Ship Channel.



Photos: Jalesha Bass, a Port Maritime student at Houston I.S.D. Jack Yates high school expressed her appreciation to the Port Commission for its continued support of the maritime education program. She is flanked by Port Houston Executive Director Roger Guenther and Port Commissioner John D. Kennedy. Bass, a scholarship winner, plans to study supply chain management at the University of Texas-Austin this Fall.