



**For Immediate Release  
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## **April 2026 Meeting: Port Houston Marks 70 Years of Containerization and Advances Long-Term Container Capacity Planning**



*Dock side view of Bayport Container Terminal*

**HOUSTON** – On Tuesday, April 28, the Port Commission of the Port of Houston Authority met for its regular monthly meeting, continuing a busy start to the second quarter as the organization marked a historic industry milestone and advanced long-term planning to support future growth.

Chairman Ric Campo opened the meeting with a recap of Fleet Week in Houston, which brought multiple U.S. Navy vessels and thousands of sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen to the region for more than 200 community events. Port Houston hosted three Navy ships at its public terminals, with more than 12,000 people touring the vessels docked along the Houston Ship Channel during the week.

Port Houston also recognized the 70th anniversary of the *Ideal X*, the first container ship. In 1956, Malcom McLean converted the World War II-era oil tanker into a container vessel that completed its maiden voyage from Newark, New Jersey, to Port Houston’s Turning Basin Terminal, carrying 58 containers. This journey marked a turning point for global trade by introducing standardized container shipping.

“Our port would not be where it is today without that first ship,” said Charlie Jenkins, CEO of Port Houston. “The creation of the standardized container reduced cargo damage and theft and provided incredible efficiencies.”

Since the arrival of those first containers seventy years ago, Port Houston has grown to be the nation's fifth-largest container terminal, now handling 75% of the Gulf Coast's containerized cargo. At the meeting, the Commission received an update that container volumes at Port Houston's public terminals are up 2% compared with 2025's record-setting year. Additional information was released on [April 22](#).

Looking toward the future, Jenkins shared an update on Port Houston's continued terminal expansion to meet projected cargo needs. Buildout and densification at Bayport and Barbours Cut Container Terminals continues to be underway and expected to meet demand for roughly the next ten years. In addition, earlier this month, Port Houston filed a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit application to expand the Barbours Cut Terminal to the north, onto Spilman Island. The permit is one step in a broader, long-term evaluation that continues to consider multiple options, with any project requiring a formal Final Investment Decision by the Port Commission before advancing to detailed design, procurement, or construction.

During the meeting, it was also announced the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) had awarded Port Houston a \$48 million grant through Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) to support the construction of a new container yard and the installation of a new exit gate at the Bayport Container Terminal. These projects, part of Port Houston's Strategic Terminal Operations & Resilience Measures (STORM) application, are designed to accommodate forecasted growth in goods movement demands while maximizing operational efficiency, facility resiliency, and safety for employees and terminal users. More details can be found [here](#).

Also, Port Houston celebrated the launch of the Anchored in Action community-investment plan, now available on the [Port Houston website](#). Developed through extensive community engagement, the plan outlines priorities and partnership opportunities across the 14 Houston Ship Channel communities. Industry partners along the channel participated in crafting the plan and aligning it with their corporate social responsibility goals. More information can be found [here](#).

### *Additional Meeting Updates*

- The Commission approved two professional services contracts totaling \$10 million to support permitting, design, and construction services to support the Houston Ship Channel and Port-adjacent berth capacity needs. Further, a \$1.2 million contract was separately awarded for mowing and trash removal specific to the upland sites located near neighborhoods.
- The Commission recognized and expressed gratitude to Jessica Shaver, Chief Administrative Officer, who is retiring after 15 years with the organization.
- The Port Commission also approved the Port Authority's Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) including the Report of Independent Public Accountants, with an unmodified opinion and no findings.
- Port Houston noted progress toward its 2026 Strategic Targets, with priority initiatives on track.

The Port Commission will meet next on Thursday, May 21, 2026.

### **About Port Houston**

For more than 100 years, Port Houston has owned and operated the public wharves and terminals along the Houston Ship Channel, including the area's largest breakbulk facility and two of the most efficient container terminals in the country. Port

Houston is the advocate and a strategic leader for the Channel. The Houston Ship Channel complex and its more than 200 private and eight public terminals is the nation's largest port for waterborne tonnage and an essential economic engine for the Houston region, the state of Texas and the U.S. The Port of Houston supports the creation of nearly 1.5 million jobs in Texas and 3.37 million jobs nationwide, and economic activity totaling \$439 billion in Texas and \$906 billion in economic impact across the nation. For more information, visit the website at [PortHouston.com](http://PortHouston.com).

**CONTACT:** Lisa Ashley-Daniels, Director, Media Relations, Office: 713-670-2644; Mobile: 832-247-8179; E-mail: [lashley@porthouston.com](mailto:lashley@porthouston.com)