



**PORT HOUSTON**  
THE INTERNATIONAL PORT OF TEXAS

**For Immediate Release**  
**May 20, 2020**

## **Port Houston Planning for the Future**

### *Moves Forward on Expansion and Improvement Projects*

**HOUSTON** – The Port Commission of the Port of Houston Authority conducted its regular public meeting today electronically. Chairman Ric Campo opened the meeting expressing gratitude to Executive Director Roger Guenther and “all those responsible, and the essential and critical employees, in particular for “their unyielding commitment” to keep the port running by “showing up every day.” Campo also expressed his appreciation and support for the diverse cross-section of employees selected to help facilitate the “best, safest and most productive way” to “return to normal.”

In his remarks, Executive Director Roger Guenther acknowledged the “amazing port community as a whole.” He stressed that Port Houston is still “planning for the future” and that while there are challenges, missions and goals haven’t changed and “it’s important to strive for business as usual and plan for future growth”.

Guenther highlighted that more than \$36 million worth of projects and agreements were on the agenda for the Port Commission’s approval. He acknowledged that the entire industry is facing “major disruptive factors,” reflected in a recent easing in cargo volumes related to the COVID-19 pandemic, but he remains positive about its long-term outlook.

Both gentlemen provided updates concerning Project 11, the public-private effort to widen and deepen the Houston Ship Channel, the nation’s busiest waterway. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee had included the project in their American Water Infrastructure Act. While an important development, work is still ahead as the project needs to be considered by the full Senate and House of Representatives. Gratitude was expressed for the strong support for this effort given by House and Senate members, local leaders as well as industry stakeholders.

The design of the project is progressing, laying the groundwork to begin construction after Congressional authorization anticipated later this year.

The impacts of this project on Texas, the largest exporting state in the nation, are clear. But just as important are the national benefits from supporting the future of the largest petrochemical complex in the nation, that thrives along the Houston Ship Channel.

Actions taken by the Port Commission supported commitment to continued investments in infrastructure and terminal improvement projects. A highlight of some of the work includes wharf rehabilitation of docks at the Turning Basin, Bayport, and Barbours Cut terminals, and another million dollars investment in software and technology for those public terminals.

Keeping the health and safety of workers, customers, users of the facilities and community paramount, the Port Commission authorized more than \$1.2 million towards support of pandemic-related services.

Additionally, the Port Commission amended Port Authority retirement plans to opt into programs offered under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Finally, in the spirit of commitment to building and strengthening partnerships with the surrounding neighbors and greater community and stakeholder involvement, Chairman Campo announced the relaunch of the Chairman's Advisory Council as the Port Commission Community Advisory Council.

### **Roger Guenther's April 2020 Cargo Report:**

Port Houston handled a total of twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in April, a decrease of 12 percent compared to April of 2019, when a total of 221,540 TEUs were handled. For the full year, Port Houston handled 994,627 TEUs through April, which is 5 percent more than the first four months of 2019. Total tonnage at Port Houston's public facilities was down 10 percent in the month of April at 3,766,756 short tons, a decrease of 3 percent year-to-date. Port Houston handled 3,910 auto units in April, 41 percent less than the same month last year, and down 31 percent for the first four months as compared to the same period in 2019. Steel, primarily used in the energy industry, is down 50 percent year-to-date at 784,733 short tons through the end of April.

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### **About Port Houston**

*For more than 100 years, Port Houston 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 the port's website at [PortHouston.com](http://PortHouston.com).*