



*Maryland Port Administration
Open Session Meeting Minutes, #417
Tuesday, April 1, 2025*

MEETING DATE & LOCATION

The Four Hundred and Seventeenth Session of the Maryland Port Commission was called to order at 9:03 a.m. on April 1, 2025, by Secretary, Paul Wiedefeld. The Commission met in Open Session from 9:03 a.m. until 9:32 a.m. in the Stanton Room, 20th floor, World Trade Center, 401 E. Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21202.

ATTENDANCE

Chairman and Officials:

Secretary Wiedefeld and Commissioners Barber, Brewer, Neuman, Richardson, and Robert. Commissioner Webb was absent.

Executive Members:

Jonathan Daniels (Executive Director, MPA), Brian Miller (Deputy Executive Director, Operations & Logistics), Robert Munroe (Deputy Executive Director, Administration and Environment), Matthew Wypyski (Deputy Executive Director, Commercial Development)

Directors:

Bradley Smith (Director of Maritime Commercial Management & Strategic Initiatives), Cindy Burman (Director of Cruise Marketing and Business Services), Cornelius Barmer (Deputy Director of Engineering), Dominic Scurti (Director of Planning), Jason Knott (Senior Director, Business Development & Services, Maryland Department of Commerce), Jennifer Guthrie (Director of Government Relations and External Affairs), John Boden (Director of Human Resources), John Thornton (Director of Procurement), Kathleen Pickett (Director of Security), Melody Countess (Director of Finance, CFO), Ryan Barry (Director of Operations), Steve Johnson (Director of Engineering), Tracy Pinder (Director of Internal Audits), William Richardson (Director of the Environment), Phil Whaling (Assistant Attorney General, Deputy Principal Counsel)

Affiliates:

Daren Dean (WTC Property Manager), Hannah Brown (Procurement Officer, Office of Procurement), Jasmin Todman (Budget Manager, MPA), Mary Kay Radford (Executive Finance Manager, MPA)

Staff:

Marvis Harden (Special Assistant to the Executive Director), Krystal Jones (Executive Office) and Ken Kolarik (Office of Information Security and Technology)

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Barber moved to approve the Open Session Minutes of the Four Hundred and Sixteenth Maryland Port Commission (MPC) meeting. Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion, and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the Open Session Minutes

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE, Jonathan Daniels, Executive Director

Mr. Daniels reported that the MPA continues to monitor the impact of tariffs on cargo flow, port operations and business activity at the POB. MPA, and most other ports in the United States, are also closely monitoring the anticipated decision from the US Trade Representative (USTR) regarding fees to be imposed on ships built in China entering US ports. The Section 301 investigation, officially known as "China's Targeting of the Maritime, Logistics, and Shipbuilding Sectors for Dominance" is anticipated to result in the administration proposing a fee structure to be imposed on vessels built in China which will apply also to any fleet that includes any vessels constructed in China. The fees under discussion could exceed millions of dollars per port call. The fees likely would result in vessels limiting the number of ports they call and dropping their cargo at a single major port on the East Coast thereby taking smaller ports out of the rotation and creating a load center system. This would impact several lines of business through the Port of Baltimore and would impact trade flow in/out of other ports. Ports and the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) are monitoring the USTR's moves and advocating against the fees.

Secretary Weidefield asked about the timing of the USTR decision. Mr. Daniels stated the USTR could make its decision as early as mid-April, with the implementation schedule also to be determined. There are many vessels on the water heading to a variety of ports that could potentially be impacted.

Mr. Daniels reported that cargo numbers continue to rise with the new services in place, and that daily gate transactions are averaging 3,800 per day. As vessels get larger and the number of weekly services has increased from 12 to 16, the cargo handled increases and could lead to additional slot spaces (vessel hauls) for POB.

Mr. Daniels, Mr. Wypyski, and Ms. Burman will be traveling to Florida to attend the SeaTrade Cruise Global Conference and meet with cruise lines to fill openings in the MPA Cruise schedule, either home port or in transit calls. On Sunday, April 6, they will attend a press conference with Carnival for an announcement regarding future vessel deployments, which may include the POB.

In closing, Mr. Daniels reflected on what happened a year ago with the bridge incident: he acknowledged the lives lost, and the impact to the POB, community, state, and nation. Mr. Daniels further acknowledged the incredible work done by the staff at MPA, and the leadership from Secretary Wiedefeld and the Moore/Miller administration, as the Port and State continue the work of recovery and rebounding.

Secretary Weidefield asked about the potential impact on the POB of auto tariffs. Mr. Daniels stated that the impact will depend on how customers and the auto shippers respond to the 25% increase. It could have a significant impact with 80% of vehicles moving through the POB being imported. The tariff on imported autos combined with the tariffs on inbound auto parts will have a two-tiered layer impact on all things auto. The tariffs will also have an impact on the shipment of farm equipment.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE, Jennifer Guthrie

Jennifer Guthrie, Director of the Office of Government Relations and External Affairs, reported that state legislators had to make tough decisions during the legislative session to address a projected

\$3 billion plus deficit. Throughout the session, MPA has actively engaged with elected officials to provide updates on key projects, accomplishments, and challenges ahead, and to provide input on proposed bills that would impact the MPA. Among these bills, Senate Bill 168 – now called the Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) Cells - Construction - Moratorium, would prevent the Maryland Department of the Environment and Board of Public Works from processing or approving applications for the construction of CAD cells through May 31, 2029. MPA proposed amendments to alleviate MPA's concerns; however, the bill that passed did not include these amendments. MPA has paused the CAD program and looks forward to working with the surrounding communities on any proposed re-start.

The Coal Transportation and Railroad Safety bills, which MPA and Port partners had been monitoring, did not cross-over.

The MPA has responded to the \$1.6 billion cut in funding for the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in the latest Continuing Resolution by strongly advocating for federal funding for the Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island project. The MPA has submitted letters to the Office of Management and Budget and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works highlighting the critical importance of this project to maintaining the navigability of the channels for the Port of Baltimore.

In response to Commissioner Richardson's question about the impact on MPA's dredging programs of the cuts to the Army Corps of Engineers budget, Mr. Daniels stated that MPA is monitoring the situation and will report on any impacts.

Secretary Wiedefeld discussed the State budget and the General Assembly's appropriation for the MPA. The MPA was on track to receive most of the amounts requested. The focus of the General Assembly was on the source of the funds for the MPA's appropriation.

CONTRACTS, John Thornton

John Thornton, Director of Procurement, presented the following contract for approval by the Maryland Port Commission.

1. **Contract #225002-S** – Janitorial Services at Dundalk Marine Terminal; Duncan Commercial Cleaning Services, LLC; \$545,663.

After discussion, a motion to approve Contract **#225002-S** was made by Commissioner Richardson, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and approved unanimously by the Commission.

VOTE TO CLOSE THE MEETING

At 9:32 a.m., in accordance with Sections 3-305(b)(4) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Commissioner Richardson moved that the Commission meet in Closed Session, and Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. See attached Closing Statement.

The Commission met in the Closed Session from 9:34 a.m. until 9:58 a.m. Secretary Wiedefeld, Deputy Secretary Biddle and Commissioners Barber, Brewer, Richardson, Roberts, Neuman and Webb, Jonathan Daniels (Executive Director, MPA), Brian Miller (Deputy Executive Director, Operations & Logistics), Robert Munroe (Deputy Executive Director, Administration and

Environment), Matthew Wypyski (Deputy Executive Director, Commercial Development), Phil Whaling (Assistant Attorney General and Deputy Principal Counsel), Bradley_Smith (Director of Maritime Commercial Management & Strategic Initiatives), Daren Dean (WTC Property Manager), and Marvis Harden (Special Assistant to the Executive Director), were present for the closed session.

The following topic was discussed in close session:

State General Provisions Article Citation #	Topics Discussed
§ 3-305(b)(4)	World Trade Center leasing proposals

Bradley Smith, Director of Maritime Commercial Management & Strategic Initiatives provided an overview of proposals for leasing of space within the World Trade Center.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to move out of closed session, seconded by Commissioner Brewer and approved unanimously by the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Webb made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Roberts. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.