



*Maryland Port Administration
Open Session Meeting Minutes #430
Tuesday, July 7, 2026*

MEETING DATE & LOCATION

The Four Hundred and Thirtieth Session of the Maryland Port Commission was called to order at 9:04 a.m. on July 7, 2026, by Secretary Kathryn Thomson. The Commission met in Open Session from 9:05 a.m. until 10:04 a.m. in the Stanton Room, 20th floor, World Trade Center, 401 E. Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21202.

ATTENDANCE

Chairman and Officials:

Secretary Thomson and Commissioners Barber*, Brewer*, Neuman*, Richardson*, Roberts*, and Webb.

Executive Members:

Samantha Biddle (Deputy Secretary), Jonathan Daniels (Executive Director), 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, Deputy Principal Counsel).

Directors:

Bradley Smith (Director of Maritime Commercial Management & Strategic Initiatives), Cindy Burman (Director of Cruise Marketing & Business Services), Dominic Scurti (Director of Planning), Holly Miller (Director, Office of Navigation, Innovation & Stewardship), Jennifer Guthrie (Director of the Office of Government Relations & External Affairs), John Boden (Director of Human Resources), Kathleen Pickett-Bowen (Director of Security), Melody Countess (Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer), Nick Porter (Director of Business Development), Richard Scher (Director of Communications), Ryan Barry (Director of Operations), Steve Johnson (Director of Engineering), Trisha O'Neal (Director of Procurement), and William Richardson (Director of the Office of Environment, Safety, and Sustainability).

Affiliates:

Daren Dean (Manager, Maritime Management), Jeff Gutowski (Deputy Director, Business Development), Jill Lemke (Manager, Strategic Planning), John Timmins (Manager, Business Development) and Mark Riesett (Manager of Procurement for Construction and A/E).

Staff:

Marvis Harden (Special Assistant to the Executive Director), and Mana Sherman (Office of Information Security and Technology).

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

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

*Attended via Teams/phone

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE, Jonathan Daniels, Executive Director

Mr. Daniels acknowledged that this was his final MPC meeting and thanked the staff and Commissioners for their support. Mr. Daniels noted that the MPA refused to quit after the Key Bridge collapse and the POB's strong recovery reflected this determination.

The nearly 10-year process of acquiring the 17-acre St. Helena property located just north of the Dundalk Marine Terminal has been completed. The property was purchased for \$6 million at a closing in late April after years of delay while environmental remediation continued. Additional remediation work will occur in the water adjacent to the property; MPA will provide the Seller a right of entry to access the shoreline during clean-up operations.

While cargo numbers continue to lag with continued geo-political instability, there is good cargo news related to MSC's plan to reinstate their Indus Express service linking India to the US East Coast through Baltimore. MSC discontinued the service when the box rates decreased due to excess capacity on this route. With the recent jump in the per box rate, MSC has decided to restart the service.

A few weeks ago, the MPA staff and Carnival sales team hosted trade advisors and travel agents at the Cruise Maryland terminal. The event highlighted the 2027 arrival of the Carnival Miracle and the variety of itineraries from Baltimore. MPA staff is also in the final review phase with Royal Caribbean (RCL), on a new long-term seasonal agreement that will commence in 2027.

MPA staff continue to work with John Martin and Associates on the Master/Vision Planning process and will be holding another meeting with subject matter experts this Thursday.

Mr. Daniels closed by stating, "I cannot thank you all enough for the time I have had at the Port of Baltimore. The support from the maritime community has been like nothing I have experienced, and I wish you the best of luck as you work through the planning and into implementation in the future."

Mr. Daniels also recognized Samantha Biddle, Deputy Secretary, who will assume the role of Interim Executive Director.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION OVERVIEW, Richard Scher, Director of Communications

Mr. Scher shared an overview of the multiple media outlets utilized by the Communications Department, including *Port of Baltimore in the News*, digital and print advertisements, e-broadcasts, the POB magazine, social media platforms, and media events.

The MPA/POB distributes its message through local, regional and international maritime and trade publications, including the Journal of Commerce, Maritime Executive, and American Journal of Transportation, and cargo specific media. Digital and print ads are created in-house, with a current focus on double stack.

E-broadcasting has been very effective for getting messages out to the public, with nearly 14K subscribers, including labor, trucking, terminal operators, port users, pilots, tugs, and the public. E-broadcasts share information on terminal closings, holidays, press releases, and critical reminders.

The Port of Baltimore magazine communicates sales and Port-related information to a broad audience. The magazine is published six times a year. Printing has been reduced in favor of digital distribution, resulting in a 15% increase in views within the last year. The magazine focuses on cargo, cruise, and diversity at the Port, with newly expanded coverage of environmental and community initiatives, in addition to our private terminals.

Social media has proven to be a highly effective communications tool. Analytics show tremendous growth and engagement, with post impressions increasing 120% over the previous year, post engagement increasing by 10.7%, and the follower count increasing by 12.1%. Fun informative videos highlight the great work at the POB.

The MPA Communications team at the Port of Baltimore received the 2025 AAPA Lighthouse Award for Achievement in Public Relations for a Large Port.

AUTO/RORO/HIGH & HEAVY CARGO OVERVIEW, Nick Porter, Director of Business Development, John Timmins, Manager Business Development and Susan Serrano*, Manager, Automotive Business Development, Office of Commercial Development

The Commercial Development team provided an update on Ro/Ro, high and heavy cargo, and automobiles. Mr. Porter highlighted the rebuilding of the Commercial Development Office over the past year, and introduced Jeff Gutowski, Deputy Director of Business Development, John Timmins, Susan Serrano, and the newest team member, Kevin Dowling, who will begin on Wednesday, July 8. This team builds on the POB's strengths, works to retain current customers and attract new business.

Ms. Serrano provided an overview of the Port's automotive activity. The POB was ranked #1 for automobiles for 13 consecutive years and is currently ranked #2 for FY25. Baltimore is #1 for imported vehicles for Q1 of 2026, reflecting the recovery of the automotive business since the bridge collapse. The goal of the MPA is to develop additional long-term commitments from vehicle manufacturers to drive growth.

MPA hosted a group of 23 engineers and logistics leaders from General Motors in May for a tour and review of the Port of Baltimore facilities and capabilities. The General Motors team expressed satisfaction with, and reaffirmed its commitment to, the Port of Baltimore.

Stellantis will begin importing the ProMaster City van through the POB in November 2026. Stellantis projects 40K units annually with incremental growth through 2037.

Ford Motor company has a global ocean bid for U.S. to the Middle East exports, U.S. to South America exports, and eventually Spain to U.S. imports. General Motors has a global ocean bid for additional import volume from South Korean to Baltimore.

Plans are underway to bring back and host a Finished Vehicles Conference in Baltimore in August 2027. The last conference was in 2019. MPA is supporting Wallenius Wilhelmsen to regain the Volvo imports business through the POB.

John Timmins provided a review on Ro/Ro and high and heavy cargoes (HH). The POB ranks #1 in the U.S. for HH Ro/Ro cargo. These cargoes are up 44.5% year over year. The closest competitor is the Georgia Port Authority with year over year increase of 1.7%.

Mr. Timmins and Mr. Gutowski attended the CONEXPO/CON-AGG Conference with nearly 140,000 attendees from around the world. They made valuable connections with current and potential new customers, including construction equipment manufacturers Develon and Takeuchi. The goal is to continue building relationships and bring business from such new customers to the POB.

The Ro/Ro training was hosted in May, providing more than 200 longshoremen with hands-on

training on the proper handling of Ro/Ro equipment. The training will improve equipment-handling practices and help reduce damage.

Business Development team members will be attending and exhibiting at the Breakbulk Americas Conference in September, with nearly 62,000 attendees. The goal is to generate new business opportunities and attract additional cargo to the Port of Baltimore.

CONTRACTS, Mark Riesett, Manager of Procurement for Construction and A/E

Mr. Riesett, Manager of Procurement, presented Modification No. 17 to Contract #521040R for approval by the Maryland Port Commission.

1. **Modification No. 17, Contract # 521040R.** Modification No. 17 is for the removal or cutting of previously unknown timber piles and cross beams to drive new concrete piles during excavation for the box culvert on First Street at Dundalk Marine Terminal; Original Contract Amount: \$51,513,365.44, Modification Amount: \$816,107.23; Original Term: 730 calendar days from Notice to Proceed, Modification Term: 167 calendar days.

After discussion, a motion to approve Modification No. 17 to Contract #521040R was made by Commissioner Webb, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and approved unanimously by the Commission.

VOTE TO CLOSE MEETING

At 10:04 a.m., in accordance with the State General Provisions Article, 3-305(b)(1)(i),(ii) and (13) of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Commissioner Richardson moved that the Commission meet in Closed Session, Commissioner Brewer seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. See attached Closing Statement.

The Commission met in Closed Session from 10:09 a.m. until 10:42 a.m. Acting Secretary Thomson, Deputy Secretary Biddle, Commissioners Barber*, Brewer*, Neuman*, Richardson*, Roberts*, and Webb, along with Jonathan Daniels (Executive Director), Brian Miller (Deputy Executive Director, Operations & Logistics), Matthew Wypyski (Deputy Executive Director, Commercial Development), Robert Munroe (Deputy Executive Director, Administration and Environment), Phil Whaling (Assistant Attorney General, Deputy Principal Counsel), Bradley Smith (Director of Maritime Commercial Management & Strategic Initiatives), Daren Dean (Manager, Maritime Management), and Marvis Harden (Special Assistant to the Executive Director), were present for item #1 of the closed session.

Brian Miller, Bob Munroe, Matthew Wypyski, Daren Dean, Bradley Smith and Marvis Harden exited the Stanton room before the item # 2 discussion began.

The following topics were discussed in the closed session:

State General Provisions Article Citation #	Topics Discussed
§ 3-305(13)	Evaluation of Competitive Position of Public Marine Terminals
§ 3-305(b)(1)(i) and (ii)	Personnel Matter

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Richardson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Barber. The motion was carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:42 a.m.