



*Maryland Port Administration
Open Session Meeting Minutes #431
Tuesday, September 1, 2026*

MEETING DATE & LOCATION

The Four Hundred and Thirty-First Session of the Maryland Port Commission was called to order at 9:03 a.m. on September 1, 2026, by Secretary Kathryn Thomson. The Commission met in Open Session from 9:03 a.m. until 9:59 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 Brewer, Neuman*, Richardson*, Roberts*, and Webb.

Executive Members:

Samantha Biddle (Interim Executive Director), Brian Miller (Deputy Executive Director, Operations & Logistics), Robert Munroe* (Deputy Executive Director, Administration and Environment), Matthew Wypyski* (Deputy Executive Director, Commercial Development), Jason Sayers (Assistant Attorney General, Assistant Deputy Principal Counsel).

Directors:

Bradley Smith (Director of Maritime Commercial Management & Strategic Initiatives), 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), Richard Scher (Director of Communications), Steve Johnson (Director of Engineering), Trisha O'Neal (Director of Procurement), and William Richardson (Director of the Office of Environment, Safety, and Sustainability).

Affiliates:

Aubrei Barton (Program Manager, MDOT), Steve Bennett (CEO, D.O.T. Shipping and Agency).

Staff:

Emmanuel Ansah (Office of Fair Practices), Jeff Gutowski (Deputy Director, Business Development), Jasmine Todman (Budget Manager), Jill Lemke (Manager, Strategic Planning), Mark Riesett (Deputy Director, Office of Procurement), Mary Kay Radford (Executive Finance Manager), Tyler Russell (Manager of Procurement for Construction and A/E), Marvis Harden (Special Assistant to the Executive Director), Nancy Moyo (Executive Office), and Paul Wainaina (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 Thirtieth Maryland Port Commission (MPC) meeting. Commissioner Brewer seconded the motion, and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the Open Session Minutes.

Commissioner Webb moved to approve the Closed Session Minutes of the Four Hundred and Thirtieth Maryland Port Commission (MPC) meeting. Commissioner Brewer seconded the motion, and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the Closed Session Minutes.

CHAIR, Secretary Thomson

By way of introductory remarks, Secretary Thomson informed the Commissioners that Maryland's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) will be released at noon, and that it is expected to look similar to last year's CTP, with approximately \$22B allocated for statewide transportation projects. There continue to be financial constraints on the budget, and some projects will have to be deferred/delayed. No new capital funds were included in the CTP plan, but funding was preserved for projects already underway, such as the work at DMT.

INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE, Samantha Biddle, Interim Executive Director

Ms. Biddle shared that she is looking forward to cultivating and strengthening important relationships across both internal and external supply chains, recognizing that each of us plays an essential role and is an important piece of the puzzle in achieving our shared goals. She noted that this is a pivotal moment and that she, Secretary Thomson, and key port stakeholders were focused on enhancing the state of MPA's marine terminals.

Ms. Biddle thanked the entire staff and Commission for their ongoing hard work.

She reported that the month of August was busy with customer events and meetings, including the Breakfast Cruise and Golf Outing, which provided opportunities to meet many of the key port stakeholders and logistics business partners. Internally, she has met with many of the MPA staff in the World Trade Center, as well as approximately 30 terminal operations professionals, along with MPA's security team. Last week, Ms. Biddle and MPA hosted members of the Federal Maritime Commission, with participation from Ports America Chesapeake and Wallenius Wilhelmsen.

Ms. Biddle highlighted several key focus areas moving forward, including the marketing of POB and business development. Development of the MPA's Master Plan continues. John Martin and Associates are looking at MPA's assets in need of repair and the age of MPA's assets, and the team will be thinking creatively about how to implement the Master Plan given the limited funding available. MPA will continue to seek grant funding and support wherever possible but will also need to be creative in leveraging port stakeholder relationships to perform work on the terminals.

Ms. Biddle provided a business update. First, when discussing the tariffs situation with Canada, Ms. Biddle noted that due to a lack of exports received from Canada, MPA did not anticipate a significant impact, but acknowledged a level of uncertainty with shipping around the world. In positive news, MPA's RoRo numbers are up by about 30%, and containers are up by about 11%. Automobile numbers remain down, and MPA is evaluating how to attract business from competing ports.

MPA continues to work with PAC to market the double-stack capabilities of the Howard Street Tunnel, with both CSX and Midwest carriers, and work is nearly complete on the grain transloading facility at SMT. MPA will be attending the Breakbulk Conference later this month, where the team hopes to identify opportunities to expand logistics, cargo, and supply-chain business.

In terms of cruise business, Carnival is bringing the Miracle to POB next year. MPA is continuing to work with RCL through our partnership and exploring additional opportunities.

With respect to Harbor Development, Ms. Biddle encouraged attendance at the upcoming urban conservation day at Masonville Cove, an Urban Refuge Partnership that offers environmental restoration and educational opportunities for the community.

The 2026 Sustainability Report has been published and the report for next year is currently being

produced. Efforts are focused not only on environmental stewardship but also on the Clean Ports Program.

The CTP Report is scheduled to be released today. The link will be shared once it becomes available in addition to the meeting dates for those that may be interested in attending. Ms. Biddle noted that the feedback received from local jurisdictions as part of the CTP tour is invaluable. Although there are significant financial constraints, MPA was successful in preserving funding for its core projects, including the dredge program for the channel.

PROCUREMENT UPDATES, Trisha O'Neal, Director of Procurement

Ms. O'Neal provided updates on the COMAR Title 21 regulations, which became effective on August 31, 2026.

The primary changes to COMAR were made to align the regulations with legislation enacted during the 2025 Legislative Session and the Procurement Reform Act.

Changes were also made related to IT supplies and services. These changes included allowing unlimited delegation of authority for the procurement of supplies and commodities from the Maryland Port Commission (MPC) to the Maryland Port Administration (MPA). Procurement of supplies and commodities did not require MPC or Board of Public Works (BPW) approval and was not required to be reported on a Procurement Agency Activity Report (PAAR).

In summary; the regulations effective March 3, 2025, delegated unlimited authority from the Board of Public Works (BPW) to the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) for supplies and commodities, aligning with the Maryland Port Commission's (MPC) existing unlimited delegation. Effective October 1, 2025, the Procurement Reform Act expanded the definition of supplies to include IT hardware and software; however, BPW did not authorize unlimited delegated authority for IT supplies, resulting in the MPC losing its unlimited delegation for these procurements. Effective August 31, 2026, the MPC is required to approve all contract awards that fall within the new thresholds.

None of these changes will impact competition, the Small Business Reserve Program, or other socioeconomic programs. Except for the changes to the procurement thresholds, the process of seeking contract award approval from the MPC will remain unchanged.

FINANCIAL RESULTS FY 2026, Melody Countess, Chief Financial Officer and Mary Kay Radford, Executive Finance Manager

Ms. Countess introduced her team, Ms. Radford and Ms. Jasmine Todman, Budget Manager. The presentation provided an overview of the FY26 operating results, including principal revenues, major expense categories, and the trends the effect the overall financial performance.

Ms. Radford shared that MPA's finances are unique, as they encompass both Maryland Cruise and the World Trade Center. The FY26 operating revenue enabled a \$55M deposit to the Transportation Trust Fund. Facility rentals, in the form of long-term leases, are our strongest finance source.

In reviewing revenue generated by location, Dundalk leads at \$18.42M in revenue, reflecting MPA's largest facility and diverse cargo operations. Seagirt follows with \$10.29M, from rent and security fees. The Cruise facility at South Locust Point generated \$8.31M in revenue. Additional locations include WTC, Masonville, Fairfield, South Locust Point, North Locust Point, and Point Breeze.

Ms. Radford explained that as a state agency, MPA is not immune to the inflationary increases in costs. MPA's current operating expenditures are nearly \$60M, up slightly from \$57.1 in FY25.

Security services have had the greatest increase from \$13.8 in FY25, to \$15M in FY26.

Looking at historical trends from 2022-2026, Ms. Radford explained that although revenue grew by approximately 4-5% a year, expenses were subject to several large increases over the past few years, including an increase of 12%. MPA strives to have its Operating Expenses covered by Operating Revenue, but that has not occurred since 2023-2024.

The FY27 revenues are expected to remain stable overall, with continued growth. There may be a slight dip in cruise revenue for the first six months, followed by a recovery in the second half of the year.

Commissioner Webb asked about the loss of lumber/paper business and the potential impact on revenue. Jeff Gutowski explained that the recent re-routing of a paper ship to DMT provided MPA with an opportunity to recapture business.

Commissioner Richardson asked whether WTC revenue was expected to increase in the future. Bradley Smith responded in the affirmative, noting that MPA is filling vacancies in the WTC with other state agencies, which should result in timely payments and increase revenues. Construction on the tenant space at WTC is expected to last for another two years, but at its conclusion MPA will have higher-paying tenants at the WTC, with longer term leases.

In closing, Ms. Countess shared that her strategic focus will be aligning recurring revenues with recurring expenses, actively managing vendor clauses and contracts, and ensuring critical needs are met.

MPA DRAFT CTP REPORT, Dominic Scurti, Director of Planning

Mr. Scurti shared that the CTP is scheduled to be released today, September 1, 2026. The link will be shared today. A more in-depth presentation will be provided during a future meeting.

In providing a general overview, Mr. Scurti explained funding continues for core projects. The HST project is expected to wrap up this year, and the renovations will continue at the WTC. The primary focus is the funding of the DMMP, including Cox Creek and Masonville, while continuing to work with Poplar Island on the reuse of dredged material.

The System Preservation/State of Good Repair (SGR) upcoming project is expected to start FY28, Phase I, Dundalk Berths 11-13 reconstruction. This will be a multi-year project with an expectancy of 10 or more years to complete.

MPC DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FY 2026, Jill Lemke, Manager of Strategic Planning

Ms. Lemke noted that the Commissioners received a draft copy of the Maryland Port Commission report, which is to be presented to the General Assembly pursuant to Transportation Article §6-201.2(c).

The report to the General Assembly includes an assessment of the Port of Baltimore's competitive position, as well as challenges that may be of concern to policymakers in Maryland. The report also summarizes the Port's successes and accomplishments during the reporting period.

An additional section addressing Safety, Emergency Management, and Preparedness has been added to the report.

The Commission was asked to review the draft report and submit any additional edits or comments.

The report will be revised to incorporate the Commission's feedback and presented again at the October 2026 Commission meeting. Upon Commission approval, the final report will proceed through the appropriate chain of command and will then be submitted to the Maryland General Assembly in January 2027, in accordance with the applicable reporting requirements.

VOTE TO CLOSE MEETING

At 9:59 a.m., in accordance with the State General Provisions Article, 3-305(b)(1)(i) and (ii) of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Commissioner Brewer moved that the Commission meet in Closed Session, Commissioner Webb seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. See attached Closing Statement.

The Commission met in Closed Session from 10:02 a.m. until 10:20 a.m. Secretary Thomson, along with Commissioners Brewer, Neuman*, Richardson*, Roberts*, and Webb, in addition to Brian Miller (Deputy Executive Director, Operations & Logistics), and Jason Sayers (Assistant Attorney General, Assistant Deputy Principal Counsel), were present.

The following topics were discussed in the closed session:

State General Provisions Article Citation #	Topics Discussed
§ 3-305(b)(1)(i) and (ii)	Personnel Matter

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Webb made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Brewer. The motion was carried out unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

*Attended via Teams/phone