

Port Commission Special Meeting
February 4, 2026
In Person & Videoconference

A Special Meeting of the Port Commission of Port Freeport was held February 4, 2026, beginning at 1:35 PM at the Administration Building, 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, Texas.

Commissioners present in person:

Mr. Rob Giesecke, Chairman
Mr. Rudy Santos, Vice Chairman
Mr. Kim Kincannon, Secretary
Mr. Dan Croft, Asst. Secretary
Ms. Barbara Fratila, Commissioner
Mr. Ravi Singhania, Commissioner

Staff Members Present:

Mr. Grady Randle, Randle Law Firm
Ms. Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO
Mr. Rob Lowe, Director of Administration/CFO
Mr. Chris Hogan, Director of Protective Services
Mr. Jesse Hibbetts, Director of Operations
Mr. Brandon Robertson, Director of IT
Ms. Missy Bevers, Executive Assistant
Ms. Amanda Veliz, Public Affairs Manager
Ms. Christine Lewis, Safety Coordinator

1. CONVENE OPEN SESSION in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:
2. Roll Call - Commissioner Giesecke noted that all Commissioners were present in the Board Room.
3. Call to identify and discuss any conflicts of interest that may lead to a Commissioner abstaining from voting on any posted agenda item.

There were no conflicts noted by Commissioners.

4. Public Comment – There was no public comment.
5. Public Testimony – There was no public testimony.
6. Continuation of November 17, 2025 Planning Workshop for Port Freeport regarding the following:

A. Safety Update.

Safety Update

Ms. Lewis gave a safety update covering the port's past performance, current priorities and what lies ahead as safety remains a top priority. She explained that by being engaged with

tenants, labor, OTR (over the road) drivers, contractors and vessel calls, staff can identify risks early, respond quickly and reduce delays. Using a graph to depict 3 years (2023-2025) of safety events, she noted the key outcomes from fiscal year 2025 show zero recordable injuries, a decrease in safety violations by 29%, and only one spill recorded across the year. There was a rise in health related call outs that included three heat related cases which reinforces the need for hydration, rest cycles and acclimation plans. Property damage incidents were slightly up from 2024 with things like gate arm strikes, but they still remain below fiscal year 2023. Safety responded to three fire incidents (1 preventable dumpster fire and 2 non-preventable events) which included a grass fire sparked by a power line wire burning and a power pack battery explosion. The port's fire buggies were instrumental in rapid mitigation for both instances. Building on performance, Ms. Lewis stated that as of February 4, 2026, Port Freeport staff has achieved 500 days without a time loss injury which is a major accomplishment and belongs to every person who planned the job, wore the PPE and looked out for their teammate. Looking ahead, Ms. Lewis noted the port's focus areas as port operations continue to expand...

Safety Productivity: Maintaining speed and quality without compromising safety standards.

Daily Communication: Updates with tenants, laborers and drivers to prevent repeat issues.

Targeted Training: PPE compliance and operational needs, including staff, contractors and RORO Rodeo participants.

Project & Cargo Planning: Aligning safety with construction activities, heavy lifts and oversized moves.

Traffic & Congestion Management: Planning for the bottleneck peak hours.

Observation & Support: Routine field walkabouts and quarterly tenant safety meetings.

Recognition Enforcement: On the spot recognition and celebrating wins annually.

With regard to safety production, Ms. Lewis stated that coordination of vessel schedules, dock work, yard work and road usage must be synchronized with clear communication before, during and after operations. Tailgate meetings are held prior to commencement of operations and PPE standards remain non-negotiable. Ms. Lewis shared pictures of steel bar labor wearing appropriate Class 2 high-visibility vest, steel toed shoes and hard hats while line handler teams wear approved high-visibility flotation devices. Safety continues to fine tune traffic and crossing controls by deploying auto flaggers where appropriate, reduce exposure and improve flow. They also coordinate with uniformed officers during Ro/Ro activities to maintain safe crossings and consistent guidance. She noted that visual cues and physical controls are selected based on the risk level, time of day, and volume. Ms. Saathoff commented on the pictures being shared stating that they show what's trying to be managed and why it's considered such an important intersection for additional safety procedures reminding the commission that staff insisted on adding uniformed personnel to man the area when the port has vehicles crossing. The construction has added more complexity to the intersection making it even more important for coordination between the contractors. Ms. Lewis spoke to the ongoing safety efforts that include four fire suppressant systems in service: two fire buggies and two security patrol trucks which are positioned for rapid

response with the buggies staged at Dock 7 and Dock 2. Routine inspections are performed on the buggies, extinguishers, and AEDs. Safety also monitors daily operations, attends tailgate meetings, and conducts thorough investigations on incidents, construction hazards, and traffic delays. In the moment safe behavior is also recognized, and the port supports projects with improved signage and safety equipment, so controls are clear and consistent. Ms. Lewis stated the annual RORO Rodeo provided employees, labor, tenants and partners hands-on training with high and heavy equipment and one of the fire suppressant buggies. The event reinforces confidence and reduces equipment and property damage through practice and sharpens response for unrealistic conditions. Ms. Saathoff noted that earlier Ms. Lewis mentioned property damage in the three-year slide stating the port has not had cargo equipment damage this past year, which is largely attributed to the port's RORO Rodeos and the continued emphasis on safety. Ms. Lewis also noted that labor is fully trained with the fire buggies and can operate them if there is an incident. Moving forward, staff wants to work with the fire department to let them know what sources the port has available to aid them in getting their job done when access is needed onto the RORO vessels. The rescue container training brought stevedores, ILA members, non-union workers and tenants together for a walk-through of the container layout and onboard tools allowing participants to familiarize themselves with equipment which will save time when operation of the container is necessary. Project cargo demands careful planning with staff coordinating traffic control, movement schedule during non-peak hours when possible and mapping out routes in advance. The safety team assist the movements inside the port by spotting, verifying controls and enforcing PPE compliance to ensure smooth, predictable movements from start to finish. Ms. Lewis stated that every vessel, vendor and contractor receives a safety packet, outlining expectations and common questions. When incidents occur, safety responds immediately, gathering facts onsite and initiates corrective actions to prevent recurrences. She shared photos of a recent contractor loadout incident where the driver failed to set his braking system or use wheel chocks while loading. No one was hurt, but it could have been worse. Safety reinforced controls with safety signage as reminders. Ms. Lewis then noted the following high activity areas where safety's attention is concentrated at...

- Non-TWIC Check-In Lot
- Parcel 14/19 Staging Area for AMPORTS
- Del Monte Truck Staging
- AMPORTS Check-In Area
- Chiquita Scales
- Dole Interchange
- Vessel Operations

She stated that being visible, accessible and proactive in these locations helps staff coach in real time and intercept issues before they escalate. Safety has invested in safety equipment that improves safety controls and readiness like a new auto flagger for traffic control, Brazos Pilots' safety stairs that aids pilots when boarding or disembarking a vessel, and a bulk purchase of safety cones that standardize temporary controls when needed. The Port also extends a safety plan to community events with a pre-event risk review, hydration plan, shade, rest and a clear communication plan in case of an incident. For the Take-a-Child Fishing Tournament, safety operated a dedicated first aid station and coordinated closely with Freeport EMS to be ready if a situation arose. The same planning model was applied to

the Port Freeport Annual Golf Tournament. Safety was also on hand for briefings for the Centennial Community Tours. Ms. Lewis then highlighted the safety projects for 2026...

- Evaluate and upgrade gates and directional signage across the port to confirm designated fixed locations.
- Ensure all safety and security vehicles have the appropriate first aid kits, AEDs, fire extinguishers, shelter-in-place supplies and that all staff has the escape hoods required.
- Continue routine assessments of safety needs.
- Purchase a second auto flagger.
- Continue to update the safety brochure for OTR truckers, contractors and vendors to align with current operations.
- Keep recognition strong through an Employee Appreciation Luncheon and the safety awards.

Lastly, Ms. Lewis stated that staff continues to advance port-wide safety through targeted projects and strong engagements, adding that current initiatives include managing speed along the long straights, supporting major community events, improving hydration and wellness on site and expanding access to essential safety equipment across the facility. Safety's engagement remains the multiplier with quarterly tenant safety committee meetings, quarterly walkabouts, monthly safety staff training, joint safety meetings, tailgate briefings project cargo coordination, opening of new facilities and active participation in the community events. Ms. Saathoff stated that Ms. Lewis is doing a great job with the increased demand because of the amount of cargo moving through the port, adding that every time a customer and cargo are added it increases activity and the need for safety in operations. She further commented that the numbers are good, so the program is effective and is an organization wide effort by everyone.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION in accordance with Subchapter D of the Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:
 - A. Under authority of Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney):
 1. Consultation with attorney under Government Code Section 551.071(1) (to seek or receive attorney's advice on pending or contemplated litigation).
 - B. Under authority of Section 551.076 (Deliberation of Security Matters) for discussion regarding:
 1. Discussion regarding issues related to the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation of security personnel or devices or security audit and services.
8. RECONVENE OPEN SESSION:

Commissioner Giesecke noted that Commissioner Singhania left the meeting during executive session at 4:32 p.m.

9. Adjourn.

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 5:14 PM.