Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Business, Intergovernmental and Environmental Committee of the Board of Commissioners of the Lake Charles Harbor and Terminal District held at 2:30 P.M., Monday, December 21, 2020 in the Board Room of the Port of Lake Charles located at 1611 W. Sallier St., Lake Charles, Louisiana.

In attendance and constituting a quorum, were:

David Darbone, Chairman

Carl Krielow, President

Mike Eason, Member

Dudley Dixon, Member

Tom Lorenzi, Member

Judy McCleary, Member

Keith Prudhomme, Member

Absent:

None

Also Present:

Richert Self, Executive Director

John Ringo, General Counsel

Channing Hayden, Director of Navigation

Cameron Landry, Director of Administration and Finance

Michelle Bolen, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Darbone called the meeting to order at 2:33 P.M.

The attached notice of meeting was posted and given in accordance with the Open Meetings Law. A Business, Intergovernmental and Environmental Committee meeting was held.

Mr. Darbone made a statement reminding the Public of the Port’s procedure for the Public to address an agenda item to the Committee.

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1. Consideration and appropriate action regarding awarding a contract for federal lobbying services for the District.

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Mr. Darbone stated there are four groups to present their proposals for federal lobbying services.

Mr. Darbone stated the first Group to make a presentation would be the Livingston Group. Mr. Bob Livingston and Mr. Mike Hayes spoke. Other staffers joined by ZOOM – Paul Cambon, Jim Adams, Gallen Martin, Becky Natakis-Grants, John Doyle and Brian Glackin.

Mr. Darbone stated they will allow 15 minutes for a presentation to be followed up by a question-and-answer session.

Mr. Hayes stated he worked with the Livingston Group when he was with SASOL. He was part of the team hired the Livingston Group in May 2005. They had a long and professional relationship with one another. He cannot speak to the status of the project as it exists today. If the quarterback gives the ball to the running back and he fumbles going around the end, then that is a different problem altogether. They solved a lot of problems with the Livingston Group using a lot of unique and different mechanisms. Never once during the time he was working with the Livingston Group did he regret having hired them or question whether it was the right decision. He had a fantastic relationship with the team and he is so proud to be a part of the team today. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to make a bid and take the chance to be able to represent the Port. He hopes the Port has the opportunity to have a relationship with this organization as he had.

Mr. Livingston stated he wanted to express his condolences to the whole community of Lake Charles for the devastation that they have suffered from the hurricanes this year. He knows a little bit about hurricanes going back to Betsy, Camille and obviously Katrina. This summer he has to do a little roof repair, but it isn’t anything like the Lake Charles area has to do. His heart goes out to everyone who has been devastated.

He has had a varied career as being a lawyer, prosecutor, and a congressman for 20 years, Chairman of the Appropriations Committee. In 1999, he formed the Livingston Group with Alan Martin, who was his Chief of Staff and Paul Cambon, who was his chief legislative guy. They formed the Group and have been doing well for 21 years. The three of them have been working together for 43 years. They like long-term relationships. One of their principal clients lasted about 15 years until SASOL decided to do other things. They have enjoyed working with Mike Hayes, not only since they located in Lake Charles, but before. They helped guide SASOL this way with Mr. Hayes’ help. Hopefully this is worked out in the Board’s minds. One day it could even be twice the size that it is with the plans that are still available if they choose to follow through. Nobody can predict the economy and no one can predict the fortitudes and whatnot, but SASOL had big plans and have developed about $11-$12 billion worth, but they were planning on a good bit more than that.

In Congress and subsequently, they worked with waterways. They have worked with various ports such as such as the Port of New Orleans, Port of Charleston and Port of Savannah. The waterway people were one of the first groups of people to support him in his bid for Congress. He lost the first time he ran, but the guy was nice enough to go to jail so he another shot at it and then he won. He hung in there and they worked on waterways issues for the entire 22 years he was in Congress and since then. They started the WCI, the Waterways Counsel Initiative. They are joined with Jones Walker, the law firm based in New Orleans, but reaches into Phoenix and New York and all the way down to Miami. They have worked with them and together they have done a lot of waterways issues. They have a great relationship together. They are working with them on this bid. They have been a great team. They have been with them for 21 years.

Having been a member of the Louisiana delegation, it stands to reason they get along very well with all of the members of Louisiana delegation in the United States Congress and in the Senate. He knows each one of them personally. He guarantees they will be more than willing, regardless who the Port decides to go with, and will be steadfast and support the Port.

In their Group, they have a number of capabilities. They may have a few people on Zoom, and if they are there they will speak up. They have a grants lady who works on special needs grants and she can write applications for grants. This is a specialty that he does not have, but he is glad they have her. Becky Nictakis is the grants writer. She can answer anyone’s questions regarding grants. She handles all of the special grants within the world of federal bureaucracy.

Mr. Livingston stated his forte is the appropriations process. Being chairman for four years of the Appropriations Committee, with Paul Cambon, who was his chief legislative assistant and has worked in appropriations since around 1980. They hold themselves out to be about as good as anyone you get in Washington to work the appropriations process. The good news, as a Republican, he is not always excited when Democrats, but in this case the Democrats have taken control of the House of Representatives and may or may not have control of the Senate. But, he understands they are bringing back earmarks. Earmarks will not be there for just any private individual that has an idea to spend money. But, public institutions will be able to apply for under the way it is being devised right now. That means that Lake Charles will probably be right in front of the line. Back to his original statement, their experience in appropriations has them as well equipped to handle that sort of request as anyone in the city. He is the only former chairman of the Appropriations Committee in the government relations business. He hopes they would consider this information.

Disaster relief will be at the top of the list. Again, Lake Charles will be at the front of the line. There is a lot of evidence to support their claim. He believes they can add quite a bit of resources to the Port’s demands and needs so that they can be successful to the Port’s needs on their behalf.

Mr. Livingston stated they have several people that they put together on the list. One is Jim Adams of Jones Walker, who was head of the office of Marine Supply Association. He is not included on the list, but he wanted to include him because he is in the Jones Walker office in Washington as well as John Doyle, former acting chief of the Corps of Engineers. They also have Bernie Robinson. He stated Mr. Cambon was on Zoom. Mr. Cambon stated he, along with Jim Adams and Brian Glackin have appropriations experience as well. Mr. Livingston stated Mr. Glackin and is a retired Navy Captain and was a pilot. To his great credit, his spouse is a member of the staff of the Appropriations Committee, which is an asset. He is very skilled at appropriations matters. It is actually a double-team with Cambon’s experience and Mr. Glackin’s experience on appropriations with the staff. The Port will not get a better team than them.

Mr. Livingston stated Mr. Adams was based in Kentucky and was going to fly down for this presentation, but they decided to keep him at home.

That is it in a nutshell. He would like to have everyone respond to any of the Board members detailed questions. He does want to take up any more time, but wanted to let the Board know that this firm can do it and they have been doing this for 43 years.

Mr. Darbone thanked Mr. Livingston for their presentation and asked if anyone had any questions.

Mr. Dixon stated he did not have a question for Mr. Livingston. He thought he was around whenever Mr. Livingston ran against John Breaux in years past. Mr. Livingston stated he never ran against Mr. Breaux. Mr. Dixon stated they were both good men and either one would’ve done a good job. He appreciates his honesty, his character and service that he gave to the United States of America.

Mr. Dixon stated that he wanted to say a few words about Mr. Mike Hayes. Mr. Hayes came to Westlake several years ago. He was just one of those guys. He was a higher level and all of a sudden he moved up the line and then when he came back he was running the whole show. He had more money than he knew what to do with, so he was buying up everything he could buy. He put a highway down Westlake, a heavy haul road. He did a good job and was very courteous to the people of Westlake. He appreciates his service also, because he was always adept at answering the questions. That’s all he had to say.

Mr. Krielow stated they touched on the grant writing and had someone there that could go into depth regarding this issue. Typically, Washington lobbying has focused on funding of the channel. What opportunities or where would the Livingston Group go with grant writing to assist in other areas of the Port for the development of Port projects not specific to the channel?

Ms. Nictakis replied that the Livingston Group has really been on the forefront of recognizing that their clients are looking for federal revenue opportunities and they brought her in to identify those opportunities and to help try to win them. Typically, what they do is they work with their client on a needs assessment of what they are looking for and look to make sure that those projects are in a place where they would be able to be successful when grants become available. There are some of the traditional grants that they would look at ports that come out of the Department of Transportation, like the Port Structure Development Program or like INFRO. They will look at opportunities for intermodal transportation upgrades, but then there are some other opportunities that come through Homeland Security that may be a benefit to the Port and some of the public safety roles that fall within the Port. There are other grants that are available in Louisiana because the port is a special political district. For instance, if the Port had a need for public safety in the round of fire or law enforcement training or personnel, there are grants available in that space. There are grants available through the economic development administration with things like strategic planning or public works projects that focus on job creation and retention. Those are a few of the first places she would look. She would also like to look at what the Port’s priorities and objectives are over the next few years to see if they could dig and find some others that maybe the other ports are looking at also.

Mr. Livingston asked Mr. Cambon to speak about the deepening of the channel and some of the steps they have done in the past. Mr. Cambon stated that the Port of Lake Charles would be the only port that they would be working with on channel issues. They are not working with the Port of New Orleans anymore. They use to and they did help them with their deepening projects on the WRDA bills. They have vast experience in the WRDA bills and the resources development bills. He and Jim Adams also have experience working with the Corps of Engineers. The CORP’s work plans are important post passage of the annual appropriations bill where the funding is added for the Calcasieu River and Pass projects and O&M construction. They just released the 21 Bill. There are additional monies there spelled out in O&M and construction accounts, but the work plan has additional funding they have to allocate when they submit the budget next year. They have worked those types of issues to bring more construction and O&M money along those lines. They also put in their files that the Port has recently received some provisions in the WRDA bill in the dredge material maintenance plan. They would explore with the Port some options to find a way to speed that process up, whether it is policy or funding. Mr. Livingston stated that Mr. Cambon has had a lot of success, unrelated to what the Port does, but they have been working with the Louisiana shrimpers and have been able to assist them in disaster relief and getting some provisions in the bill.

Mr. Hayes stated one other area that they would like to look at is the methanol project. The first project that SASOL worked on with the Livingston Group was a very similar project where they took a rock and turned it into a gas and then made it into a liquid fuel. A big part of that is figuring out the offtake agreement. Regarding the offtake agreement, the approach they took was to work through the Pentagon to try to get them to give SASOL a guaranteed contract. You will not get a project funded unless you have a guaranteed offtake agreement. Looking at that project is something the Livingston Group has experience in handling in the past.

Mr. Darbone thanked the Livingston Group for presenting their proposal.

Mr. Krielow asked if staff had any questions. Staff did not.

Mr. Darbone stated the second group to present was the Picard Group.

Mr. Chuck Kleckley stated he was here on behalf of the Picard Group. He is a longtime resident of Lake Charles. He stated it was an honor and a privilege to be standing here today before the Commissioners on behalf of the Picard Group. As a lifelong resident of Lake Charles, he went to LaGrange and graduated from McNeese State University. He has spent 20 years in politics starting locally on the police jury and then as a state representative and also Speaker of the House.

When they first heard about the RFP, he told Mr. Tyron Picard that this is something that is very important to not only the Port, but for him to make sure that they are doing everything they can to help and support the Port of Lake Charles in Washington DC. He is a lifelong resident. His three daughters live in Lake Charles and his six grandchildren live in Lake Charles. It is very important for him to make sure that they all stay here. They all know that the Port of Lake Charles is the economic engine for Southwest Louisiana and will continue to be that. He has told people before, that outside of this building, there is probably no one that knows the Port of Lake Charles and the challenges that the Port is faced over the many years and also the ship channel issues and being involved and engaged in being in meetings and being associated with the Port for so long.

When they speak about the Port, they talk about what is important for the Port. Regarding staff, they have Emily Bacque and Hunter Hall that will be meeting via Zoom. Mr. Tyron Picard is also here in person and has some interesting information to share with the Board. They have an all-star cast in Washington DC with Ms. Bacque, Mr. Hall and Mr. Rodney Alexander. Ms. Bacque has family that lives in Lake Charles. She grew up in Lafayette and went to Washington DC many years ago and worked for former Senator John Breaux. Ms. Bacque is a five-star class act for the Picard Group.

On his own, Mr. Hunter Hall used to come to the Port Board meetings when he was with Senator Cassidy and worked on the commerce committee. He has developed relationships with many of the former directors and Mr. Hayden as well. When they talk about relationships, he thinks it is important for him to share with the Board, that when he served in the legislature for the 12 years he did, he served with many of the current congressional delegation, including Congressman Steve Scalise, Congressman Mike Johnson and Congressman Cedric Richmond, who will now be a top administrator with the Biden administration. He served with Congressman-elect Luke Letlow, who was on the Governor’s committee or staff when Mr. Kleckley was Speaker of the House. He has developed relationships, but even more important is Senator Cassidy and he, when he was chairman of the house insurance committee, they actually worked on legislation together when he was a State Senator. He served with Senator Kennedy on the bond commission for four years when the senator was chairman and he sat next to him.

What is important is, for the Picard Group, what the Port will hear today is what sets them apart from everyone else and the skill set that they bring to the table with the background and knowledge and experience that they have.

They have talked about the ship channel for many years - since his police jury days. They need a predictable and stable source of funding for the ship channel. There is no one that disagrees with that. They look at the ship channel here but they also look over at the Mississippi River and the Houston ship channel. What are they doing over there? They are talking about widening their ship channel. They’re talking about deepening their ship channel. Right here, they still struggle for that stable source of funding.

He doesn’t want to take up all of the time, but thinks what the Board will see from the Picard Group is what their experience is, what their knowledge is and the opportunity that they think they can bring to the table for the Port of Lake Charles. Their approach will set them apart.

Mr. Picard addressed the Board. He is the founder and principal of the Picard Group. By having such a talented team, he often times feels like he is just a bridesmaid. He just needs to not step on anyone’s toes and get out of the way let them do their thing. He wanted to make three quick points that will hopefully resonate with them.

The first goes back to 1995. He was the first lobbyist hired by the Port of Lake Charles in 1995 to do state work because they were trying to get projects. One was something called a semiautomatic bag loader and the other was trying to get an industrial park out at Chennault. Three years later he went on to become an in-house counsel. The port director at the time asked who could take over the lobbying. He stated at the time there was a young and very smart lady Ginger Adam, who he highly recommended and does an outstanding job. The rest is history. Today they still work with Ms. Adam Corley on a number of shared projects. If given the opportunity, they would look forward to continuing that on behalf of the Port.

His point in going back to 1995 is that it was a totally different Port then. They focused on the export of agricultural products and petrochemical products. Today, they see the evolution where it is not only those two things, which remain very important, but also the aspect of becoming a landlord for the gaming and entertainment industry and becoming a financial sponsor for what is the most valuable asset in Southwest Louisiana, the deep-water port channel. It is the Port’s primary responsibility. Fifty years from now, they do not know what LNG is going to be or if it is going to still continue to be prominent. They do not know what gaming will be like, but by and large, they can probably predict that the deep water ship channel is going to continue to be there and be a tremendous asset. Understanding the complexity and the evolution of the Port’s role in the economy is something they understand.

This second item to discuss is 1109 Pithon Street. Some may ask why is that. As of December 15, 2020, it is the fourth location of the Picard Group. They have offices in Washington DC, Baton Rouge, Lafayette and now Lake Charles. It is all to help them be close to their clients to provide connectivity down on the local level. All of the firms that made applications are all very qualified. There is no question about it. It comes down to accessibility and getting in front of issues and helping the client strategize. That is what their management has always been at their firm. They like to be in on the front end, whether it was helping Lafayette try to figure out how to pull the money down to build a new airport. Those are the things they like to do, not be reactionary but be proactive and help the client solve issues.

Finally, they are a no conflict firm. They do not represent any other port and they will not represent any other port. They take a bipartisan approach. They understand that that is what it takes, particularly with the next Congress and administration, it will take someone who can talk to people on both sides of the aisle. They believe multiple opportunities will lie in the new administration that have not existed previously and they would appreciate the opportunity for their consideration for their proposal. He turned it over to his Washington DC staff.

Ms. Bacque stated she and Mr. Hall would be the boots on the ground in Washington DC. They have years of experience. As Mr. Picard mentioned, they are bipartisan. She worked for Senator Breaux for years and Mr. Hall worked for Senator Cassidy in the most recent administration. They do reach across both sides of the aisle and they think they are a great team for their clients and are able to get information from both sides and get what they need to have the success for their clients.

Today is a big day in Washington because for months they have been waiting on additional Covid relief and appropriations bills. They have all come out within the last hour. She and Mr. Hall have been pouring through thousands of pages of documents. They know there is good stuff actually in there for the Port of Lake Charles, particularly as it relates to the WRDA, which many may know is how you get the Army Corps of Engineers’ projects authorized. That usually happens every two years. That is about to be finalized and will be implemented. But, Congress will soon begin working on another WRDA and that is where she and Mr. Hall can step right in with priorities related to the ship channel, further dredging and looking for appropriations annually through the energy and water appropriations committee. They also have great relationships with the Corps of Engineers and many different departments.

One other thing she wanted to mention is the way in which they communicate. She does think it is different than other people. It is what sets them apart. Not only communicating with staff on the hill and staff in agencies, one of the things that they pride themselves on is the fact that they get the information before they even ask. As far as the Port is concerned, the Ports priorities would be in front of these staffers and members and folks in agencies that are key to their success before that they even know they need it. They do the same with their clients. When they are communicating with their clients, people may in fact get sick of them at some point because it is so much, but they have found that that is the key to success. If they are not communicating with their client, the client does not know what they are doing for them in DC. The fact that Mr. Kleckley is here in Lake Charles, that will enable even better communication, whether it is at commission meetings or just daily communications.

She turned the meeting over to Mr. Hunter Hall.

Mr. Hall stated one of his first positions was he started with Senator Cassidy in 2015. One of his first visits was to the Port of Lake Charles and sat in the rain for about 15 minutes before Mr. Hayden came outside and put him in a 15-passenger van and drove him around the Port and showed him piles and piles of fracking pellets. For the next several years working for Senator Cassidy’s office, he went to a number of ship channel meetings and was able to interface with a number of people out there. They have this on the ground experience. They spoke about boots on the ground here in Washington, but they also have boots on the ground there. They have a significant amount of experience in dealing with ports and port issues, not just at the federal level, but also on the ground there are a number of things that Mr. Kleckley has done as well.

The biggest priority every year is Mr. Hayden’s “Begging for Bucks” tour. An increase in dredging dollars year after year is obviously a top priority and something that is a significant focus from January 1 every year until December 31 at the end of the year, but in this case 21st is when they put out the appropriations bill. Their approach in their communication is going to be what sets them apart, especially given the new change in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund that was included in this bill where ports and port authorities now have $500 million of discretionary funding to use on port projects. It is at their discretion. With their relationships, they know relationships run very deep in Louisiana and moving outside of that as well into Senator Shelby’s office and the chairman appropriations and others, they are able to tell the Port’s story and spread their message much further and much wider. This will allow them access to those discretionary funds. That $500 million of which is going to increase on a schedule every year as well. The most important priority is obviously that funding because that allows the ship channel to maintain its width and depth. He thought the Port was still doing year-round dredging. Clearly, to operate at full capacity, that has to be handled.

Other issues they find to be valuable is trade in opening up new markets. In his experience in working with Secretary Ross and the Trump administration and working at the Department of Commerce, will give them access to the international trade administration and others – commerce, treasury etc. This will allow them to expand into new markets along with ongoing long-term things such as trade with Cuba, if that ever becomes a thing. That is something they would look at to be a long-term priority. He knows there are more reforms that need to be made to the harbor maintenance trust fund, but their communication and their relationships even outside of Louisiana will be what allows them to succeed for the Port of Lake Charles for their top priorities in maintaining that depth and allowing the Port to continue to grow. It will also enable more access to the channel into the Port. He hopes to work with Mr. Hayden soon.

He stated that communication is the most important thing that they have found with client’s success. This includes communication with all three parties - on the ground where the client is located, between the client and the government affairs firm and between the firm and the client the staff and the members. That communication is key. Some people get sick of it, but it is why they are successful and how they provide the results that they do. Look forward to the opportunity to work with them and answer any questions they have.

Mr. Darbone thanked Mr. Kleckley and Mr. Picard for the presentation and opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Eason stated he wanted to say he was sure they had had a lot of success stories. He would like them to think back on a project that was a very challenging project for them that was ultimately a success story and share that with them.

Mr. Picard replied that one item related to public financing ss and he alluded to earlier, was the new terminal at the Lafayette airport, which was a $90 million project. In the summer of 2013, they were forced to sit down and facilitate with the mayor and a number of stakeholders in the town to discuss how could a new terminal come about here. What they discovered was there was not going to be a golden bullet through one source of funding. There was not going to be capital outlay. It was not going to be FAA. It was not going to be bonds. But, their job was to sit down and figure out how do they weave all of this together to make it work and to get the $90 million. Ultimately, they had meetings with the FAA and figured out roughly what they be good for if they were able to come up with some funding. They had the mayor come up with an eight-month one cent sales tax for third of the amount. They received a commitment from the legislative delegation on another piece of it. By stringing together four different buckets of money, they got to $90 million and Lafayette will have a brand-new terminal opening in about 10 months. The ability to work across the lines to understand that a lot of the times project are not necessarily and do not necessarily fit squarely within one cubicle or one box. But, in order aggregate the means necessary, it means reaching out and talking to others and having that communication. Every Monday morning, they are on Zoom, just like this with Washington and Lake Charles and Baton Rouge. Every member of the firm and every member of the lobbying team, whether you work on the state level or the federal level goes over a dashboard. They make a run through of every single client so every person knows and understands what is going on with that client at both the state and federal levels. That cohesiveness is very valuable in solving problems.

Ms. McCleary asked about regarding getting that information back to the Port and all of those dashboards they see as relevant to the Port, how would they be reporting back to the Board. Mr. Picard replied that there are multiple ways. One way is that they have a scheduled call or Zoom meeting depending on the frequency the body wants it. One of their LNG company clients likes to have a Zoom meeting every other week. In times like this, they have been sending clients emails daily out of Washington with developments over the course of a weekend. In addition to regularly scheduled reports, they have a “Washington Weekly” that they send out to their federal clients. It gives a broad picture as it relates to what is going on in Washington, but tapering that into more specifics as it relates to the clients concerns or as it relates to the Corps of Engineers or appropriations dollars in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund. With them having the ability to have Mr. Kleckley be here on a weekly or daily basis is what they think gives them an advantage. Obviously, you would like to have conversations and be able to brainstorm about certain ideas and things like that, but are not quite ready yet to form in the policy because you want to determine the feasibility of it before you roll it out and whether it is something that can be accepted or would be accepted on a state or federal level. What the Board will see from them is a variety of communications, whether it is a combination of calls, weekly updates and their Washington weekly report and if there is a desire for a regularly scheduled conference call or Zoom meeting, which many of their clients like and they are happy to do so they can talk to clients more confidentially.

Ms. Bacque stated she would like to add one thing. They work with a number of local governments and public entities. They understand the importance of showing what you are getting from your federal lobbyist. Often times simply having them write that down for you, be it a monthly report that they can tie back to your legislative platform so they can say, “x, y, z occurred this month in DC and this is what it means to you.” They would do that on a monthly basis for the Port.

Mr. Lorenzi stated that this RFP is for federal lobbying. How much of their focus is on federal lobbying as opposed to on a state level, because obviously Ginger does the lobbying on the state level. They are strong on the state level so he wants to understand about the federal level.

Mr. Picard stated they have 20 clients on the federal level, which is roughly about one third of their businesses that are on the federal side. They range in interest from universities to municipalities. The public funding aspect of it is something that they are very familiar with. There federal side deals with everything from matters in healthcare to appropriations to regulatory issues as it may affect certain industries and certain agents. It is right at about 20 to 21 federal clients.

Mr. Lorenzi asked if he had other clients where their work is bifurcated where they are only representing them on the federal level and someone else does the state. Mr. Picard stated that yes they do and vice versa. He also stated some that are only on the state side and they work with that client’s federal counsel. An example of that is Cheniere Energy. His company represents them on the state side and work with their federal lobbyist. That is something they’re very comfortable with. They already work with Ms. Corley on a number of other projects and have a very cohesive relationship.

Mr. Dixon asked if that was his understanding that they were going to get a weekly report from them. Mr. Picard stated that they would provide that. Mr. Dixon stated he thought he had read somewhere Mr. Kleckley would be at their meetings every month. Mr. Picard stated that was true.

Mr. Kleckley stated he intended to bring that out in his initial comments. He lives here in Lake Charles and has told many that he is available 24/7. He plans to be here at the monthly meetings. If staff or board members need to speak to them have them call him and he can get with the federal staff and can all meet. It will be at all of the meetings and will be able to answer any questions at the meetings.

The third group to present was Card and Associates. Proposal was all conducted by a Zoom meeting.

Brad Card introduced himself to the Board. He thanked them for letting them give their presentation by Zoom meeting. They would prefer to be there in person but with the times they appreciate them working with them to meet with them virtually.

He stated he is the founder and CEO of Card and Associates. His history is very different. He grew up in a very political family. He was involved in politics most of his life. He had a detour, if you will, and went into law enforcement, which was kind of the love of his life. He had an awful lot of fun in 7 ½ years working undercover all over the country working narcotics and murder for hire cases. He enjoyed every minute of it. He then had the opportunity to come to Washington DC with his wife when she came to run a Washington DC office. He initially worked at the Pentagon for Secretary Bill Cohen, whom he had known for quite a while. Secretary Cohen detailed him to the White House after a period of time. He had two offices - one at the Pentagon one at the White House. After that period of time, he was offered a position running government relations for 3M Company for the Northeast. He had the entire Northeast section from Maine down through Massachusetts. He worked in the traffic control materials division. During that time, a very good friend of his was running for Congress, John Sweeney. He was in New York and Mr. Card was in New York with him often. He got elected. He tried to help him set his office up and he asked him to be his Chief of Staff.

Mr. Card stated he went on to become Congressman Sweeney’s Chief of Staff. The job progressed to be on the Appropriations Committee and the Steering Committee. Mr. Card stated he managed all of that. He ran Congressman Sweeney’s campaigns for reelection. He handled all of their leadership obligations as he was a Deputy Whip.

He finally left Capitol Hill and went to work at Dutko Worldwide. He became a managing partner. During that time, they went from being a relatively small firm to growing one of the nation’s largest lobbying firms. They are consistently ranked at the top in both individuals, revenues and effectiveness. During that time, they ended up selling the firm to a private equity Group who in turn sold them to a publicly traded company. After that period of time, he thought it might be good for him to change his life a little bit and start his own firm - Card and Associates.

He brought Adam Bordes on with him, who he has known and worked with for 20 years. Mr. Bordes worked on and off the hill for 20 years. He is very well known in Washington DC. He is a Democrat active. He has worked for Mr. Bill Clay, Louis Stokes, and Ed Townes. He stated he worked with Ed Townes while he was in New York. They have also had the good fortune of hiring Laine Glisson Oliver while they were at Dutko. She is a rock star. Those of you in Louisiana may know about her prowess as a world class runner. She worked with a lot of his clients and vice versa. She left to go to Baker Donaldson during the time the firm was changing hands. They stayed in touch and shared some clients.

Where he is at right now, is he has a number of strategic relationships with a number of firms in town, including a large law firm. He shares office space with a friend from that law firm. They collaborate on items. They work in a very bipartisan manner. They work the clients that they like to work. They also have the interaction and collegiality of much larger firms. Ms. Oliver does as well.

Mr. Card stated it might be good to let the Board know their methodology. That is really important in Washington DC. A lot of firms will come forward and bury you in paper and list 100 people that say they are going to work on your accounts and that doesn’t usually happen. In their firm, they work their clients and are personally engaged with them every day. They do the work and hustle and talk to people. He likes working with Ms. Oliver because she is very much like him, which is somebody that gets up and runs to the hill and engages with people and is well known and works the circles as he does. He is involved with a number of boards. He is on NRCC218 Board. He is on a 15 or 20 member of Congress kitchen cabinets senator’s kitchen cabinets. He does a lot of fund raising. He is very active and very engaged.

What they would like to do with the Port is sit down and have a good strategic session with the Port so they could come up with comprehensive campaign strategy. What they would like to do is to help the Port leverage its assets and help them leverage their assets. When they can work with the Port to find bottom-line success so they can come up with a political strategy and a policy strategy that works for the Port. They really want to be clear on what the Port wants and help the Port get there. They have been doing this for a long time. This is his 20th year of lobbying. He stated that they spend a lot of times with members of Congress and staff. What they like to do is to see the big picture and see the direction Congress is going and what is actually important for members of Congress. They identify champions, certainly, which is necessary and staff. They are also pretty adept at knowing what is actually happening, not what you are reading in politico or the hill, but what is actually going on because they are talking with staff on a regular basis. For instance, he is been working all weekend long on the Covid package and fielding calls as has his partners. They try to get in the know so they can see what buttons need to be pushed and what issues drive people. He worked with Senator Cassidy on a number of issues. Obviously, he is very engaged in healthcare, but he has an awful lot more to him than just healthcare. He works a lot of people on the hill. The appropriation staffer, Ron Anderson, he has worked with about 20 years. It is that type of relationship that they are able to come to the table with and they know some issues the Port may want to talk about one priority and to another member they may want to talk about a different priority because they don’t share the same concern on the issue of priorities. You have to understand who your audience is when working on Capitol Hill. That is what they do.

They also work with third-party groups a lot. They will go out and help identify third-party groups that will champion their cause. They might be think tanks, opinion makers, someone who is writing an op-ed or an ongoing campaign and an issue might come up that they could leverage those specific issues during the campaign. What they tried to do have a comprehensive view of the landscape and then bring it forward in a really succinct and targeted way to achieve real success so they can get where they want to be legislatively. He asked Ms. Oliver to address the Board.

Ms. Oliver stated she was a Baton Rouge native and went to LSU. She moved to Washington DC to work for Senator John Breaux as his press secretary. She fell in love with DC and never left. Her entire family is in Louisiana. She goes down often. She has several clients in Louisiana. She is very passionate about the work she does with the Louisiana delegation and the issues in and around things that are important to the state of Louisiana. She sits on the LSU Board of Visitors for the mass communication school. That allows her to interface with all of the political people in the communications space. And they have seen over the last several years how important communications are in building a campaign or anything. She has been able to leverage her experience as a press secretary for Senator Breaux as she produced his television show back way before people were doing a lot of mass communication. With that, she has taken that skill set and brought it to clients.

She stated she could walk through a couple of things that she is working on right now for the LSU Ag Center. They work very closely with some of the people that are doing work in the Port obviously. They are all of the rice people, the shippers etc. so she is fairly up to speed on things that are important to the Port. She’s very close with the Kennedy staff as is anybody and everybody that is going to be doing this work. She knows the port has worked in the past with Louisiana firms. What they would bring is a fresh approach. She gets up and hustles every day. She is working with the Pennington Biomedical Center right now with the LSU Ag Center to get some language in the stimulus bill as they were left out of receiving some of the money. They formed coalitions all around the state. What about these people? What about those people? Why don’t we call the Florida folks? They are pretty nimble. They are able to access the right people at the right time. One of the things that she has used very successfully over the last five or six years is using the administration to work for you rather than always just going to the hill. Going to the agencies and talking to the agency program managers and saying “Hey, USDA. What are your goals?” and then going back to the client and telling them here are their goals how can he help that guy program manager at USDA meet his goal? Then they work a strategy to help bring their folks into what they are doing. There are a lot of ways that they have had to get creative over the last five or six years when they did away with earmarks on how to get funding. She has been very successful in employing those kinds of strategies for clients. It is working. Mr. Card stated the earmarks may be coming back. He stated the Port could pull up his client roster as it is public record and see who they represent. They represent Fortune 500 companies, national trade associations and the City of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Ms. Oliver stated they represented the Louisiana Chemical Association after Hurricane Katrina. She wrote the chemical guide to all of the chemical companies up and down Louisiana. Mr. Card stated he represented the World Trade Center literally three days after 9/11. He started representing the World Trade Center and worked with them over 15 years. He saw them through the whole rebuilding process. He is very familiar with the crisis management side of that. He also represents all of the hospitals in New York City, the Greater New York Hospital Association, which through this Covid crisis has been really challenging and daunting. He also represents all of the airports, who are really struggling.

He is not the smartest guy in the world. However, he thinks if he can understand it than a hill staffer can understand it. If he does not understand it, then chances are they will not understand it. They try to speak in plain English and work with staff to help them understand where they are going and build the right teams to get there. He gave a shout out to Mr. Bordes and stated he was one of the smartest men he has ever known and is a great researcher and knows the intricacies of Capitol Hill like no one. He has been a very staunch Democrat supporter. He is very engaged in those campaigns mostly on the Biden/Harris campaign in Pennsylvania. Mr. Card stated he was Republican and has been that his whole life. He stated he would be pleased to answer any questions.

Ms. McCleary stated that with not knowing a lot of what they do, would he explain what a kitchen cabinet is and how the will that would benefit the Port of Lake Charles.

Mr. Card stated he works with leadership a lot. In many of these deals, like what was done working on the Covid package, these deals are written by what they call the four corners - the Republican leader, the Speaker of the House, the Majority leader and the Minority leader. He serves in kitchen cabinets so he gets to know what is happening. He can kind of see the general direction of where things are going and what players are going to be important. He is been very intricately involved with the steering committee, which is kind of an inside baseball game committee. It is where committee assignments are determined. It is where committee chairmen are selected. He serves as a formal advisor to several Democrats as well. It gives you a real good perspective and understanding of what is happening in the leadership and within the conferences of both the Republicans and the Democrats. It is because they are trying to find an agenda. If they can find a way to work within their agenda and fit his projects in - there are multiple ways to skin a cat in Washington usually. This kind of gives them a unique perspective because they are talking with staff all of the time and talking with members and understand the landscape. Just because someone says no, it does not mean no. They go to other members. They are paid advocates for their clients. If the Port would talk to some of their references they would find that they are tenacious and they work very hard and have a pretty good understanding and are very respectful. They understand that members of Congress have their job to do personally really respects them. They do an important job and get into it for the right reasons. He is a proud lobbyist. He does not think that lobbying is a bad word. Proud of his clients and of the work that he does and his staff does as well.

Mr. Eason stated that this may be a little premature, but he did see that there was some funding that was given to the Corps of Engineers on the stimulus bill that was done over the weekend. He was not sure if there were any restrictions on that as far as what the Port’s needs are. This may be premature as it just happened over the weekend.

Mr. Card stated he has not seen the specific provision that Mr. Eason was talking about and would have to look. However, he will say that he is very close the national Ports Association Chris Connor, who is the present CEO. He is a good friend. He holds him in the extreme high regard and is doing wonderful things for all the ports. Quite frankly, Carrie Davis who runs the government relations there, he has known and introduced him to Chris and is very impressed Mr. Davis. He was a hill staffer. Dan Donovan is a top-notch class guy. He thinks he could work with the Association, but he is also very cognizant that he is a paid advocate. He is a very passionate paid advocate. He stated that pretty sure the Port’s interests are pretty similarly aligned, but may not always be aligned. That is okay with him. This is a profession that he takes seriously and works tenaciously. Would not be relying on the AAPA, but would be working collaboratively with them to help position the Port of Lake Charles for success. On that specific point, he would have to look at the exact language.

Ms. Oliver asked if that was regarding the Army Corps of Engineers provision. Mr. Eason stated that was correct and there was an outlay to the Army Corps of Engineers, but he does not know if there were restrictions on how the funding would be spent. It was around $25 million. Ms. Oliver stated they could look that up and get right back to him. The bill language has just come out moments ago. Mr. Card asked if this was something relating to the trust fund. Mr. Eason thought it was. Mr. Card stated the trust fund provision is something the port has been working on a lot of time with AAPA and the AAPA has done a great job working on that. That is the trust fund to be able to free up those trust fund dollars, which is a big deal and has been very contentious. His understanding is that it is in the WRDA bill, is being included in the omnibus bill Covid package.

Mr. Darbone thanked them for their presentation. Mr. Card stated they appreciated their consideration and to feel free to ask them any questions and they can get back with them.

The final group to present was Adams and Reese.

Mr. Jeff Brooks thanked the board for allowing him to speak and apologize for not being there in person. He was going to, but unfortunately was potentially exposed to Covid.

He stated that the past three years that they have represented the Port in DC has been absolutely fantastic. The partnership and the relationship that they have had with the Port have done an incredible job in furthering what staff are doing to make the Calcasieu Ship Channel an incredible asset for the nation. That is what they have done in the past three years. They are not worrying about just Louisiana, but making it much more important for the nation for a national security standpoint, from an economic standpoint and how Mr. Hayden likes to say some of their OMB meetings how much money they put back into the federal treasury, which has made an impact.

Mr. Brooks stated he has been a partner with Adams and Reese about 20 years. He came off of staff from Congressman Baker, who was on the Transportation and Financial Services Committee. He served as his chief counsel, Chief of Staff and chief of projects. It was at the project level where he really learned the appropriation process. He learned how to handle Corp projects, port infrastructure and he has kept this is a stallworth of his practice over all of these years with Adams and Reese.

Whenever you speak to the delegation, and more important when you talk to committee staff, you will find out that while they may know who he is and may give a campaign contribution here or there, they will tell you that Adams and Reese is substantive. They know how to get from point A to point B. They rely on their strategy and expertise to make sure that the project gets done. And while everyone wants their member of the delegation to do something; the Louisiana delegation will go out of their way for the Port of Lake Charles. It is important to know that they give that staff and those members the right way to do it, because there are other ports in Louisiana asking for the same thing along with other ports nationally. They do incredible job as substantive lobbyists on the Port’s behalf.

He grew up in Louisiana. He has clients there and nationwide. Louisiana is home for him his mother lives in New Orleans. It means a great deal for him to represent clients from Louisiana.

Regarding Adams and Reese, they have an office in Washington DC, which is one of 16 offices around the country. They have two offices in Louisiana and many up the coast up to Georgia, Tennessee and South Carolina. Being a part of Adams and Reese has taught him to not just depend upon one delegation, but with all of the states that they are in, they utilize each member of that delegation for their client’s needs because they know them as Adams and Reese in that state. Whether it is a Richard Shelby who is chairman of appropriations in Alabama, where they have two offices or whether it is Senator Graham, Senator Scott, Senator Rubio Senator Wicker on commerce. They know who Adams and Reese are and they know who he is and they know who their others are because Adams and Reese is in all of those states and that is what they bring to each and every one of their clients.

He wanted to speak about the specifics about the partnerships that they have with the Port and Port staff and how they have utilized that over the past three years to get to the point where they are today. If you look at the RFP. The one thing you will take away is that first number of $207 million in federally appropriated dollars that has been able to come to the port of Lake Charles over those three years. That is not just him. That is unfair. It is a partnership. It is what the Port of Lake Charles represents, what the Calcasieu ship channel represents and it represents both of their minds coming together and putting forth the best opportunity to go get it. The best example of that is a couple of years ago, when it was an emergency supplemental bill, and $116 million came to the Port for dredging and for operations and maintenance. The reason that is, is because they made a valid argument collectively about national security. They saw what the administration was doing. They talked about where the LNG contracts were going. They talked about going over to Eastern Europe and how that was going to help the energy piece over there. That was important to the administration. When they made that argument, they coupled that with following up Louisiana delegation and others. In the work plans of that emergency supplemental, there was a large dollar amount for O&M. That is what he is talking about a partnership. That is how they did it together and he hopes to be able to do that again as they will have an emergency supplementals coming up here in the next quarter when Pres. Biden takes office.

The other big thing that they do is to look and make sure they have the OMB, the administration and the Corps of Engineers all on board with what needs done. He knows the Port has dealt Corps of Engineers in recent times with trying to clear things out of the channel or the emergency supplemental are even recently with the barge getting loose over the past couple of days. What is critical is these relationships not only supplement, but add to what the Port already has in existing relationships at all levels. All levels matter. Whether it is the district region or here in DC, they all can stop something, they can all stall something and they all can move something through. His relationships over the past three years and going forward, especially with the new administration, when there will be a new secretary of civil works, those are going to play a large part in making sure that the agenda gets done, both on an authorization side instruction that needs to take place as far as disposal sites, as well as on the appropriation side. Anything that comes up in between and does happen, or they are working with Port staff to call the Corps to push upward – from the district up to headquarters or downward to the district to get things done.

The other pieces that often time get missed are the House and Senate transportation committees. Those are really critical. While they may not be the appropriations that give out the dollars, they are the authorizing side. One of the best examples, is just recently Congress has agreed upon an omnibus bill for all 12 appropriation bills in addition to the covert relief package. Attached to that covert relief package is a WRDA bill that authorizes the Corps of Engineers’ projects for the next two years. Included in that is a section that they worked on with the Port when they were having trouble trying to make sure the Corps did the modifications for the construction. They put language in at the house on the floor with Congressman Higgins’ assistants to make sure the language was there to hold the Corps’ feet to the fire. That made it through today and it passed. It should be signed tonight by the President. That is a good thing going forward and shows how quickly and nimbly that they were able to work with the Port staff to get that accomplished.

Another thing that is very critical thinking about what is ahead. What is going to happen in the next order? What will happen in the next six months? When President Biden takes office in January, and there is a new administration, OMB, and new people who will control what the budgets look like. There will be an emergency supplemental bill. He has spoken to Port staff about this as it relates to how can they help with, for example, the cranes at city docks or other issues that are going on with the port that will not be taken care of by FEMA or by insurance. One of the things that will happen in an emergency supplemental bill, there will be opportunities as there were opportunities on the dredging side. There will be opportunities on the community development block grant for disaster relief. They have already started talking about that with both the delegation and with the Governor’s office so when that supplemental happens, they are prepared. They have already laid the groundwork with Port staff and the current delegation to make sure when an emergency supplemental bill gets sent, that they have an opportunity to get dollars in the bill to replace the cranes. They work collectively with the state so when those funds do come down through the state that the Port will have an opportunity. They have had a couple of phone calls already he anticipates to make sure the governor’s office in the local delegation is ready to go on those type of things.

Stated he would like to talk about today. Today Congress will pass the omnibus bill. Included with in there as of today, will be an additional $7.4 million for operations and maintenance funds for dredging. There will be $9 million construction dollars. They worked really hard with the delegation staff to get this. This will be the 3P program. That is the collaboration that they have. They listen to what port staff was doing. The delegation got those. That is why they got the WRDA language backing that up. That is $9 million construction dollars for disposal sites. There is also $50 million for energy ports. The Port will not get all $50 million, but the Port is one of the energy ports and will get a portion of that. Finally, there is $580 million set aside for deep draft navigation. That is the work plan that they have worked on. After Congress passes this bill, there is still always work to do and over these past three years that is where they have been successful in getting additional dollars. You get into the work plan and you start talking to the Corps again and get the delegation and other house members involved and that is where that $110 million came from and $10 million came from. They are in a position again this year going forward to go after those dollars to add to what they have already gotten for dredging and other purposes.

He started by talking about substance. He talked about what they have done. He is very proud of what they have done and how they have done it and how they have accomplished it. He is very proud of that relationship and hopes to have the opportunity again. One thing he would plan to do moving forward is communication. He will take ownership of that. They do provide updates pretty regularly as client alerts. He would like to add the Commissioners to their publications. They put those out a couple times a week about what is going on in Washington. Sometimes it is transportation or sometimes it is tax related. That will give the Board a chance to understand what is going on in Congress. He would be happy to make that commitment to come down quarterly. That is what he was hoping to do this year, but when he showed up in January, Covid hit the next month and he was not able to continue to do that.

He stated he was finished with this presentation and would answer any questions that anyone had.

Mr. Krielow asked that in addition to the $207 million accomplishment over the last three years that was predominantly for disposal and channel issues, have they gone after any specific grants for funding or other projects at the Port in the last three years other than channel related.

Mr. Brooks stated that they have. There have been a couple of security grants that they assisted early on in the process. They were not successful one of the transportation grants – Tiger grant – but were not successful. There was one grant early on that was successful, but as far as in terms of grants and Tiger grants, those are not something that they have done a lot of over the years.

Mr. Eason asked regarding the bill that will pass tonight had some funding go to the Army Corps of Engineers. He asked if that was a potential funding source for the port of Lake Charles. Mr. Brooks stated that normally over the past several years it is been on the operations, maintenance and dredging side. It was $9 million in construction dollars that they were able to ask for and did receive which is a big plus. These are new dollars that is coming for the disposal sites. It is something they have asked for in the past, but have not been able to secure. This year, however due to everything that is going on with what the Port did on the commission level as well as what they have done on the WRDA side in DC these are new dollars that will be coming to the Port.

The Board began discussions of the presenters beginning at 4:14 p.m.

Mr. Darbone stated they would now have conversations about the Groups. He stated that of the four that presented, the Picard Group and Adams and Reese stood out to him. As he listened more to the Adams and Reese Group, it looks like they have done a lot of work already. That is his opinion. Mr. Ringo reminded everyone that they are still on the record. They are not in executive session, nor can they go into executive session.

Mr. Dixon stated he thought the Picard Group and Adams and Reese are good. He is concerned about one man. He does not know how much information staff gets from them.

Mr. Self stated they get regular updates from Jeff Brooks weekly.

Mr. Krielow asked if that was their basic newsletter or was that specific to Port issues. Mr. Self replied that it varies from week to week. Mr. Krielow stated they have weekly legislative updates, which is kind of a cookie-cutter deal that appeals to all of the clients. Mr. Self stated he is constantly keeping them abreast of what is going on beyond just a general newsletter. Mr. Self asked Mr. Hayden if he agreed. He stated he did.

Mr. Lorenzi asked Mr. Hayden for some feedback. Everyone mentioned him, so obviously he has experience with all of these people. He would like to hear Mr. Hayden’s take on these Groups.

Mr. Hayden stated he was impressed with all of them. Mr. Lorenzi stated he was too. But it doesn’t make it easy. Mr. Hayden stated he has worked closely with Jeff Brooks and Adams and Reese over these past years. They have done a very good job. Of the four presented, he believes they know the Port’s issues the best. That is his evaluation. However, he has known Hunter, Paul Cambon and Robert Livingston. The only one he did not know was Card and Associates.

Mr. Dixon stated he personally feels like the Picard Group, especially because he likes Chuck Kleckley because he has done a lot for the state and this area. He is always involved and his name was in the paper. As long as he was the speaker of the house, he was in good shape as far as the Port is concerned. He did a good job. The whole thing of being able to get him here at every Board meeting, if they want him here at every meeting to talk to him about any subject that is going on at a state level would be ideal way to have things.

He knows that Adams and Reese have been used by the Port for a long time, that he has heard a lot of things that are coming up, but not in any assurance that the Port will get them. That is the same as any company that will be addressing them. He thinks having a local contact person, on a regular basis any time they want him, would be an ideal way for the Port.

Mr. Hayden stated he respectfully disagrees. Mr. Kleckley has been with Adams and Reese these past four years, or for a while during the Port’s contract. He has never really dealt with him. He has always dealt directly with the DC representatives. He has dealt with Jeff. For all of the local issues, he deals with Ginger. She is extremely knowledgeable. That is his opinion.

Ms. McCleary stated she would like to follow up about a question that Mr. Eason posed about collaborating at the various levels of government. They use the Lafayette terminal. That was in their airport terminal and also in their proposal. Regardless of which Group is selected, because of all of the challenges now and rebuilding the Port and securing financing, being creative and where we are just as a as a Board and with staff, they do have to start thinking about how to put current pots of money together. They may need to go to sources they have not used in the past. She was impressed that it was a project that they were able to do that. Regardless of which Group is selected, she thinks that is a challenge the Port is facing and how to not always go back for capital outlay on things where there was capital outlay money in the past or Port priority - all of those pots of money that Mr. Landry deals with and tries to sort through. This stood out to her.

Mr. Krielow stated he agreed with Ms. McCleary. He believes the focus on the federal lobbyist, to Mr. Hayden’s credit, has been for the channel and disposal area - channel, channel, channel. The Port is paying the bill, so to speak, so there should be juice in the game for the Port. There are other areas that they need to look and have lobbyists that will focus into these other grants and other opportunities that can bring dollars not only to into the channel, but at the same time focus on bringing things back to the Port. He was impressed with all of them. He was especially impressed by Adams and Reese and the Picard Group. He believes they’ll get a little bang for the buck with the Picard Group to help Ginger in Baton Rouge. Ms. McCleary was in lobbying for a large part of her life, and understands the more lobbyists you have in yourcorner when you are pushing something, it makes it move better. He does like the concept of having a local contact and local update rather than remote. He stated Mr. Brooks is done a good job, but Mr. Hayden got introduced to Mr. Brooks because Mr. Kleckley was a part of that firm at that time.

Mr. Hayden agreed. He said he will work with whoever the Board chooses.

Mr. Eason said that his understanding of lobbyists is about relationships. Relationships clearly give you accessibility. He thinks that is a fair statement. He asked Mr. Hayden if the majority of their accomplishments, where they bring bucks back to the Port of Lake Charles are as a result of the Louisiana congressional delegation. Mr. Hayden replied that it was. Mr. Eason’s said that very little goes across state lines. Mr. Hayden replied that it was hard to determine. They are working with AAPA on the harbor maintenance trust fund. With this $50 million they have in WRDA, the Port will get about $1.1 million again in FY 21. The Port received that last year and the year before. That is a broad-based coalition. Whoever the Port uses, as a DC lobbyist, is not just going to be talking to the Louisiana delegation. They are going to be touching all of the people that they can touch on the Port’s behalf. Agency wise and various other members of the house and Senate that they can get to meet. It gets beyond the Louisiana delegation. The Port’s first contact is with them. But then it spreads.

Mr. Dixon said that another problem he has is with Adams and Reese, he could not find a phone number in the proposal. Just a simple phone number where he could speak to them. He looked all the way to the back and found numbers for everyone that works for them. That is a good thing. But, Picard had their number on the second page of the presentation. On their letter to the Board, it stated where they could be reached and gave a number. He does not know if that is important. He thinks it is and that is what he is addressing. He is not saying anything negative, he is just trying to explain his viewpoint. So, if that is readily available to you, and it is like you can go down the street and kick them in the leg when they don’t respond to you and you have to call someone to call someone. It may take them a while to get them where they work well for the Port and do things well for them, but at least they will know where they are at all times and we will have a person that will come to the meetings to report to the Board. Staff would get their reports too and is sure everyone does, but at least it would be making their conversation with the Board if the Board desires it.

Ms. McCleary stated she knows there are Covid travel restrictions, but the Adams and Reese law firm probably takes up a couple of floors in a building in Baton Rouge. They have had Congressmen here. They have had the Governor here. She questions why there doesn’t seem to be that mutually beneficial, like, okay with Jeff, it is probably important that he is in Washington. That is what they are paying him to do. But, there does not seem to be any support for what he does to interact with the local body, which at some point she thinks you have to do that. She thinks it is important. They have seen that with their state lobbyist and that there is some support for working with the Port and communicating with the Port from that Baton Rouge office. If that is as close as they can get, that is fine. She was fascinated with Card and Associates. She would like to go have dinner with them. But, one thing with that Group is they may have clients in Louisiana, but at some point, they need to have someone that can help them with their congressional delegation. She has not seen that with Adams and Reese so far. But, she is new.

Mr. Prudhomme asked Mr. Hayden how often does he interact with Mr. Brooks from Adams and Reese. Mr. Hayden replied that he speaks with him at least weekly and sometimes daily. It depends on what the issue is regarding. Just to add, this will be in his report at the Board meeting. Yesterday was a very exciting day. One of the things was exciting about it, is in the afternoon the Port received word that WRDA may not have been included in the Omnibus bill. There was some work done yesterday afternoon contacting the Louisiana congressional delegation with Jeff and himself contacting them directly asking them to make sure WRDA got included and it seems to have worked out.

Mr. Dixon stated that Mr. Hayden had to call them. Mr. Hayden replied that he received the first message from a blast from an organization that was not AAPA. It was a different organization that the Port is a member that alerted staff. Staff started working and he looped Jeff in it.

Mr. Darbone asked for a show of hands… Mr. Dixon stated he would make a motion. They can do that in a committee.

Mr. Krielow said that this has to be just a recommendation. It needs to go to the full Board so there is no vote in this meeting.

Mr. Self stated that the committee does vote and makes a recommendation. Usually, what used to happen when they had three-member committees, is the committee would vote and make a recommendation as to how they wanted to vote. Mr. Krielow stated that they would vote on the recommendation. Mr. Self agreed. They will have to vote on the record because this is a public meeting.

Mr. Dixon offered a motion to bring to the full Board for approval at the December 21, 2020 Special Meeting to adopt Resolution 2020 – 064 to authorize the Executive Director to enter into a contract with The Picard Group for federal lobbying services for the District. Mr. Ringo stated they needed a second to the motion. Typically, with Roberts Rules of Order, a motion was made, a second and someone, if they so choose, could make a substitute motion. But those motions have to be seconded and then voted on. It would be just like in the normal course of business. So, a motion was made and it needs a second. It would have to be on the record and they would do it just like they normally do - all in favor, any opposed. Four votes for majority. The votes agree with Mr. Dixon than that is the end of it. Mr. Prudhomme seconded the motion.

Mr. Lorenzi stated they need to discuss. He stated that this is the most expensive proposal. The Picard Group is a two-year contract at $12,500. He is not saying that is a move against it, but it is, of the four proposals, it the most expensive proposal. He does not know if that is an issue or not.

Mr. Ringo said the question was asked if this was open for negotiation. Because this is an RFP, the Board will be approving their bid. The Board will be limited in their ability to say that this is included in your bid and we would like you to change it. He is not saying they couldn’t ask but if they disagree, the Port would have to come back and go through the process again.

Mr. Dixon stated if they went back to the Picard Group and said to them they are too high and if they are willing to come down, will that meet Mr. Lorenzi’s… Mr. Lorenzi stated he wished he had thought to ask this. He was not sure if he could ask the question since it was an RFP. He did not think to ask this before. In their favor, he thinks their list of current clients is a good fit for the Port. He does think it is an issue that they would be selecting the highest bid. It is always an issue.

Mr. Dixon asked if staff would be willing to speak to the Picard Group about bringing the price down. Mr. Ringo stated they could do that. He stated if it is a problem and they refuse, then the Board could come back and do whatever. That is still his recommendation.

Mr. Lorenzi asked if there was a way to do a substitute motion. He is uncomfortable with knowing what they as a Board can do without running afoul. Mr. Ringo stated his experience with RFPs, typically the Board will approve the bid that they made. Then when you are entering into a contract, there are issues that can come up and you can make concessions here and there. They can request it, but to him ideally, they would bring them in and before they approve the RFP and have that discussion while they were here. If you do some kind of conditional approval… He does not think that the Board can. Mr. Lorenzi stated he did not think they could either. Mr. Dixon stated he could make a substitute motion. Mr. Lorenzi stated he thinks they should just vote no. None of these have to be accepted is that correct? Mr. Ringo stated that was correct.

Ms. McCleary stated that she noticed that as well, but and cannot say definitively they can look at the one, but the cost proposal for the Picard Group seemed all-inclusive. Others added things like travel and other expenses. Her question is if they go with the Picard Group or whoever they go with is, is this all-inclusive? If they come to a meeting once a year, the Port is not paying for their airfare or if they represent the Port at a conference or whatever the case may be. Other proposals had a $10,000 or $12,000 proposal, but it was very specific about anything about where they occurred in expense would be passed along to the Port. The Picard Group did not.

Mr. Lorenzi made a substitute motion that the Board direct the Executive Director and General Counsel to request a clarification from the Picard Group of their proposal, because it does not specify even what the termination, if there is a termination clause for example, and or there is nothing in there regarding expenses, travel or anything. Mr. Ringo stated he thought they would structure the deal to be an all-inclusive one price. Mr. Lorenzi stated he agreed with Ms. McCleary that it is difficult to compare it to the others because they all addressed expenses and address termination whether it was 30 days or 60 days.

Mr. Self stated staff would be glad to reach out to the Picard Group before the 5 o’clock Board meeting to confirm that that way they could still take action at the Board meeting. They do not necessarily have to take action at this committee, if that is what they choose. Mr. Lorenzi stated that was poorly worded but that would be his substitute motion.

Mr. Darbone stated they have a motion and a substitute motion. Mr. Krielow stated he would second the substitute motion. Mr. Darbone asked Mr. Self and Mr. Ringo if they will follow up on that information. Mr. Ringo said that just so he is clear, this will be to confirm that the price is all-inclusive and does not include things like expenses and things like that. Mr. Lorenzi replied that whatever they tell you, it is. Mr. Self stated it does include it. It is all-inclusive. Mr. Ringo stated it does include that. They will not send the Port another bill for travel and things like that. Mr. Eason stated that this was total turnkey. Mr. Ringo replied that it was.

Mr. Darbone asked that if they will be voting on this at the Board meeting. Mr. Ringo stated he thinks they can solve this fairly quickly.

Someone called to question on the substitute motion. Mr. Dixon stated that he called for a question on the substitute motion.

Mr. Darbone asked if they were all in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Darbone stated the substitute motion passed

With no other business to be discussed, Mr. Lorenzi offered a motion to adjourn. Mr. Prudhomme seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

This minute entry is made to document the presence of a quorum of the Committee. No other minutes are required or necessary.

All discussions held on the above items were recorded on FTR Gold recording system, and filed in the Executive Offices of the District.

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David Darbone, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Carl Krielow, President

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Michael Eason, Member

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Judy McCleary, Member

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Dudley Dixon, Member

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Thomas Lorenzi, Member

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Keith Prudhomme, Member