

**ILLINOIS INTERNATIONAL PORT DISTRICT**

**Summary Record of Proceedings  
of the  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**February 20, 2026**

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Illinois International Port District was held on Friday, February 20, 2026, at the offices of the IIPD, at 3600 E. 95<sup>th</sup> Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Roll was called at approximately 10:05 am. The following Directors were present:

Mr. Solis	Present	Ms. McClendon	Present	Ms. Rodriguez	Present
Mr. Wisniewski	Present	Ms. Sanchez	Present	Dr. Sriraj	Present
Ms. Cassel	Present	Ms. Edwards	Present (via teleconference)		

Also present: Erik Varela, Executive Director; Maria Limonciello, IIPD; LaKesha Lundy, Treasurer; and Counsel Brad Smith, Neal and Leroy, LLC.

Committee Chairman Solis requested a Motion to allow Director Edwards to attend the meeting via teleconference. The Motion was made by Ms. McClendon, seconded by Ms. Rodriguez, and the Motion passed unanimously.

**General Public Present:** See attached list of members of the public present.

**REPORTS ON STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Leases and Agreements Committee Report – Items requiring action.**

Adoption of Committee Minutes

Chairman Solis reported the Leases and Agreements Committee recommended the Board of Directors approve the Committee’s January 16, 2026 meeting minutes and requested a Motion for approval. The Motion was made by Ms. Cassel, seconded by Mr. Wisniewski, and the Motion passed unanimously.

FTZ Operating Agreement – Geanto’s Trucking Company.

Chairman Solis requested a Motion to approve an FTZ Operating Agreement with Geanto’s Trucking Company. The Motion was made by Ms. Cassel, seconded by Dr. Sriraj, and the Motion passed unanimously.

Amendment to FTZ Operating Agreement – AFC Specialty Coatings Group, LLC

Chairman Solis requested a Motion to approve the Amendment to AFC Specialty Coatings Group FTZ Operating Agreement. The Motion was made by Ms. Cassel, seconded by Dr. Sriraj, and the Motion passed unanimously.

### **Finance and Personnel Committee Report – Items requiring action**

#### **Adoption of Committee Minutes**

Chairman Solis reported the Finance and Personnel Committee recommended the Board of Directors approve the Committee's January 16, 2026 minutes and requested a Motion for approval. The Motion was made by Ms. Cassel, seconded by Dr. Sriraj, and the Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Adoption of Financial Reports**

Chairman Solis reported the Finance and Personnel Committee recommended the Board of Directors approve the Committee's December 2025 Financial Reports and requested a Motion for approval. The Motion was made by Ms. Cassel, seconded by Dr. Sriraj, and the Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Solis reported the Finance and Personnel Committee recommended the Board of Directors approve the Committee's January 2026 Financial Reports and requested a Motion for approval. The Motion was made by Ms. Cassel, seconded by Dr. Sriraj, and the Motion passed unanimously.

### **ADOPTION OF BOARD MINUTES**

#### **Adoption of Committee Minutes**

Chairman Solis requested a Motion to approve the Board of Directors January 16, 2026 meeting minutes. The Motion was made by Ms. Cassel, seconded by Dr. Sriraj and the Motion passed unanimously.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Chairman Solis reported there was no Old Business to be addressed.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Solis reported there was no business to be discussed in Executive Session.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Solis reported there was no New Business to be addressed.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Executive Director Varela reported:

- The IIPD has issued an RFP for Solar Panel and Battery Storage at Lake Calumet Terminal. The submission deadline is March 11.
- The IIPD has partnered with the Carbon League on a grant application for the DCEO Illinois Energy Efficiency Grant. If awarded, the funding will allow the IIPD to complete technical, workforce and stakeholder groundwork needed to ensure the successful implementation of electrified freight systems and resilient energy infrastructure, all related to the federal Clean Ports grant.
- IDOT is convening a working group focused on advancing port projects in Illinois. He will be attending the meeting next week and will provide the Board with further detail after this meeting.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT (CONTINUED)**

- He continues to work on staffing.
- He will be in Washington DC with the American Great Lakes Ports Association and the Americal Association of Port Authorities for a week of advocacy.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Robert Bellisle, CEO QSL. Mr. Bellisle stated that he is speaking on behalf of QSL and NASCO. He stated that NASCO has operated at the Port of Chicago for over 20 years, and he hopes to work closely with employees and the IIPD to continue to make it a strong and resilient Port operation.

Mr. Bellisle stated that he wanted to provide two updates, one on safety and the other on labor.

In relation to safety, Mr. Bellisle stated that in middle of 2025 complaints of various serious infractions were made with OSHA and OSHA launched an investigation. He stated that the complaints made indicated there were very serious infractions. He stated that the investigation responses came months after which showed that things were not as serious as presented and the findings were all categorized as less than serious. Mr. Bellisle stated that notwithstanding this categorization, QSL made a point with OSHA to make sure the recommendations for those less than serious findings would be corrected, and QSL is working on this today.

During this time period, QSL brought in the British Standards Institute (BSI), who helped create the ISO norm. Mr. Bellisle reported that the Port of Chicago was certified under 14001 for environment and under 45001 for safety.

Mr. Bellisle stated that following complaints to QSL shareholders made by Local 150 and some of the striking employees, the shareholders engaged Dupont Sustainable Solutions (dss+). He stated that dss+ is world recognized for its safety protocol and they audit companies. Mr. Bellisle stated that following the dss+ audit, nothing serious was found and any recommendations made are being implemented.

Mr. Bellisle stated that most of the findings regarding OSHA were related to the cranes, cranes which previously were operated by River Dock. Mr. Bellisle stated in June of 2025, QSL acquired the cranes, which, at this time, were operated by Local 150 members and not QSL employees. He stated that at the time of acquisition, the cranes were OSHA certified. He stated that after the purchase, the cranes were recertified by OSHA. He stated that during another inspection, the cranes were de-certified and they were decommissioned. Mr. Bellisle stated that QSL is correcting items identified and expects the first crane to be completed in the next 1-2 weeks and following this, QSL will have the crane certified.

Mr. Bellisle stated that all of the allegations have been addressed. He stated that most of the allegations refer to construction code. He stated that QSL is a maritime operator and not a construction company. He stated allegations made using construction codes, are the wrong references. He stated that most of the allegations were made using drones flying in protective air space.

**PUBLIC COMMENT (CONTINUED)**

Mr. Bellisle next addressed labor. Mr. Bellisle stated that in June of 2025, he received a letter from Mr. Freddie Alvaraz of Local 150. Mr. Bellisle cited the letter, stating: Local 150 unequivocally disclaims any interest in organizing QSL employees or seeking recognition. Please be advised that Local 150 has no intention of organizing your company or barring it from signing a collective bargaining agreement or otherwise engaging in any action or conduct inconsistent with this disclaimer.

Mr. Bellisle stated that on or about this time, the ILA indicated they had interest in certifying and recognizing QSL employees. He stated QSL responded that it had no objection to a union representing employees and, if there were a valid card check, it would recognize the ILA as a union. He stated this was done by the National Academy of Arbitrators in November of 2025.

Mr. Bellisle stated that since this time, ISA, who represents over 85,000 long shoreman over the Gulf and Great Lakes area, and QSL have been working on negotiating a comprehensive collective bargaining agreement that will last for a period of 3 years and hopes to have it completed in the near future.

Mr. Bellisle stated that any allegations on safety have been thoroughly investigated and, where there were findings and improvements that need to be made, QSL is making them.

Mr. Bellisle stated QSL recognizes unions and any claims that QSL is anti-union or anti-recognition employees being represented is false. He stated QSL is actively negotiating a collective labor agreement with ILA.

Mr. Bellisle stated that he hopes employees who are not working and who are striking will engage the ILA and make their points of where differences exist and, if possible, incorporate them into the collective bargaining agreement and have labor peace and start working on the next 20 years.

Wilford Quinn, Associate General Counsel, Local 150

Mr. Quinn asserted that Mr. Bellisle left out crucial facts in his statement. He stated Mr. Bellisle failed to mention that QSL was fined \$52,000 for OSHA determined violations. He stated that Mr. Bellisle's claim that there were no safety issues because the investigation took a long time is incorrect. He stated that OSHA has six months to investigate, and OSHA uses six months to investigate. Mr. Quinn stated that he will have workers at the IIPD meeting next month who will state they were discouraged from making OSHA claims.

Mr. Quinn stated the IIPD has heard personal testimony that refutes claims that safety is a priority for QSL. Mr. Quinn asked if the recent fire was before or after Dupont fixed the safety protocol.

Mr. Quinn stated that Local 150 did send the disclaimer letter Mr. Bellisle referenced. He stated that before ILA became involved, Local 150 rescinded the letter and filed an election petition with the National Labor Relations Board. Mr. Quinn asserted the Local 150 letter is not relevant.

**PUBLIC COMMENT (CONTINUED)**

Mr. Quinn stated that in regard to card checks, QSL and ILA say they have a majority (50% plus 1 person). Mr. Quinn stated Local 150 believes that their counting is off. Mr. Quinn asserted that QSL has demoted supervisors to allow them to vote in an election and count their cards, and QSL has hired previously fired employees and have hired family members to count their votes. Mr. Quinn asserted that it is a majority created by QSL and ILA.

Mr. Quinn stated striking workers have been approached by ILA. He stated that Local 150 has, at no point, told workers to not talk with the ILA. Mr. Quinn stated that the workers have had conversations and weighed the odds, and there are still more people outside the gates than inside.

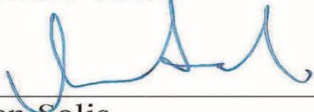
**ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business before the Board, Chairman Solis requested a Motion to adjourn at approximately 10:25 am. The Motion was made by Ms. Cassel seconded by Ms. Rodriguez, and the Motion passed unanimously.

**Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting**

The next Board of Directors meeting, the Leases and Agreements Committee meeting, and the Finance and Personal Committee meeting will be held on Friday, March 20, 2026 at 3600 E. 95<sup>th</sup> Street, Chicago, Illinois. The Leases and Agreements Committee meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m., followed by the Finance and Personnel Committee. The Regular Board Meeting will follow the adjournment of the Finance and Personnel Committee.

**APPROVED:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ivan Solis  
Chairman

**ATTESTED:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathleen Dart  
Secretary

<b>February 20, 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Public In Attendance</b>	
Wilfred Quinn	Associate General Counsel Local 150
Kristine Kavanagh	Local 150
Freddy Alvarez	Local 150
Ray Sundine	Local 150 Director of Organizing
Carlos Saldana	Local 150/QSL
Alex Munoz	QSL
Acy Wartsbaugh	Local 150
Hector Valadez	Local 150/QSL
Arturo Cortes	Local 150/QSL
Jess Vasquez	Local 150/QSL
Ray Rogers	Local 150
Leonardo Lopez	Local 150
DaVonne Taylor	Local 150
Clemens Gizynski	Local 150/QSL
Terrill McWilliams	Local/QSL
Richard Betz	Local 150
Braulio Partida	QSL
Oscar Ornelas	Local 150/QSL
Jonathan Delgado	QSL
John	Local 150
Uriel Sanchez	
Anthony Maldonado	
Jack Eskin	HNTB
Robert Bellisle	QSL
Mark Wagstaff	Smith Group
John Yonan	Collins Engineers
*Please excuse misspellings or typos	