

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SAATHOFF NAMED INTERIM EXECUTIVE PORT DIRECTOR/CEO OF PORT FREEPORT**

**FREEPORT, Texas (April 2, 2012)** – Phyllis Saathoff, CPA, PPM<sup>®</sup>, has been named interim executive port director/CEO of Port Freeport, Texas, following the retirement of A.J. “Pete” Reixach Jr.

During a special meeting today of the Board of Commissioners of Port Freeport, Saathoff, who joined Port Freeport in 1992 as director of finance and has served as the Port’s managing director since 1994, was chosen to fill the Texas Gulf Coast Port’s top executive position on an interim basis.

“I have known Phyllis since she joined Port Freeport in 1992,” said Port Commission Vice Chairman Ravi K. Singhania, who chairs the commission’s personnel committee. “Phyllis has proven herself to be well-qualified in managing port operations and has the necessary leadership skills to serve as the interim executive port director while the Port Commission undertakes the process of selecting a new, permanent executive port director.”

A certified public accountant, Saathoff earned her Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from the University of Houston-Clear Lake in 1985. She started her career as an auditor with the international accounting firm of Ernst & Whinney.

Saathoff received her certification as a Professional Port Manager in 2007 from the American Association of Port Authorities. While chairing the AAPA Emergency Planning and Disaster Recovery Working Group, she developed the *Emergency Preparedness & Continuity of Operations Manual for Best Practices* for use by seaports throughout the Western Hemisphere.

“We are fortunate to have Phyllis to guide the Port as interim executive port director,” Port Commission Chairman Bill Terry commented. “She has been deeply involved not only in the daily operations of Port Freeport, but also in its business development and financial management. She will ensure the continuity of the organization during this period of transition while building on the Port’s past successes.”

For more than a decade, Saathoff was treasurer of the Gulf Ports Association of the Americas, and she served the 2003-05 term as president of the National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones. Saathoff was recognized by *Gulf Shipper Magazine* in 2004 as among the Top 10 Women in Gulf Transportation.

In November, Saathoff accepted the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting award from the Government Finance Officers Association on behalf of Port Freeport, marking the 22nd consecutive year the Port has been so honored.

**PORT COMMISSION**

Port Freeport ranks 16th among U.S. ports in international cargo tonnage handled. With a current channel of 45-foot depth, soon to be widened and deepened, just 3 miles from open Gulf of Mexico waters, Port Freeport offers more than 7,500 acres for future development. Port Freeport serves its customers and stakeholders through development and marketing of competitive world-class navigational capabilities, technically advanced marine and multimodal terminal services and port-related industrial facilities while achieving profits and creating jobs as a leading economic catalyst for the Texas Gulf Coast.

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