AAPA Commissioners Seminar
Montreal Marriott Chateau Champlain
June 26-28, 2012
Current Legal and Liability Issues for Ports and You, the Governing Board
Behind the Port Canaveral Scandal

An in-depth account of what happened in the Port Canaveral corruption investigation
Behind the Jaxport Scandal

Ex-JaxPort board chairman Tony Nelson indicted

Nelson and a Tallahassee lobbyist face charges including money laundering, bribery

Posted: January 28, 2010 - 11:36am


Former Jacksonville Port Authority board chairman Tony Nelson was in court this morning to answer to a 44-count indictment (.pdf, 1.5MB) charging him with conspiracy, money laundering, mail fraud, bribery and making a false statement to the FBI.

The indictment was unsealed today after nearly four years of investigation by the FBI.

Lobbyist Frank Bernardino, who formerly worked for the South Florida Water Management District, was indicted with Nelson and also appeared before U.S. Magistrate Howard Snyder. Bernardino faces 36 criminal counts.

Nelson and Bernardino turned themselves in this morning and were in handcuffs in court.

If convicted, Nelson faces up to 715 years in prison and a $13.5 million fine. Bernardino faces 575 years in prison and an $11.5 million fine.

More: Find our more about the key players in this investigation.
Code of Ethics of Canaveral Port Authority
Board of Commissioners

WHEREAS, it is essential to the proper operation of government that public officials uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct and that public office be used for the benefit of the public and not for private gain; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the Canaveral Port Authority desires to adopt a Code of Ethics to supplement those prescribed by state law and that will contribute to the more orderly and efficient operation of the Canaveral Port Authority while enhancing the productivity, accountability and integrity of the Board of Commissioners in carrying out the purposes and objectives of the Canaveral Port Authority; and

WHEREAS, the Canaveral Port Authority Board of Commissioners finds adoption of this Resolution to be in the public interest.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CANAVERAL PORT AUTHORITY AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. CODE OF ETHICS. The following Code of Ethics is hereby adopted for the Board of Commissioners of the Canaveral Port Authority and the individual Port Commissioners thereof and is intended as a public expression of the high ethical standards expected in the performance of the duties and responsibilities as elected public officials.
The Canaveral Port Authority was established by the Florida legislature in 1953. It is governed by a Board of Commissioners which is made up of five elected officials to represent the five regions of the Canaveral Port District. Under the Canaveral Port Authority’s legislative charter (Ch. 26922, Laws of Florida, as reenacted and renumbered by Ch. 2003-335, Laws of Florida), the Board of Commissioners has the express and implied legislative power and duty to establish good and proper fiscal, regulatory and operational policies for the Canaveral Port Authority. It is pursuant to that power and duty that the Board adopts this Code of Ethics for the Canaveral Port Authority Board of Commissioners.

Statement of Policy – It is the policy of the Canaveral Port Authority that members of the Board of Commissioners shall carry out their duties, both individually and collectively, only for the benefit of the citizens within the Canaveral Port District. In both their official acts and their personal affairs, each Commissioner is to act in a manner that promotes public trust and confidence, to act with complete transparency and honesty, and to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.

Nature and Scope – In undertaking their duties and official actions, the five Port Commissioners of the Canaveral Port Authority are governed by the following ethical codes:

- the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees set forth in Part III of Chapter 112 of Florida Statutes (the “State Ethics Code”);
- the charter of the Canaveral Port Authority, set forth in Chapter 2003-335, Laws of Florida, as amended from time to time (the “Port Canaveral Charter”);
- Canaveral Port Authority Resolution 03-08, approved by the Port Authority on May 21, 2003 (the “2003 Resolution”); and
- this Code of Ethics for the Canaveral Port Authority Board of Commissioners (“Code of Ethics”).

This Code of Ethics incorporates the primary ethical requirements and restrictions of the State Ethics Code, the Port Canaveral Charter, and the 2003 Resolution, plus certain additional ethical requirements and restrictions. Furthermore, the 2003 Resolution is herewith merged into and superseded by this Code of Ethics. To the extent this Code of Ethics conflicts with either the Florida Ethics Code or the Port Canaveral Charter, this Code of Ethics shall govern, but only to the extent its requirements and restrictions are more stringent than the Florida Ethics Code or the Port Canaveral Charter.