



**Duluth Seaway
Port Authority**

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New Port Authority Director named in Duluth

Duluth, Minn. USA (9/19/13) - The Duluth Seaway Port Authority will be welcoming a new Executive Director on Oct. 1. Transportation executive **Vanta E. Coda II** was officially appointed to that position at today's Port Authority Board of Commissioners' meeting in Duluth. (*Note: his first name is pronounced Vawn - tah*)

He succeeds Adolph Ojard, who announced in May his decision to retire and who will be leaving Sept. 30 after more than a decade at the helm of the agency, capping a career in the maritime and transportation industries that spanned 40-plus years.

Mr. Coda, 46, brings to this leadership post over 20 years of experience in multi-modal transportation and logistics. Much like Ojard, he began his career in the rail industry and, similarly, is leaving a management position in the Gulf to move to Duluth.

During his career, Coda developed expertise in transportation marketing and sales, pricing, and financial analysis working with a wide array of customers and across many commodity lines including coal, aggregate, chemicals, petroleum, steel, wind generation and heavy-lift products. He has had responsibility for moving product via inland waterways (brown water) and across oceans (blue water) alike, as well as by rail and truck across North America.

Coda started his career in Chicago in 1993 with the Illinois Central Railroad, eventually becoming Director of Marketing and Sales following its merger with the Canadian National Railway. Having played a key role in CN's strategic planning for chemical transport, he was hired by the Westlake Group of Companies in 2000 to manage all logistics for its vinyls subsidiary. Five years later, he was recruited by American Commercial Lines to be Director of Regional Sales in the Gulf, during which time he managed an international account portfolio that included expansion of its project cargo business including the company's first wind generation movement. Most recently, he served as Director of Fuel Transportation for Dynegy Inc. in Houston, Texas.

"Mr. Coda is exactly the type of person we were looking for in this nationwide search," said Steve Raukar, Port Authority Board President. "He possesses strong business acumen, understands transportation pricing and utilization, and has excellent communication and negotiation skills plus a strategic, hands-on approach to management."

And Coda is equally as enthusiastic about accepting the position. "This is such a wonderful opportunity. What has preceded me here has been done extremely well," he said. "The Port Authority has been so well managed ... the board and current director have been able to accomplish

a great deal during what has been a difficult economic environment. Now, particularly with the \$10 million TIGER grant, we have an opportunity to solidify that real estate for economic development, to funnel in opportunities to grow the port even further.”

The new Director will be heading north with his wife, three sons and two yellow labs. “We are thrilled to be moving to the Twin Ports. Not only is it a great fit for me professionally, but also a great move for us as a family,” noted Coda. “We were drawn to the history and the historic architecture of this area. We love the outdoors, and access to nature here is literally in one’s backyard. The boys play baseball but can’t wait to give hockey a go. We are a Scouting family and will plug into Scouts as soon as we get settled.”

Coda, a 2nd generation Eagle Scout himself is also a 2nd generation transportation executive. In fact, he is often referenced in logistics circles as “*the 2nd*” since his father is still an active consultant in the coal industry. Those curious about his name should know that there is also a “3rd” as the family’s Italian heritage is carried on by the next generation.

Coda (the 2nd) is a graduate of the University of Kentucky and quips that he is “unapologetically a Wildcat basketball fan.” Though based in Houston for the better part of the last six years, he recounts that his life has touched many of the Great Lakes. In addition to handling logistics for cargoes moving on the waterway, he was actually born in Chicago... his first job was in the Windy City...his mother is from Ontario...she and his father met in Cleveland... and extended family lives in Buffalo.

In accepting this position, Coda becomes only the seventh director this Port Authority has had in almost 60 years: Adolph N. Ojard 2003-13; Davis Helberg 1979-2003; Paul Pella 1977-79; C. Thomas Burke 1969-77; David W. Oberlin 1967-69; and Robert T. Smith 1957-67.

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*Close to 1,000 ships visit the **Port of Duluth-Superior** each year, moving roughly 40 million tons of cargo including iron ore, coal, grain, limestone, cement and salt plus a variety of heavy-lift and project cargo. As the largest tonnage port on the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway, cargo movements through the Port of Duluth-Superior support 11,500 jobs and contribute over \$1.5 billion to the local/regional economy. The **Duluth Seaway Port Authority** is an independent, public agency created by the Minnesota State Legislature to foster regional maritime commerce, promote trade development, facilitate industrial development and serve as an advocate for port interests here and around the world.*
For more information, www.duluthport.com

To schedule an interview, please contact :
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