

Port Canaveral Prepares for Growth Spurt

Canaveral Sees Tall Future for Growing Cargo Service and Cruise Passenger Service



*(Photo: Stephen B. Morton CPA
Photo/Stephen B. Morton)*

Two giant cargo cranes are scheduled to arrive by barge at Port Canaveral on Friday morning, a tangible symbol of the port's goal to expand its cargo business.

Port officials attending Wednesday's Canaveral Port Authority meeting were excited about that prospect.

But they were equally excited about how quickly the port's cruise business is growing.

Even as port commissioners were debating details of how to pay for a \$105 million cruise terminal complex now under construction, Chief Executive Officer John Walsh indicated that they soon would start discussing plans for yet another cruise terminal.

"We're almost effectively out of berth space," when current and planned cruise ship bookings are taken into account, Walsh told port commissioners. "We're looking at running out of room. We have to start looking at discussions of terminal plans" for a new terminal that would open in 2017 or 2018.

Walsh said he expects the port's cruise passenger traffic to be up 50 percent by then, as Port Canaveral aims to become the world's busiest cruise port, ahead of the Port of Miami and Port Everglades near Fort Lauderdale.

Another positive sign for Brevard County's seaport: Norwegian Cruise Line will be basing a ship at Port Canaveral for the first time since the winter of 2011-12. The Norwegian Spirit is set to sail from here from November 2015 through April 2016 for 23 cruises, alternating between the eastern and western Caribbean.

Walsh said the Spirit is a mid-sized ship, giving cruise passengers "a nice choice of a more intimate ship," if they are reluctant to sail on the mega-ships that some cruise lines have at Port Canaveral.

Ship to Shore Cranes Arrive at Port Canaveral



The Canaveral Port Authority says the cranes, almost the height of a football field, will allow the port to take a container off a ship and put it onto a truck in 45 seconds, bringing in thousands of new high paying jobs on the Space Coast. (PHOTO/Julian Leek, Viewer)

Port Canaveral's channel will be widened by another 100 feet and deepened an average of two feet along the length of the harbor to accommodate larger vessels required to insure the growth of Port Canaveral's cruise and cargo operations.

"Already a thriving and growing cruise port, we are rapidly expanding to become one of Florida's major container ports," said Port CEO John E. Walsh.

The Port, according to Walsh, will target premium cruise line brands to complement the Carnival, Disney, Norwegian Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean ships now based at Port Canaveral.

Channel Widening at Port to be Completed in Late 2014

