



Port of Brownsville

Minutes of Study Session

26 October 2011

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Allen Miller called the study session to order at 7:04 PM. In attendance were Commissioner Bob Kalmbach, Commissioner Jack Bailey, Port Manager Jerry Rowland, and Assistant Port Manager Gregg Faulkner.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made to approve agenda as written. Motion seconded and approved unanimously.

Review Aspects of 2012 Budget

Jerry Rowland proposed to not fill the vacant maintenance position. The reason for this is that he plans on retiring in three (3) years and feels the next position to be hired permanently should be his replacement. Currently there is no one on staff that can fill his position. The Assistant Port Manager, Gregg Faulkner, will more than likely retire not long after the Port Manager if not at the same time. The other permanent employees on the staff are not ready to take over the duties of Port Manager and some don't want to have that position.

The Port Manager position is the only position controlled by the Commissioners so the proposal might be unusual but the job is unique in that it is not completely repetitive and of the things that are repetitive there are items that only happen once or twice a year. Because of that a long turn over and indoctrination would be a good idea.

However, if the vacant maintenance position is not filled in 2012, then part time help would be needed. The permanent position would be hired in the summer of 2013. It would be a "Maintenance Person" with the idea in mind this person will eventually become the Port Manager, which would allow for a 1 1/2 year turn over. Delaying until the summer of 2013 would also allow development of a good set of Knowledge and Skills criteria that an individual applying for the job will be able to have some idea of what they need to know to accomplish this job. It will also give time to develop a good set of questions to ask during the interview process for this position. Something also to consider that the Port will need to pay this person more than minimum wage in order to get the right person to apply for the position.

As an interim measure, to fill the gap and free up maintenance time, the proposal is to hire a part time person to do nothing but clean the restrooms and perform some ground maintenance. In order to keep the restrooms and grounds at the standards expected by everyone that uses them it requires time. The type of cleaning required would definitely keep a part time person busy. This will free up the maintenance staff doing the other jobs around the marina and the weekend staff can keep up with daily requirements of restroom cleaning.

All in all by doing this it should save enough money over a period of time to make up for the extra amount that will be needed to hire a knowledgeable person with the background experience to take over in 2013.

Jack Bailey said that a person was hired at one time to do lawns and grounds maintenance and he wondered if that could happen again. Jerry Rowland replied that because of attendance that didn't work out well but that this new part time person could help in that area.

Jack Bailey also pointed out that there are programs out there that have part time help for hire. They even provide bus service. Jerry Rowland stated he would look into that.

Bob Kalmbach asked how many days a week this person would work. Jerry Rowland stated the part time position would be negotiable on the hours but the expectation was to clean the restrooms five days a week and the regular weekend staff could handle cleaning the restrooms on the weekend. Bob asked what the title of the part time position would be. Jerry replied that it would be under the marina attendant position and would start out at minimum wage. Bob asked if Jerry had considered contracting out the restroom cleaning and Jerry replied that he was considering that. Bob asked if this part time employee would be entitled to the whole employee package including benefits. Jerry replied that this employee would be hired under the part time criteria, which allows for the employee to pay for benefits.

Bob Kalmbach asked how much the permanent position to be hired in 2013 would make. Jerry Rowland stated in order to get someone that would be willing to take his place it would have to be around \$50,000.00 a year.

Jack Bailey pointed out that the WPPA had programs for training people in the Port industry and this might be an option. Jerry replied that the concern with that is this person would already be part of Port somewhere and more money may be needed to entice them to apply for the Port Manager position in Brownsville but it could be something that could be investigated.

Bob Kalmbach said he felt a 1 ½ year turnover was too long. Jerry replied that he didn't feel that the person would get exposed to all of the requirements of the Port manager because some of these things don't happen but once or twice a year. Bob Kalmbach stated he still felt 1 year was long enough with a salary of \$35,000.00 to \$50,000.00 a year.

Jack Bailey expressed concern over the fact that the staff was undermanned now, especially for handling a crisis. Jerry Rowland stated that being down one person on the staff can make a difference in that area and that is why he wants to hire a part time person for now. Bob Kalmbach agreed but he pointed out that the Port's appearance needs to be maintained to the expected level. Jerry Rowland said that last year in the summer he hired only 2 part time people but this year's budget was for 3 part time people in the summer. Bob Kalmbach again expressed keeping up the standards and not spend more money in a 3 year period by hiring part time help instead of a full time person. Marjie Rowland pointed out that if the part time help didn't work out the Port Manager and Commissioners could always change their mind. Jack Bailey said he would really like to see a handy man hired, part time or full time.

Bob Kalmbach stated he thought it is a good plan for now. Jack Bailey said he would agree with it as long as there was an alternate plan during crisis situation such as a storm. Jerry Rowland stated he would pursue hiring a part time maintenance attendant. Bob Kalmbach asked if the maintenance manager, Gregg Faulkner, was in agreement with this plan. Gregg Faulkner said he agreed with the plan.

Next to be discussed was the pay scale matrix.

Jerry Rowland reviewed the proposed matrix. Jack Bailey stated he like the plan and saw no reason to change it at this time. He pointed out that it takes time to train people and once trained it is important to keep the workers. Bob Kalmbach stated he thought the 7% step increase was too much and wanted

Jerry to look at having 3% instead. Jerry Rowland pointed out that they do not get the 7% increase automatically. The position description states they have to be qualified and meet the attributes before they can get that increase. Also, he wanted to leave it at 7% because that was in line with what other ports are paying for wages. Bob Kalmbach stated he has talked to other ports and they keep it at 3% between steps but if the person deserves it, they get a next grade increase. Jerry noted that federal pay scale for 2011 still maintains this average of 3% for step and 11% for grade increases so all things considered 7% is still a viable number. Jerry Rowland stated he would rework the pay scale matrix with 3% step increases. Jack Bailey said he wanted to understand what going to 3% would save over time. He again pointed out that keeping the trained people is important. Jerry Rowland said he would bring the reworked pay scale to the next meeting with the information of what is saved over time.

Next was discussion over the employee's benefits.

According to the 2011 WPPA survey a large majority of the Public Ports are paying 100% of the employee and dependent medical expenses, but some of them are starting to make the employee pay the dependent portion. Jerry Rowland proposed that employees will pay 5% of the employee benefits and would be compensated for the first year by a pay increase. Then each following year the employee would pay 5% more with no additional pay increase, until it reached 25%. There was more discussion and some confusion on the benefit of waiting 5 years to get to 25%. Jack Bailey stated he thought the employee should pay 25% with no pay raise. Bob Kalmbach said he doesn't like to see employee's lose money because of this policy change.

Bob Kalmbach made a motion to proceed with the proposal that Jerry Rowland submitted. Allen Miller seconded. Motion passed 2 for, 1 against. Jack Bailey said he thought an attorney should be consulted.

Jerry Rowland noted that this proposal takes a change in the personnel policy manual so the commissioners would still have a chance to discuss this further. He will present the resolution to change the personnel policy manual. He will present 2 versions to the commissioners for review. Bob Kalmbach withdrew his motion until the resolutions are reviewed.

Port Security

When Blue Night Security went out of business, the Port hired a security guard full time and a part time security guard. Jerry Rowland suggested going back to a contract with a security company. He noted that it might be more expensive but it would take the Port out of the security business. It has been suggested in the past that we install security cameras, but there would still have to be someone to monitor the cameras, make rounds to ensure boats are not sinking and that things are safe and sound.

Jerry Rowland offered 4 proposals to the commissioners for consideration.

1. Keep security as part of Port staff.
2. Discontinue Port staff security and go back to a contract service.
3. Purchase a good camera system and either use the current security or go for a contract.
4. Eliminate security entirely from the Port.

Bob Kalmbach stated that the Port Manager didn't need the added burden of controlling security staff. He recommended getting some bids from local security companies and then discussing the future of security at the Port. Allen Miller concurred. Jack Bailey was in agreement but noted that the Port would lose control of the security staff.

Next on agenda was administrative items.

The commissioners were presented certificates and letters to sign for the volunteers of Brownsville Appreciation Day (BAD)

a. Redistricting –

Jerry Rowland stated he got a phone call from the election office inquiring if the Port was going to redistrict the commissioner’s districts. He stated that he had given the commissioner’s the proposed plan for redistricting at the last meeting. He asked if there were any comments. Bob Kalmbach stated he thought the plan was fair. Jack Bailey agreed. Jerry stated he would proceed with getting the information to the election office.

b. Rental of Lower Level Fire Station –

Jerry Rowland discussed the lease for the lower level of the Fire Station that he had presented to the commissioners. Bob Kalmbach asked what the lease term was. Jerry Rowland stated one year with a negotiation every year for a one year extension. Allen Miller asked if the Port attorney had reviewed the lease. Jerry replied yes. Jerry stated that the leasee was wanting to move in on November 1, 2011. The only question at this time was the occupancy permit. It was submitted to the county but not sure when it will be approved. The leasee can move in but cannot conduct business until the occupancy permit is approved. Bob Kalmbach stated he wanted it understood that any improvements other than what was agreed to in the lease will be paid for by the leasee.

Bob Kalmbach made a motion for the Port Manager to proceed with the lease of the lower level of the Fire Hall with Fire Design Beads. Allen Miller seconded. Jack Bailey stated he wanted a signed acknowledgement from the leasee that they could not conduct business until the occupancy permit was approved. Jerry Rowland stated he would do that. Motion carried unanimously.

CLOSE MEETING / ADJOURN

Motion made to adjourn Study Session. Motion seconded and passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned 8:55 PM.

President/Commissioner

Secretary/Commissioner

Commissioner

Recording Secretary