


Memorandum



Date: May 24, 2006

To: Honorable Carlos Alvarez, Mayor
Honorable Joe A. Martinez, Chairman & Members
Board of County Commissioners

From: George M. Burgess
County Manager 

Subject: Appointment of Acting Seaport Director

As you are aware, Port Director Charles Towsley tendered his resignation effective June 5, 2006. I have asked Assistant County Manager Bill Johnson to serve as the Port's Acting Director. In the capacity of Assistant County Manager, Bill had oversight responsibility of the Port for six years, affording him the opportunity to develop an understanding of maritime issues, and most importantly, a firsthand understanding of the Port of Miami. Bill will continue to lead our efforts in ensuring the timely completion of the Performing Arts Center in October 2006.

The Port of Miami is a tremendous community asset. As the second largest economic engine in Miami-Dade County, its direct/indirect impact exceeds \$12 billion annually. The success of the Port directly affects the well being of this entire community. The Seaport has faced significant challenges since the tragedy of September 11, 2001. The Port of Miami's security costs have more than tripled since 2001. This has had, and continues to have, a significant impact on the Port of Miami's annual budget.

Furthermore, in recent years, the Port has faced increased competition from other ports. Also, with the unprecedented amount of new development in downtown Miami, it has become increasingly more difficult for our cargo and cruise customers to access the Port. These issues, along with many others, must be properly addressed in order for the Port to continue to grow and be of benefit to the community. I have asked Bill to immediately look into these issues and provide an assessment and plan of action with 60-90 days.

I want to thank Chuck for his efforts over the past eight years in helping to address many of these issues. As he commences a new phase of his career, I know you join me in wishing him well.

An interim table of organization for my office reflecting this change will be distributed on Tuesday, May 30, 2006.

- C: Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Clerk, Circuit and County Courts
Honorable Joseph P. Farina, Chief Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit
Honorable Katherine Fernandez-Rundle, State Attorney
Honorable Bennett Brummer, Public Defender
Murray A. Greenberg, County Attorney
Assistant County Managers
Department Directors
Marvin O'Quinn, President, Public Health Trust
Robert Meyers, Executive Director, Commission on Ethics and Public Trust
Christopher Mazzella, Inspector General
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor