


Memorandum



Date: October 24, 2006

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

From: George M. Burgess
County Manager 

Subject: Appointment of Seaport Director

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Bill Johnson as Director of the Dante B. Fascell Port of Miami-Dade. Bill, who has served as Port Director in an acting capacity since June 2006, brings a wealth of experience and skills to tackle the pressing issues at the Port. He is a 27-year veteran of our County government and has previously served as the Assistant County Manager overseeing the Seaport. His knowledge of Port operations will serve us well in addressing issues of critical importance to the County and the maritime community.

As the second largest economic engine, the Port generates more than 110,000 jobs in the Miami-Dade County area and has an economic impact of \$16 billion annually. Its success is vital to the economy of South Florida. It will be Bill's job to ensure that our Seaport is well positioned for future growth opportunities.

As Acting Director, Bill developed an action plan that focuses on four critical areas requiring immediate attention: marketplace competition; port access; security concerns; and capital development. He has aggressively worked with both the cargo and cruise industries to grow port business. As you know, an important component in this effort is to improve Port access. Bill will continue to work with the state to pursue the development of a port tunnel—this will be a top priority for us in coming years.

Also of great importance are ongoing efforts to enhance port security. We must identify ways to improve efficiencies and reduce costs related to public safety programs and security. The department will soon be submitting to the U.S. Coast Guard and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement modifications to the existing Seaport Security Plan, which we believe will strengthen security while lowering costs substantially.

Bill is working closely with all of our port partners and other stakeholders in assessing their needs, especially in the area of infrastructure improvements. The Port is instituting a new approach to the way it administers its capital development programs by creating a port management team to manage its projects. This will allow the Port to do more of the work in-house and reduce the need for outside consultants.

Bill is a respected public administrator who has worked on some of the most challenging County projects during his long tenure with Miami-Dade. These include such significant capital projects as the Performing Arts Center and the American Airlines Arena. He has also moved forward programs such as the streamlining of the County's development and permitting process. He is an energetic problem solver who is not afraid to tackle tough projects and issues.

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With his appointment, I look forward to continued improvements at the Seaport. I ask you to join me in wishing Bill success in his new assignment.

Please contact me directly at 305-375-1880 if you have any questions.

C: Honorable Harvey Ruvlin, 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