

## CEO Perspectives

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### Subject Three Concerns

In reviewing emails and discussions I see three different perspectives. Each concern is valid but together they can be confusing. To focus our thinking I have identified three distinct concerns that could be applied in order to identify the best candidate for the port. Each concern is important and must be seen as part of a whole. You can disagree but this analysis is a starting point that may be helpful as you proceed.

#### **I. Public participation is necessary.**

Public as used throughout this text, means input from the general public, stakeholders, and port staff. No one disputes Commissioner Clinefelter's argument that the public must be engaged in the process and consulted. Omitting the public places the new director at a disadvantage when a crucial decision is required that impacts the public. Not inviting the public and gives credence that the port is indifferent to its shareholders, which is clearly not the case. However a balance between participation and rendering a final decision must be respected.

Suggestion. At the ports website and at the workshop, invite public response to three questions:

- (1) What is working? What are you proud of about the port?
- (2) What are the challenges that you see / perceive or realistically see happening?
- (3) What are the attributes? What kind of director do you want to see ?

In addition print these three questions and have them available for handouts at the workshop.

Staff can then tabulate and share the results. People also can respond at the workshop to these questions or share their preferences about a director. These options reflect the port's intent to open the process.

#### **II. Confidentiality.**

One way the pool of applicants could be reduced to three or five could be made by a selection committee. The committee could be composed of The Director and the CFO/ Human Resources Director and (commissioners if they desire) who will review the written applications and then cull the list to semifinalists. Commissioners may add a candidate not selected by the committee.

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Selection will be made on the written materials submitted by the applicants. The questions on the application can be made public. All submitted materials are confidential and cannot be copied or released without written consent of the applicant. Once the semifinalists are identified they can be presented at a public meeting where they can introduce themselves. (I don't have an opinion about questions from the public as that may unduly favor an in-house applicant.) Then the Commissioners will retire into executive session, interview the semifinalists, by asking an identical set of questions. These questions shall not be shared with anyone outside of the selection committee. Once the interviews are complete the Commission proceeds to deliberate and select its new director.

### **III. Integrity of the Process**

Its assumed that the members of the selection committee (which includes commissioners and staff) must exhibit the highest standards of confidentiality and mutual trust. For example its is fundamental that none of the final interview questions or scoring grid be revealed to anyone but the selection committee. Any deviance from that standard can result in harm to the port and a successful candidate.

### **IV. Conclusion**

No doubt there are other significant opinions that will eclipse what I have attempted to identify. These observations are offered as an aid in crafting an acceptable process and a starting point for discussion and not the end point.

Sincerely,

Pat O'Malley