

Executive Summary

- a. As the City of Key West and State of Florida Flagship, an important distinction of the schooner *Western Union* is being the last of the iconic tall coastal schooners constructed and launched in Key West.
- b. The schooner is the last remaining representation of the Historic Key West Bight maritime heritage and is the "*Centerpiece of the Key West Bight.*"
- c. As a state treasure, the schooner *Western Union* name is displayed in honor -
- high on the Florida state house rotunda wall listed as the State Flagship.
- d. The schooner *Western Union* represents to Key West what the USS Constitution "Old Ironsides" represents to the port of Boston and the Statue of Liberty to the port of New York.
- e. Such Flagship designations make the schooner *Western Union* the symbolic property of the citizens of Key West & Florida Keys and the State of Florida.
- f. SWUPS, a 501-c3 not-for-profit, FL Corporation is charged with preserving the SOF historic Flagship, the schooner *Western Union*
- g. SWUPS has no paid staff and is an all volunteer organization (outside of a Capt. and crew employed during passenger sailing operations.)
- h. SWUPS board of directors believes that completing the restoration of the schooner *Western Union* falls in tandem with the mission of the Key West Bight Board to preserve and enhance the quality of the Historic Seaport.
- i. The request is for \$250,000 in the form of a funding Letter of Commitment from the Key West Bight Management District board.

- j. The application for the \$500,000 (2 to 1) matching funds from the State of Florida Historic Preservation Grant Program is due (in Tallahassee) in hard copy form at 5:00 PM, June 30, 2015
- k. SWUPS will support codicils with the \$250,000 funding that require the schooner *Western Union* remain home ported in Key West and operate for the benefit of Key West residents and visitors.
- l. The schooner *Western Union* will only depart Key West for maintenance or brief participation in historic events.
- m. The restoration will be preformed in accordance of the guidelines outlined in the State of Florida, Dept. of State, Division of Historical Resources (DHR) and will be supervised by the Historic Preservation Grants Department.
- n. The completion of this second phase of a two-part (nearly) \$2 million restoration of the schooner *Western Union* represents the first major renovation of the 76-yr. old historic vessel since the schooner's construction and launch from Key West in April 1939.
- o. SWUPS passenger sailing operations have demonstrated since 2011 that the schooner *Western Union* can generate enough revenue to support sailing operations plus generate a 10% excess per year that will be used for the vessels biennial haul outs.
- p. Licensed shipwright estimates and quotes from Marpro Boatyard, Tarpon Springs, reveal that \$750,000 is adequate to cover the renovation expense including tracking expenses and administrative expenses.
- q. A more detail estimate is expected prior to the Key West Bight Board meeting on Wednesday, 10 June.

Attachments

1. *Schooner Western Union* PowerPoint Presentation to the Key West Bight Management District Board
2. *Schooner Western Union* Timeline
3. "Schooner Western Union A gallant effort to save a ship" Key West Citizen article dated 31 August 2014
4. "Don't Let the *Schooner Western Union* Sail Away" Key West Citizen article dated 22 February 2015
5. Designation as the Flagship of the State of Florida – Senate Bill No. 326, approved by unanimous votes of the Florida House and Senate and signed by the Governor 27 April 2012 to take effect 1 July 2012.
6. Resolution No. 97-301 A resolution of the City Commission of the City of Key West, Florida, proclaiming the schooner "*Western Union*" the Official Flagship of the City of Key West; passed 5 August 1997
7. National Register Listing for the *Schooner Western Union* approved 16 May 1984