

For item no. 18

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From: **Arlo Haskell** <[arlohaskell@gmail.com](mailto:arlohaskell@gmail.com)>

Date: Wed, Jan 22, 2014 at 12:39 PM

Subject: Approve the lease, raise disembarkation, renegotiate Pier B

To: [ccates@keywestcity.com](mailto:ccates@keywestcity.com), [mrossi@keywestcity.com](mailto:mrossi@keywestcity.com), City Of Key West <[jweekley@keywestcity.com](mailto:jweekley@keywestcity.com)>, Tony Yaniz <[tyaniz@keywestcity.com](mailto:tyaniz@keywestcity.com)>, Teri Johnston

<[tjohnston@keywestcity.com](mailto:tjohnston@keywestcity.com)>, [clopez@keywestcity.com](mailto:clopez@keywestcity.com), [bwardlow@keywestcity.com](mailto:bwardlow@keywestcity.com)

Cc: [csmith@keywestcity.com](mailto:csmith@keywestcity.com), Bogdan Vitas <[bvitas@keywestcity.com](mailto:bvitas@keywestcity.com)>

To the Mayor and the Commissioners of the City of Key West:

We know now that the city is losing money at the Outer Mole. If the disembarkation fee is not raised, and if we continue to give \$500,000 a year to HTA for Mole ground transportation, the city will continue to lose money under the proposed lease, even though its terms are more generous than the current arrangement.

But there is much more at stake here than revenue. The Navy's proposal to lease the Mole to the highest bidder threatens grave consequences for the public interest. The risks of private management of cruise ship terminals are clear. Last summer's campaign to dredge the ship channel in order to accommodate larger cruise ships was the brainchild of the corporate owners of Pier B. Pier B ownership spent more than \$100,000 pushing for the dredging proposal that was rejected by 75% of Key West voters. In defeat, their campaign staff publicly vowed to continue fighting for this unpopular cause.

If the Mole falls into private hands, its new managers will almost certainly join the owners of Pier B in their ongoing efforts to lobby state and federal officials for the dredging project. If the citizens of Key West are to expect any accountability from the cruise ship industry, the city must maintain control over the Outer Mole.

Please: accept the proposed lease. Do not allow the Outer Mole to go the way of Pier B and Truman Annex.

Once you have accepted the lease, I believe you have an obligation to begin a serious and concerted effort to stop hemorrhaging city resources for the benefit of the cruise ship industry. Before the ink is dry on the lease, I ask you to bring the city's complete resources to bear on two tasks: 1. raise the current disembarkation fee; and 2. renegotiate the terms of agreement (expiring January 2015) that grant 75% of Pier B disembarkation fees to a private corporation. The City will gain millions of dollars in annual revenue by accomplishing these tasks and we will finally have a means to pay for the Truman Waterfront Park.

Thank you all for your service,

Arlo Haskell  
716 Love Lane  
Key West, FL 33040  
phone: 305-395-1899

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