



May 19, 2015

Milwaukee Common Council
City Hall
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Members of the Milwaukee Common Council,

Mayor Barrett has appointed Paul Vornholt to the position of Municipal Port Director. That nomination is now before the Council for your review (file #150092). I write you today to offer my enthusiastic and unconditional support for Mr. Vornholt's confirmation.

As President of the Board of Harbor Commissioners, I have had the opportunity to work closely with Paul over the past two-and-a-half years. I have seen his leadership, his strategic approach, his management abilities, and his negotiating skills during his time as Acting Port Director. His performance in that position has been excellent.

As you know, the Port's financial results have continued to benefit Milwaukee taxpayers with the Port returning its net proceeds to the general fund. That has added up to almost \$3-million over the past two years. During this time, the Acting Port Director has overseen significant investments in infrastructure, maintaining and upgrading rail and roadways on Jones Island.

An important responsibility of the Port Director is managing change, and Paul has taken on that duty admirably. He has renegotiated leases to promote commerce and advance the Port's interests. He has welcomed new tenants, insisted on aesthetic improvements, and planned the purchase of a large new crane which the Port sorely needs.

Paul has prioritized the economic development role of the Port by avidly promoting the Port's Foreign Trade Zone, encouraging shipping lines to commit to regular scheduled service to Milwaukee, partnering in efforts to reestablish container service, and marketing the Port to key industry representatives.

Administrative duties are an essential part of the responsibilities of the Port Director, and Paul has handled those particularly well. His leadership skills have strengthened and energized the Port staff, turned them into a team, and the entire operation is working smoothly as a result.

This leads me to highlight two other assets Paul brings to the position, his temperament and his judgment. The Port of Milwaukee is a complex operation filled with challenging decisions, aggravating

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frustrations, and multifaceted opportunities. Paul has navigated through the complexities with aplomb. The Board of Harbor Commissioners has come to rely on his good sense and solid advice.

No, the first parts of his career were not spent in the maritime field. While he did not bring a background in logistics or real estate, he brought fresh ideas and a new perspective. And, as Acting Port Director since 2012, Paul has proven himself as an able and passionate leader. His accomplishments at the Port are a testament to his capabilities. Based on my 19 years of service on the Board of Harbor Commissioners, I feel strongly there is no individual better suited to serve as Milwaukee's Municipal Port Director.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy K. Hoelter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'T'.

Timothy K. Hoelter
President
Board of Harbor Commissioners