



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

Board of Commissioners
Harbor Development Commission
52 Fisherman's Wharf
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to present for your consideration the candidacy of Jeffrey Stieb as the next Executive Director of the Harbor Development Commission (HDC). Mr. Stieb, whose resume is attached, is a former United States Coast Guard officer and Massachusetts Port Authority executive who will bring a wealth of professional experience to the Port of New Bedford.

As a way of ensuring that the best candidates for important positions are hired, I believe it is often a wise practice to ask for the help of groups of seasoned professionals with relevant experience to give advice and help identify quality candidates. There is no legal requirement that I established an advisory committee in the case of the HDC Director position, but in my view, the use of an advisory panel was the best way to fully evaluate a candidate on their professional merits.

Toward that end, I assembled an advisory committee made up of respected professionals with relevant knowledge of waterfront industries: former Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation Jeffrey Mullan, former SMAST Dean Dr. Brian Rothschild, fishing boat owner Malvin Kvilhaug, Economic Development Council Executive Director Matthew Morrissey, and former HDC Director Kristin Decas.

My recommendation of Mr. Stieb is the product of a rigorous recruitment process warranted by the importance of the position. The process took several months and resulted in more than two dozen individuals expressing interest in the position. Above all, the process was consistent with my general approach to hiring for public sector positions, which is to aim very high and aggressively recruit the very best people possible.

While, again, the law did not require the establishment of an advisory committee to assist me in fulfilling my statutory obligations related to this particular selection process, my approach was informed by the HDC enabling legislation which governs the appointment of the HDC Director position [Acts of 1957, Ch.762, s.8(e)]. The provisions of the Act create a mechanism for the Director's appointment that is something of a hybrid model found among government and quasi-public agencies.

The objective of the enabling legislation is clear, however: The appointment of a Director should reflect unanimous agreement between both the Mayor of the City of New Bedford and the HDC Board. I believe I have fulfilled my responsibility as Mayor by identifying a high-quality candidate that will meet with the Board's approval. It now rests with the Board to express agreement that Mr. Stieb is suited to assume the position.

In sum, I am confident that Mr. Stieb will make an outstanding Port Director. As is readily apparent from his resume, he has excelled as a leader in port management in both military and civilian capacities, including during his tenure as the Executive Officer of the Coast Guard's Marine Safety Office in Providence where he supervised seventy Coast Guard personnel operating along the New Bedford, Cape Cod and Rhode Island coasts.

As a senior attorney at MassPort, Mr. Stieb was involved with the full array of operations in the Port of Boston, including the areas of commercial fishing, cargo terminal operations, business development, security arrangements, and infrastructure development.

I have personally spoken to his references as well as others who have known him professionally, and to a person, they believe that Mr. Stieb would offer the Port of New Bedford a wealth of port operations experience and leadership skills. I have every confidence that he would help us maintain our status as the nation's top fishing port, as well as develop new economic opportunities for the businesses and residents of our City.

I look forward to discussing Mr. Stieb's candidacy with you further at the next Commission meeting.

Sincerely,



Jon Mitchell
Mayor of New Bedford
Chairman, Harbor Development Commission

[Attachment]