

Office of
the Mayor
Burlington,
Vermont



Miro Weinberger
Mayor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 13, 2012
Contact: Mike Kanarick
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Mayor Miro Weinberger Calls for Creation of Airport Strategic Planning Committee to Chart Course for Future Success of Burlington International Airport
Appoints Gene Richards as New Interim Director of Aviation

Burlington, VT – Mayor Miro Weinberger today from the mezzanine of Burlington International Airport called for the creation of an Airport Strategic Planning Committee to chart a course for the future success of the Airport. Weinberger, who served as a member of the Burlington Airport Commission for nine years immediately prior to being elected Mayor, also appointed Gene Richards, the current Chair of the Airport Commission, as the new interim Director of Aviation. Weinberger asked the City Council both to approve a resolution creating the Airport Strategic Planning Committee and to confirm his appointment of Richards at its July 16, 2012 meeting.

“The airport is on the path to recovery after some difficult years,” said Weinberger. “It is time to create a strategic plan that will continue this improvement and allow the airport to fully realize the opportunities ahead.”

“Gene Richards has been a force for change, a person who has driven the improvement of the past 18 months,” said Weinberger. “He is the right person to run the airport until a permanent Aviation Director is named approximately six to nine months from now.”

“I am passionate about the importance of the Burlington International Airport to this region,” said Richards. “The airport has been one of northern Vermont’s economic success stories over the past two decades, and I am excited to play a significant role in keeping it that way.”

Please see attached documents, including:

- *Memorandum from Mayor Miro Weinberger to City Council Members requesting:*
 - *Passage of a Resolution Relating to Appointment of Airport Strategic Planning Committee*
 - *Approval of the appointment of Gene Richards, as Interim Director of Aviation at Burlington International Airport*
- *Copy of Resolution Relating to Appointment of Airport Strategic Planning Committee*
- *Resume of Gene Richards*

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Burlington City Council

FROM: Mayor Miro Weinberger 

DATE: July 13, 2012

RE: Burlington International Airport

I am writing to respectfully request that the Council take two actions at your July 16, 2012 meeting to strengthen the Burlington International Airport.

First, I request Council approval of a resolution (copy attached) to create an Airport Strategic Planning Committee. This Committee, with representation from the Council, the Administration, the Airport Commission, state and regional officials, and citizens with airport interest and expertise, will be charged with writing a strategic plan to strengthen the airport and ensure that it remains a regional economic driver. The Airport currently is facing new, competitive opportunities and financial challenges that warrant proactive, thoughtful planning. This committee will be charged with completing a plan by January, 2013 that includes the following:

- A plan for long-term financial strength;
- A plan for maintaining and increasing airline service at the airport, including potentially more international service;
- A plan for maintaining and expanding the number of travelers who use Burlington International Airport;
- An operations plan that makes recommendations on property management, marketing, communications, finance and air service development staffing;
- Consideration of the Airport's regional role and benefits; and
- A review of the Airport Commission's role in the governance of the Airport.

Second, I request Council approval of my appointment of a new interim Director of Aviation. The airport has not had a permanent director since the departure of Brian Searles in January, 2011. Since that time, Burlington Airport Commission Chair Gene Richards has taken a strong leadership role and played a large part in the financial improvement the airport has experienced during that time. During this period, the Airport has tightly managed its costs, greatly improved its cash position, reviewed and executed a large number of new leases, and met head on numerous financial challenges. As a result, in FY12 and FY13, the Airport has met its debt service coverage ratio requirement for the first time since FY08.

The months immediately ahead represent an important time for the Airport. The Airport is attempting to refinance \$12 million of short-term debt, stabilize and improve the outlook of credit rating agencies, and increase revenues in multiple ways. Gene has been a force for change, a person who has driven the improvement of the past 18 months. He is the right person to run the airport until a permanent Aviation Director is named approximately six to nine months from now.

I would like to thank Bob McEwing for performing admirable service to the City for the last 18 months, working both as the interim Aviation Director and as Director of Planning and Development. Bob also deserves considerable credit for leading the Airport through a troubled time. Gene's appointment will allow Bob to return to a full-time focus on the Planning and Development role he has excelled in for many years.

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1
2 **Resolution Relating to**
3

RESOLUTION
Sponsor(s) Councilor Paul

Introduced: 07/16/12

Referred to: _____

4
5
6
7 **APPOINTMENT OF AIRPORT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Action: _____

Date: _____

Signed by Mayor: _____

8
9
10
11
12 **CITY OF BURLINGTON**

13
14 In the year Two Thousand Twelve.....

15 Resolved by the City Council of the City of Burlington, as follows:

16
17 That WHEREAS, the Burlington International Airport ("Airport") is a valued asset and profitable
18 Enterprise Fund of the City of Burlington; and

19 WHEREAS, the Airport's importance as a regional economic driver for business, commerce and
20 tourism cannot be underestimated; and

21 WHEREAS, the City of Burlington, as the owner of the Airport, is responsible for its operations,
22 its financial security, providing service to residents and businesses; and

23 WHEREAS while the Airport is a successful Enterprise Fund, there are significant financial and
24 growth opportunities that must be pursued in order to maintain and enhance the Airport's strengths and
25 benefits to the region; and

26 WHEREAS it will be beneficial to have outside expertise and consultation on key issues related to
27 the finances and growth of the Airport;

28 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council requests that the Mayor, in
29 consultation with Council President Shannon, shall appoint an Airport Strategic Planning Committee
30 consisting of two City Councilors, one Airport Commissioner, the CAO and up to 5 citizens, who shall be
31 charged with the creating a strategic plan for the Airport, including the following components:

- 32 • a plan for long-term financial strength
33 • a plan for maintaining and increasing airline service at the airport, including potentially more
34 international service
35 • a plan for maintaining and expanding the number of travelers who use Burlington International
36 Airport
37 • an operations plan that makes recommendations on property management, marketing,
38 communications, finance and air service development staffing
39 • consideration of the Airport's regional role and benefits
40 • a review of the Airport Commission's role in the governance of the airport; and

Resolution Relating to

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee shall provide a progress report at the Council's
October 29, 2012 meeting and a final report and recommendations on or before the Council's January 7,
2013 meeting.

Gene Richards III

168 Summit Street
Burlington, VT 05401
H. 802.658.5620 | C. 802.343.9909
E. generichards@generichards3.com

Strengths & Qualifications:

Business Development: Efficiency expert with demonstrated skills in reviving business performance and profitability through improvements in sales, marketing and financial strategies. Successful history of inspiring vision within an organization and achieving business objectives through cross-functional support, task coordination and drawing on people's strengths. Able to effectively identify and analyze markets, and generate creative campaigns and promotions with limited resources.

Operations Management: More than 25 years of experience managing operations, organizational change and projects in business and banking. Well-developed analytical, planning and negotiating skills. Enjoy managing multiple workloads in changing and stressful environments. Committed to providing superior customer service.

Personnel Management: Highly motivated, hard-working self-starter and team builder. Experience leading outstanding groups of people, eliciting interest, enthusiasm, and drive.

Professional Experience:

CEO and Founder, Spruce Mortgage

Spruce Mortgage; Burlington, VT - 1995 to Present

- Manage team of 13 and all residential real estate loan operations.

Business Development Consultant; Burlington, VT

1995 to Present

Successful record of improving operations, devising and implementing strategic plans, increasing market share and developing motivated work teams while creating positive work environments. Select clients/projects include:

Post Script, Inc.: Burlington, VT – 1996 to 1997

- Advise advertising firm on sales and marketing strategies. Develop market analyses.

Merchants Bank; Burlington, VT – 1995 to 1996

- Researched, analyzed and compared client banking products and services to those of competing banks. Recommended new products and specific improvements to enhance customer service and satisfaction.

Key Bank; Burlington, VT (formerly Bank of Boston & Bank of Vermont)

1989 to 1995

Vice President – Mortgage Department

1990 to 1995

Managed team of 12 and all residential real estate loan operations. Priced products, originated and processed loans, managed closing and sale to the secondary mortgage market.

Key Accomplishments:

- Through exceptional sales team effort tripled business volume from \$50 million to \$150 million within two years. Sales division cited as number one and two among all Bank of Boston affiliates in U.S.
- Created first-of-its-kind sales culture in a conventional bank environment, reducing staff from 42 to 12 while improving productivity and morale.
- Developed Old North End Housing Program, a Community Reinvestment Act project improving low income housing. Successful program was adopted by banks throughout New England.
- Member of Executive Management Team responsible for Bank operations and hiring of Bank President.
- Launched low-cost, innovative promotional campaigns: (e.g. Eagle Program - placed marketing computers at realtor locations state-wide; Realtor Limo Tour - a multi-limousine tour of properties bringing realtors and bank originators together).

Vermont State Manager of Regional Sales	1989 to 1990
Directed loan production of 20 originators throughout Vermont.	
Key Accomplishment:	
➤ Identified and implemented strategies to reduce costs and improve efficiencies, including the conversion of entire real estate operation to a PC-based computer system.	
Merchants Bank; Burlington, VT	1980 to 1989
Manager of Residential Real Estate Underwriting & Processing	1986 to 1989
Managed staff and workflow of residential real estate underwriting and loan processing department. Maintained Bank's mortgage loan quality process and knowledge of underwriting requirements. Assisted Real Estate Department Manager with departmental operations and projects.	
Key Accomplishments:	
➤ Introduced and implemented quality standards which improved financial products, replenished cash reserves and increased revenues available for reinvestment.	
➤ Consolidated underwriting, loan processing and clerical staff developing effective team approach.	
➤ Developed broad knowledge of banking (1980-86), rapidly advancing from various customer service positions to consumer loan collections, residential real estate underwriter, and manager.	
Airborne Apartment Co.; Burlington, VT	1985 to Present
Owner/Manager	
Manage 50 rental unit properties. Interview and screen prospective tenants. Review lease agreements and educate tenants regarding tenant/landlord rights and expectations. Answer tenant inquiries; address and resolve problems. Manage accounts payable and process general bookkeeping	
Key Accomplishments:	
➤ Maintain excellent relations with tenants; majority of new tenants are referrals from current tenants.	
➤ Near zero rate of vacancy over 24 years, generating positive cash flow.	
<u>Community Service:</u>	
Boys & Girls Club; Burlington, VT	1993 to 2003
<i>Capital Campaign Chairman/Board Member</i>	
➤ Facilitated a \$750,000 fundraising campaign. Fundraising team successfully turned around nonprofit on the brink of bankruptcy	
➤ Coordinated alliances with community businesses to donate products and services.	
➤ Developed fundraising strategies, OCFYHB slogan, manuals, goals, and training for board members and a network of fund-raisers.	
Community Health Center of Burlington, Burlington, VT	1985 to 1988
Board Member	
March of Dimes, Burlington, VT	1985 to 1991
Board Member	
Arthritis Foundation; Vermont & Northern New York Chapter	1989 to 1995
<i>Chair of Budget/Finance Committee/Board Member</i>	
United Way – Bank of Vermont, Burlington, VT	1989 to 1995
<i>Employee Campaign Chairman</i>	
American Red Cross, VT/NH and New England Division	1995 to 2007
<i>Board Member/Finance Committee</i>	
Lund Family Center, Burlington, VT	1996 to Present
<i>Chair of Board/Finance Committee/Board Member</i>	
Stern Center for Language & Learning, Williston, VT	1996 to Present
<i>Chair of Board/Finance Committee/Board Member</i>	

Community Service (cont.):

Maple Leaf Farm, Underhill Vermont 2011 to Present
Chair of Capital Campaign

Professional Associations:

Church St. Marketplace, Burlington, VT 1996 to 2007
Board Member/Finance Chair

Vermont Development Credit Union, Burlington, VT 1995 to 1997
Board Member

Burlington Airport Commissioner, Burlington, VT 2007 to Present
Board Member/Commission Chair

Act 250 Commissioner for the State of Vermont, Chittenden County 2003 to Present
Board Member

Burlington Country Club, Burlington, VT 2007 to Present
Chair of Human Resource Committee/Board Member

Education & Training:

St. Michael's College, Colchester, VT
Course in Personal Financial Planning Level I and II

American Institute of Banking, Montpelier, VT
Completed course work in: Principles of Banking, Installment Lending, Real Estate Finance and Computer Processing. Additional training: Facilitation, Dealing with Difficult People, various banking seminars.

References available upon request