



# The Village of Bald Head Island

January 13, 2022

VIA Email and U.S. Mail

Bald Head Island Transportation, Inc.  
Attention: Mr. Charles A. Paul, III, President  
Post Office Box 3069  
Bald Head Island, North Carolina 28461  
*cpaul@bhisland.com*

Bald Head Island Limited LLC  
Attention: Mr. Charles A. Paul, III, Manager  
Post Office Box 3069  
Bald Head Island, North Carolina 28461  
*cpaul@bhisland.com*

Re: North Carolina Utilities Commission Regulation of Parking and Barge and Right of First Refusal Agreement dated August 21, 1999

Dear Chad:

As the Village of Bald Head Island ("Village") has previously made clear, the Bald Head Island Transportation System ("Transportation System") assets owned by Bald Head Island Transportation, Inc. ("Transportation") and Bald Head Island Limited, LLC ("Limited") are of critical importance to the residents, property owners, and businesses of, and visitors to, Bald Head Island. The Transportation System would be best owned and operated by a public entity subject to public oversight. The Village, with a Council elected by the regular users of the Transportation System, a full-time professional staff, and excellent financial standing that would allow it to acquire the System on favorable financing terms and make necessary improvements to the Transportation System operations, is the entity best suited to fill those roles.

However, we are informed that, in addition to your negotiation with the Bald Head Island Transportation Authority, you are exploring sale of the Transportation System, or portions thereof, to a private equity firm or other business or investor. The Mitchell Family, as the Island's developer, has been a good steward of the Island. We are concerned, however, that a private purchaser would not have similar ties to the Island and may seek unreasonable profits from the Transportation System's monopoly or otherwise not operate with due consideration and regard for the needs of the Island's residents, property owners, businesses and visitors. Given our strong interest in the operation of this

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Page 2  
January 13, 2022

utility for the benefit of the public, we believe it is important for us to articulate these concerns and, if necessary, to take action to protect the interests of the Village, including its residents, property owners, businesses and visitors.

Among other things, the Village is preparing to petition the North Carolina Utilities Commission (“Commission”) to formally assert regulatory jurisdiction over the parking lots and barge used in connection with the Transportation System. It is our position that the regulatory authority of the Commission extends to all of the facilities of the Transportation System, specifically including the parking facilities and barge. As you are aware, the Village has articulated this view in prior regulatory filings with the Commission. To the extent that there may be disagreement on this point, the Village is prepared to seek the Commission’s formal determination.

Relatedly, we remind Limited and Transportation of the requirement to provide notice to the Public Staff and the Commission of any sale or lease of the Deep Point parking facilities or any part of those facilities not less than ninety (90) days prior to the scheduled closing date for the sale or lease. See Order Granting Partial Rate Increase and Requiring Notice, *Application of Bald Head Island Transportation, Inc. for a General Increase in its Rates and Charges Applicable to Ferry Service Between Southport, North Carolina and Bald Head Island, North Carolina*, N.C.U.C. Docket No. A-41, Sub 7 (Dec. 17, 2010), at 6. As a party to that proceeding, the Village requests that a copy of any such notice be provided to it as well.

More generally, the Village also possesses contractual rights with respect to the Transportation System under the Right of First Refusal Agreement (“ROFR”) between the Village, Transportation, and Limited dated August 21, 2019 and recorded at Book 1329, Page 932 of the Brunswick County Registry, **Exhibit A** hereto.

Paragraph 1 of the ROFR provides that the Village shall have a right of first refusal with respect to any proposed sale by Transportation of the Transportation System, as defined in the ROFR. Pursuant to Paragraph 4 of the ROFR, at such time as Transportation receives a formal offer to purchase the Transportation System or any portion thereof that is acceptable to Transportation, Transportation must promptly notify the Village of (i) the identity of the assets proposed to be sold, (ii) the identity of the potential buyer, (iii) the proposed purchase price, and (iv) the proposed closing date.

Paragraph 4 further provides that after receipt of such notice, the Village will have sixty (60) days to determine whether to itself purchase the Transportation System, or whichever portion of the system is proposed to be sold. The same paragraph also provides that the Village may exercise its purchase right subject to its ability to obtain financing for the purchase, and approval of such financing from the Local Government Commission (“LGC”). Pursuant to Paragraph 2 of the ROFR, the terms of such sale will be identical to those in the formal proposed offer received by Transportation.

Bald Head Island Transportation, Inc.  
Attention: Mr. Charles A. Paul, III, President  
Bald Head Island Limited LLC  
Attention: Mr. Charles A. Paul, III, Manager  
Page 3  
January 13, 2022

To be clear, the Village expressly reserves and does not waive its rights under the ROFR. Accordingly, the Village expects that before Transportation and Limited formally accept any offer to purchase the Transportation System, or any of its constituent components, Transportation and Limited will notify the Village pursuant to the terms of the ROFR and will wait the requisite sixty (60) days for the Village to consider and provide notice of whether it will exercise its right to purchase under the ROFR.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should any questions arise or if you would like to discuss these matters.

Very truly yours,



Peter Quinn  
Mayor, Village of Bald Head Island

pc: North Carolina Utilities Commission  
Attn: Charlotte A. Mitchell, Chair

Local Government Commission  
Attn: Dale R. Folwell, Chair

Bald Head Island Transportation Authority  
Attn: Susan Rabon, Chair

Bald Head Island Club  
Attn: Slaughter Fitz-Hugh, President

Bald Head Association  
Attn: Alan Briggs, President

(all via email)

Brunswick County—Register of Deeds  
Robert J. Robinson  
Inst #24941 Book 1329 Page 932  
09/10/1999 03:06pm Rec# 24275

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF BRUNSWICK

**RIGHT OF FIRST REFUSAL**

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this the 21 day of August, 1999, by and between **BALD HEAD ISLAND TRANSPORTATION, INC.**, hereinafter referred to as "TRANSPORTATION"; the **VILLAGE OF BALD HEAD ISLAND**, hereinafter referred to as "VILLAGE"; and **BALD HEAD ISLAND LIMITED**, hereinafter referred to as "LIMITED":

**WITNESSETH**

THAT WHEREAS, the **VILLAGE** was granted certain rights with regard to the Bald Head Island transportation system, hereinafter defined; and

WHEREAS, substantial questions exist with regard to rights and obligations of the parties hereto with regard to such transportation system, and

WHEREAS, rather than engaging in lengthy and costly litigation regarding those issues, the parties hereto desire to resolve all outstanding questions between them by the execution of this agreement;

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the sum of TEN DOLLARS (\$10.00) paid to **TRANSPORTATION** by the **VILLAGE**, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, and further in consideration of the covenants, stipulations and agreements herein contained, the parties hereto do agree, covenant and stipulate as follows:

1. That **VILLAGE** be and hereby is granted a Right of First Refusal, pursuant to the terms and conditions of this agreement, to purchase the Bald Head Island Transportation System or any portion thereof.

"The Bald Head Island Transportation System" (hereinafter referred to as "Transportation System") shall be defined as those assets, tangible and intangible, directly and integrally used in the transportation of persons and property to and from Bald Head Island and, further, in the transportation of such goods or persons while on Bald Head Island, and any and all substitutions thereof and any and all reasonably related accessories thereto, including but not limited to ferries, boats, tugboats, barges, trams, motor vehicles to pull trams, and any and all other personal property, titled or untitled motor vehicles and all accessories thereto, and any real property owned or leased comprising docking or parking facilities, administrative facilities, or facilities designed to facilitate the transfer of individuals to and from the ferry and ground transportation, including a means of access from such real estate to and from a public right-of-way, including any and all improvements to such real estate. Specifically, this Right of First Refusal shall include those parcels of real estate described as follows:

REC Bill Fairley  
TOTAL 10.00 REV. \_\_\_\_\_ TC# \_\_\_\_\_  
REC# 02 CK AMT 396 CK# 4824  
CASH \_\_\_\_\_ REF. \_\_\_\_\_ BY CS

(a) Tracts 2, 3 and 4 (consisting of 1.03 acres, 0.2 acres, and 1.19 acres, respectively) as shown on a map entitled "Plat of Survey for Bald Head Island Limited" by Brunswick Surveying, Inc., dated 8/25/99, and recorded in Map Cabinet 21, instrument 500, of the Brunswick County Registry, a copy of which is attached hereto.

(b) That tract or parcel of land lying and being in or near the City of Southport, Smithville Township, Brunswick County, North Carolina, and more particularly described as follows: BEING approximately 76.39 acres, more or less, as described on a plat of survey made by Thomas W. Morgan, R.L.S., of Brunswick Surveying, Inc. and recorded in Map Cabinet 20 at Page 414 of the Brunswick County Registry, to which plat reference is made and which is incorporated herein by reference for greater certainty of description.

This Right of First Refusal shall further include, but not be limited to, the right to assignment by LIMITED of the non-exclusive easement retained by LIMITED for the use of and for ingress, egress and regress over, across and through those properties described by deed recorded in Book 778 at Page 61 of the Brunswick County Registry, and the riparian rights appurtenant thereto, for all purposes deemed appropriate by LIMITED, its successors and assigns, including without limitation the operation of ferries, barges, boats and trams.

This Right of First Refusal shall not apply to sale, conveyance or other transfer of any assets comprising the Transportation System where such assets are sold by TRANSPORTATION in the usual course of business due to obsolescence or other reasons relating to the continued usefulness of such asset to the system. Further, this Right of First Refusal shall not be applicable to a transfer of the system or any assets therein so long as such sale shall be a transfer to any entity owned as a corporation or other entity owned by LIMITED, George Mitchell or any of George Mitchell's children or immediate family so long as such asset remains dedicated to use as an operating portion of the system.

2. The purchase price to be paid by VILLAGE for the Transportation System and the terms of such purchase shall be equal to the price of the assets comprising the Transportation System and the terms of purchase as shall be contained in any *bona fide* offer from a third party dealing at arm's length with TRANSPORTATION or any successor in title to TRANSPORTATION.

3. TRANSPORTATION agrees that it shall notify VILLAGE at such time as TRANSPORTATION begins to contemplate the sale of the Transportation System or any portion thereof, other than such sales as shall be exempt from this Right of First Refusal pursuant to paragraph 1 hereof.

4. Upon receipt by TRANSPORTATION of any acceptable offer to purchase the Transportation System or any portion thereof, TRANSPORTATION shall notify VILLAGE of the existence of an offer acceptable to it for the sale of such asset or assets. Notice shall be delivered in

writing to the Village Manager and shall include notice to the VILLAGE of the existence of an offer to purchase the Transportation System or a portion thereof and shall identify the following.

- (1) The asset or assets which are the subject of such offer;
- (2) The identity of the individual or entity making such offer;
- (3) The proposed purchase price and terms including any conditions on sale; and
- (4) The proposed closing date.

Upon receipt of notice from TRANSPORTATION as to the existence of an offer acceptable to TRANSPORTATION, the VILLAGE shall have a period of sixty (60) days from the date of receipt of such notice to determine whether to match such offer. The VILLAGE shall inform TRANSPORTATION, in writing, of its decision within sixty (60) days of the receipt of notice. In the event that VILLAGE shall fail to respond in writing to TRANSPORTATION within sixty (60) days of the receipt of notice, such failure shall constitute a waiver of the Right of First Refusal herein contained by the VILLAGE. If the VILLAGE elects to exercise its option to match the offer, the VILLAGE shall close upon the purchase of such assets within a period of time equal to one hundred eighty (180) days from the date that VILLAGE exercises its Right of First Refusal or the closing date as set forth in the proposed offer, whichever date shall be later.

The VILLAGE may exercise its Right of First Refusal subject to approval by the Local Government Commission of any financing required to consummate the purchase of the Transportation System and further subject to any other governmental approvals that would be necessary for the VILLAGE to purchase and operate the Transportation System and to finance the purchase price thereof.

5. With regard to the existence of real estate which shall be the subject of this Right of First Refusal, the parties agree to record the original of this Right of First Refusal or a memorandum thereof, together with a description of such real estate, in the office of the Register of Deeds for Brunswick County. In the event that TRANSPORTATION desires to sell any real estate subject hereto, the VILLAGE shall release such real estate from this Right of First Refusal upon (1) designation by TRANSPORTATION of a suitable substitute therefor and (2) upon determination by the VILLAGE that the proposed substitute real estate is substantially equivalent or superior to the released property for the purposes for which the released property has been used in the Transportation System. The parties shall then execute such documents as shall release the original property from this Right of First Refusal and subject the substituted property thereto.

6. The terms and conditions of this agreement supersede any and all other offers, contracts or rights of first refusal of the VILLAGE to purchase any or all of the assets which are the subject of this agreement heretofore existing between the VILLAGE and Bald Head Island Limited. This instrument constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and shall be governed by and interpreted under the laws of the State of North Carolina. The parties stipulate that the venue of any litigation arising herefrom shall be in the Superior Court of Brunswick County.

7. This agreement shall become effective only upon approval by the North Carolina Public Utilities Commission.

8. Any notice required to be given herein shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the parties as follows:

TRANSPORTATION: Bald Head Island Transportation, Inc.  
P. O. Box 3069  
Bald Head Island, NC 28461  
  
ATTENTION: Woody Fulton

VILLAGE: Village of Bald Head Island  
P. O. Box 3009  
Bald Head Island, NC 28461  
  
ATTENTION: Manager

LIMITED: Bald Head Island Limited  
P. O. Box 3069  
Bald Head Island, NC 28461  
  
ATTENTION: M. Kent Mitchell

Inst # 21941 Book 1329 Page: 935

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this instrument to be executed in triplicate originals as of the date first above written.

(CORPORATE SEAL)  
BALD HEAD ISLAND TRANSPORTATION, INC  
BY: [Signature]  
Vice President

ATTEST:  
B. J. Gorman  
Assistant Secretary



Joanna A. Camporello  
Clerk

VILLAGE OF BALD HEAD ISLAND  
BY: [Signature]  
Mayor

BALD HEAD ISLAND LIMITED (SEAL)  
BY: [Signature] (SEAL)  
Attorney-in-Fact

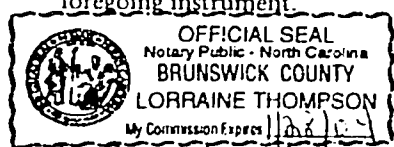
Inst # 24941 Book 1329 Page: 936



Inst # 24941 Book 1329Page: 937

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF BRUNSWICK

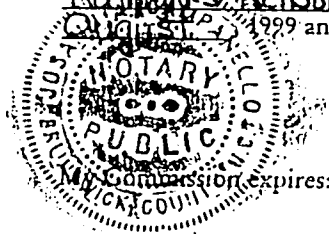
I, Lorraine Thompson, a Notary Public, do hereby certify that Kenneth M. Kirkman, Vice President personally appeared before me this 23rd day of August, 1999 and acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing instrument.



Lorraine Thompson  
Notary Public

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF BRUNSWICK

I, Josann A Campanello, a Notary Public, do hereby certify that Stephen Henson, Mayor personally appeared before me this 21 day of August, 1999 and acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing instrument.



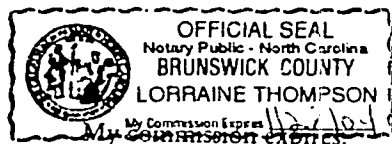
Josann A Campanello  
Notary Public

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
County of Brunswick

I, Lorraine Thompson, a Notary Public for said County and State, do hereby certify that Kenneth M. Kirkman attorney in fact for Bald Head Island Limited personally appeared before me this day, and being by me duly sworn, says that he executed the foregoing and annexed instrument for and in behalf of the said Bald Head Island Limited, and that his authority to execute and acknowledge said instrument is contained in an instrument duly executed, acknowledged, and recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds in the County of Brunswick, State of North Carolina, in Deed Book 1143 at Page 916, and that this instrument was executed under and by virtue of the authority given by said instrument granting him power of attorney.

I do further certify that the said Kenneth M. Kirkman acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing and annexed instrument for the purposes therein expressed for and in behalf of the said Bald Head Island Limited.

WITNESS my hand and official seal, this the 23rd day of August, 1999



Lorraine Thompson  
Notary Public

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF BRUNSWICK

The Foregoing (or annexed) Certificate(s) of LORRAINE THOMPSON JOSANN A. CAMPANELLO

Notary(ies) Public is (are) Certified to be Correct.

This Instrument was filed for Registration on this 10th Day of September, 1999  
in the Book and Page shown on the First Page hereof.

Robert J. Robinson  
ROBERT J. ROBINSON Register of Deeds