

February 11th Hearing Panelist Information and Written Statement

Panel One: Description of Airport Operations Heather Worthley, Executive Director, Port Jobs

INFORMATION:

Executive Director of Port Jobs, a small non-profit workforce development agency closely associated with the Port of Seattle, where she has spent the last eight years. Previously, she worked as a researcher at the University of Washington School of Social Work, as a curriculum consultant with Virginia Mason's Separation and Loss Project, as a policy and program analyst and trainer at the Domestic & Sexual Violence Prevention Office with the City of Seattle where she won the Seattle Works! Innovation Award, and as a legislative analyst the Seattle City Council. Heather has a Master's Degree in Linguistics from the University of Washington, where she was President of the Graduate & Professional Student Senate and ex-officio member of the Board of Regents. She is an amateur birder and mycologist.

STATEMENT:

Good afternoon Commissioners, Mr. Yoshitani, members of the public:

My name is Heather Worthley, and I am the director of Port Jobs. I've been asked to give you a brief overview of the current workforce development services Port Jobs offers to employers and employees at Sea-Tac Airport. I'll start with the basics. Port Jobs is a small non-profit agency; for twenty years, the Port of Seattle, the City of Seattle, King County, and the State of Washington have been engaged with Port Jobs to bring opportunities in Port-related employment to all eligible residents of King County. We rely on leveraged public and private funding to operate a high-volume employment center at Sea-Tac Airport, and to get more women and people of color into family wage jobs in skilled trades through the Apprenticeship Opportunities Project.

We are honored to work with more than 100 airport employers, to assist more than 8,000 jobseekers each year at our Airport Jobs office. As a non-profit, we are a neutral broker, and do not charge for our services. Any employer at the airport is welcome to post position openings through us, and anyone looking for a job is welcome in our office.

You heard Mr. Reis talk about the operations of the airport, and the thousands of airport workers inside the airport perimeter whose effort makes the smooth running of a major airport possible. Last year, more than 1,000 people obtained jobs at the airport through our Airport Jobs office. The jobs we post range from part-time to full-time, from minimum wage (which is currently \$9.32 an hour, although that could change as a result of this Commission's actions) to middle-income salaries, and include both union and non-represented positions. The airport concessions companies (including food, beverage, book, and gift shops), ground services (including baggage handling, cabin cleaning, fueling, and wheelchair attendant services), and direct airline employment, such as flight attendants and ticket agents, are all included in our jobs listings. So are related government jobs, such as Transportation Security Administration positions.

Port Jobs also offers career pathway education and training through our Airport University project. A big name for a modest-sized program, Airport University brings job skills and college-credit-bearing classes to the airport. The classes are taught by Highline Community College faculty, South Seattle Community College faculty, and our Airport University staff. Low-wage workers at the airport are invited to take these classes for free. The classes are designed with input from airport employers, and are tailored to the airport environment. The class schedule is designed to optimize access for shift workers. We also offer resume building, online-application workshops, preparation for the Secure Identification Display Area and Airfield Operations Access tests. Next steps career advancement training

This screenshot of our Airport Jobs website Daily Hotlist of jobs shows the beginning of the first page of the currently listed job openings. You can go to our office or our website and get a list that's updated every weekday to reflect current openings. Again, opportunities run the gamut from part-time, and minimum wage, to full-time and salaried positions. For example, the Port's Office of Social Responsibility recently alerted us to an upcoming Federal Aviation Administration Air Traffic Controller position opening. These jobs will start at more than \$50,000 per year, and do not require a college degree. Applicants do need to be U.S. citizens, and no older than 31, with audibly fluent spoken English. Our Airport Jobs office will be helping eligible jobseekers through the online application process, which can be a barrier to employment. As more and more job applications move to online only formats, assisting jobseekers with this process is becoming a key function for our staff. Similarly, having basic computer skills is now a prerequisite for many jobs, so we have beefed up our Airport University offerings to include a full Business Technology certificate. After eight years of bringing classes to airport employees onsite where they work, we find that some workers just need skills classes, while others are interested in college credits that will lead to a certificate and/or degree. The list of courses which we have offered at the airport includes:

- Leadership & Supervision
- Managing Customer Service
- SuperHost Certificate
- Introduction to Windows
- Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, & Access
- Keyboarding & 10-key
- Introduction to the Internet
- Business Writing
- Introduction to International Trade, Transportation, & Logistics

These courses articulate to credentials in customer service, business technology, hospitality, travel and tourism, and trade and logistics.

Employers tell us that what they are looking for in new hires is:

- The ability to show up on time, over time,
- Basic computer skills
- Some working knowledge of the industry, and work-specific language used in industry

We reflect this in our work with jobseekers and incumbent workers. Based on our interviews with employers and jobseekers, in partnership with the community college sector and the Port, we are constantly enhancing our airport career pathway offerings, and look forward to continuing our work with the airport community as the Port Commission develops a new policy to promote job quality and workforce development.