

February 27,2008

Dear FMA Members,

Last November, I was elected as President of the Board of Directors of the Freeport Merchants Association. In the short time since, I have gained a great deal of appreciation for the hard work and time that many people devote to achieving the goals of this partnership-based organization. I can also tell that the year ahead will be filled with change, challenge and enormous opportunity to join together in a common cause—to help our businesses thrive, to help the community prosper, and to make Freeport an unforgettable experience for all who live, work and visit here.

It is with a heavy heart, however, that I must inform you that, after three years of exemplary marketing work, Dick Collins will no longer be driving this organization's interests forward as Executive Director. As many of you may know, Dick is managing some significant health issues. His treatment plan is being administered in Florida and, while he has been completely engaged in the business of FMA from his remote location, the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors feels that it is in the best interest of the membership to have an Executive Director who can devote full-time attention to the organization from the office in Freeport. Dick will remain as an employee, managing our Web site, freeportusa.com, as he has so capably been doing for some time. A hiring committee is being convened from among the board and the process of filling the position will proceed as promptly as possible. In the interim, Dick has graciously agreed to maintain his duties as long as is necessary for us to find an ideal Executive Director.

To continue the theme of change, longtime member Paul Kelley has decided it is time to step away from the Board after more than 20 years of service. Paul is a founding member of FMA and has held most offices during his tenure, Treasurer being most recent. His devotion and leadership will be missed, but I have no doubt that his example will be carried forward by a new generation.

The past year has been busy and challenging for so many of us, and the year ahead promises to be filled with new opportunities and perils. While current development projects in town offer evidence of a very exciting future for the community, these efforts also provide near-term hurdles that must be overcome. The future is very bright for Freeport, but the road must be traveled with care and purpose. It is more important than ever that we work together to position Freeport as an authentic, world-class vacation, recreation and shopping destination.

I am happy to answer any questions that you may have and look forward to working with, and for, all of you in the coming year.

Regards,

Tim Paul
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Freeport Merchants Association
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