Resolution exempting the potential lease of portions of the Piers 15 and 17 properties to the Exploratorium from the competitive bidding policy set forth in Administrative Code Section 2.6-1.

WHEREAS, The Exploratorium is a world-renowned museum and educational center, providing access to, and information about, science, nature, art, and technology, and serving more than half a million visitors annually, including 120,000 teachers and children on field trips; and

WHEREAS, The Exploratorium has been called by Scientific American "the best science museum in the world," focusing on the exploration of science, art and human perception and featuring among other components, a museum with interactive science and art exhibits, an international center for teacher development, fabrication and export of original exhibits to over 300 science centers around the world and an award-winning Web site of new teaching resources; and,

WHEREAS, Among other initiatives, The Exploratorium is preparing students for the global economy and responding to the imperatives of the "No Child Left Behind" mandate by improving science education and supplementing school district curriculum; and,

WHEREAS, The Exploratorium has been housed since its inception in 1969 at the Palace of Fine Arts and over the past few years, with the support of the City, has been engaged in an extensive search for a new site that will better meet its need to be located in a more visible, accessible, transit-friendly location with sufficient capacity to meet its expanding program and constituency and house its accessory functions such as exhibit development and fabrication, administrative space, and ancillary restaurant and retail space; and,
WHEREAS, The San Francisco Port Commission ("Port") staff and the Exploratorium have been in discussions regarding the possible lease of Pier 15, the Piers 15 and 17 Connector Building and Valley and portions of the Pier 17 marginal wharf area within the Port's jurisdiction ("Property"); and,

WHEREAS, The members of the Port Commission expressed their support for continued negotiations between Port staff and the Exploratorium regarding the possible lease of the Property to the Exploratorium at a duly noticed public hearing on May 10, 2005; and,

WHEREAS, As set forth in Administrative Code Section 2.6-1, it is the policy of this Board of Supervisors to approve only such proposed leases involving property or facilities of the City and County of San Francisco that have been awarded to the highest responsible bidders in accordance with the competitive bidding procedures, except where impractical or impossible; and,

WHEREAS, The Exploratorium presents a special cultural and educational opportunity for the people of the City and County of San Francisco in providing a use recognized internationally as a unique institution, not only due to the nature of its exhibits, but also its science teaching programs, including the first science-specific teacher induction program in the country, which is the subject of national research studies; and,

WHEREAS, The Exploratorium's programs provide an unparalleled opportunity to prepare children in the San Francisco Unified School District and elsewhere for the global economy by teaching basic science in an innovative setting; and,

WHEREAS, Providing science learning opportunities for children has become an educational imperative under the "No Child Left Behind" standards and in light of the increasing demand for science skills in the workplace; and,

WHEREAS, It is in the interest of the City to provide science educational opportunities to improve the competitiveness of its schools and workforce; and,
WHEREAS, The Exploratorium is a unique visitor draw that enhances the City's tourism industry, and it is in the City's interest to locate the facility at a location with improved public access and visibility; and,

WHEREAS, Locating the Exploratorium on the Property would serve an important State and City-wide public purpose and allow the Port to meet its Statewide historic preservation and public access objectives for the Property while broadening the mix of uses and destinations along the waterfront; and,

WHEREAS, Specifically, the Exploratorium's proposed use is consistent with and furthers various objectives of the Waterfront Land Use Plan for this area, including activating the waterfront with a new point of interest that is designed to appeal to residents of the State, City and the Bay Area, providing new public access to the waterfront (including Exploratorium programs on the Bay), offering family-oriented, cultural and educational opportunities and facilitating the rehabilitation of the historic Pier 15 and Connector Building structures; and,

WHEREAS, The Port is specifically interested in furthering Waterfront Land Use Plan policies by encouraging additional educational and cultural uses along the waterfront; and,

WHEREAS, Locating an institution with a proven visitor draw over a 30 year period at a location midway between the tourist center of Pier 39 to the north and the Ferry Building to the south enhances the northern waterfront and ensures that these destination uses will be linked by pedestrian activity; and,

WHEREAS, The Property requires substantial investment to repair the substructure and bring the Property up to modern seismic standards, in addition to the costs associated with development, including rehabilitation of the historic resources; and,

WHEREAS, The Exploratorium is in a unique position to meet the State's, Port's and City's public purposes, including broadening the existing mix of uses by bringing major
1 cultural and educational uses to the waterfront, and providing substantial resources and a
2 proven track record over time necessary to rehabilitate and develop the Property; and,
3
4 WHEREAS, The competitive bidding policy of this Board of Supervisors would be
5 impractical, since no other user has the proven 30 year track record of demonstrated ability
6 and financial resources to provide the best science museum in the world and innovative
7 science educational programs while meeting a myriad of other public goals and policies for
8 the Property, including preservation of the historic structures on the Property and providing
9 both substantial revenue-generating uses and public access; and,
10
11 WHEREAS, The proposed project further presents a unique opportunity to retain and
12 enhance a prized San Francisco-based institution that is critical to supplementing school
13 curriculum and preparing children to meet educational and workforce imperatives; and,
14
15 WHEREAS, By not utilizing the competitive bidding process this Board of Supervisors
16 will be furthering City policies by enabling the Exploratorium to reach out and provide
17 educational resources and relevant services for children, including children who otherwise
18 would not have access to the type and diversity of resources and services that will be
19 provided by the Exploratorium; now, therefore, be it
20
21 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors exempts the potential lease of the
22 Property to the Exploratorium from the competitive bidding policy set forth in Administrative
23 Code Section 2.6-1; and, be it
24
25 FURTHER RESOLVED, That should the San Francisco Port Commission and the
26 Exploratorium agree upon mutually acceptable terms for the lease and development of the
27 Property, this Board of Supervisors shall not disapprove such proposed lease solely on the
28 basis that it does not satisfy the competitive bidding policy set forth in Administrative Code
29 Section 2.6-1.
Resolution exempting the potential lease of portions of the Piers 15 and 17 properties to the Exploratorium from the competitive bidding policy set forth in Administrative Code Section 2.6-1.

June 21, 2005  Board of Supervisors — ADOPTED
Ayes: 10 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Elsbernd, Ma, McGoldrick, Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval
Excused: 1 - Maxwell

File No. 050881

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on June 21, 2005 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Gloria L. Young
Clerk of the Board

Mayor Gavin Newsom