

Put-in-Bay Township Port Authority Beats the Ferry

infotech



Meet Rosann

Rosann Keiser is the secretary for the Put-in-Bay Township Port Authority. We spoke with her about her department's solicitation process before they adopted Bid Express®. At first glance, it's similar to what we often encounter:

“Our engineers would create the estimate, then I would submit it in our local newspaper who would post it online for 2-3 weeks. If any contractors wanted to bid on it, they would contact our engineering firm, pay a fee for the plans, and submit before the bid opening.”

It's that last little bit about submitting before the bid opening where things get interesting. To go further, we need to understand a little bit more about Put-in-Bay.



About Put-In-Bay

Put-in-Bay is a village (that's right, a village) located on South Bass Island in Lake Erie, Ohio (that's right, in Lake Erie). As a resort town, Put-in-Bay is home to about 600 year-round residents. Some of the residents aren't even full time - when Rosann took our call, she was working remotely for the winter in Florida. While Put-in-Bay isn't exactly a prime construction

spot, regular tourism and winter air transportation keep the Port Authority busy while managing three island airports.

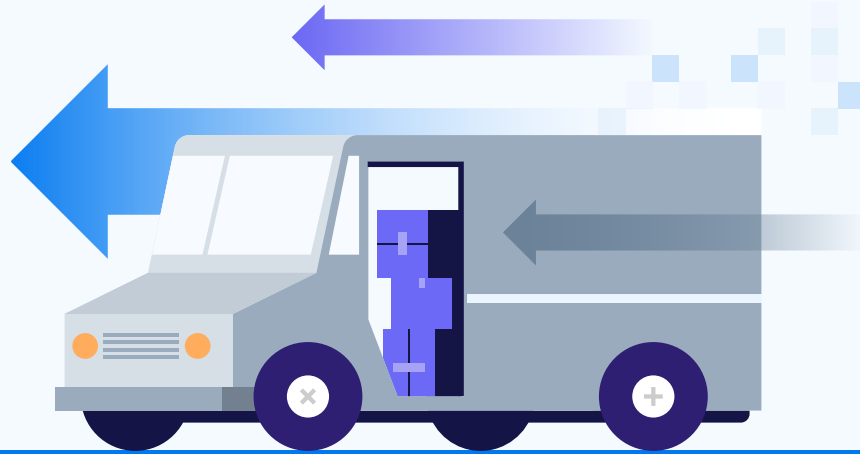
Airports may bring in tourists and some supplies, but most goods - including mail - come via ferry. If you've ever scrambled to make a bid opening deadline, you may begin to see the problem.

“We work with the FAA and we manage and operate the three Bass Island airports, so nearly every year we have a project going on with one of the airports,” said Rosann.

The Ferry

So, the Port Authority puts out a project for bid in the newspaper and online. What happens next?

“Because we’re on an island, most of the contractors send their bids via FedEx and those have to be in to us by 4:00 pm. Well, FedEx doesn’t drive on to the ferry and on to the island. They unload their packages in a little trailer, which is then brought over and unloaded by the ferry company. That arrives in the afternoon, so I was always frantic that I was going to miss someone’s package.”



In fact, Rosann’s dedication is probably the only thing that kept some of those packages from ever arriving past the deadline.

“By the time the ferry gets in, it’s 3:30 pm, so by 4:00 pm, it’s pretty nip-and-tuck. I was constantly running down to the ferry or calling them to see if I missed a package. It did not happen but it was very close.”

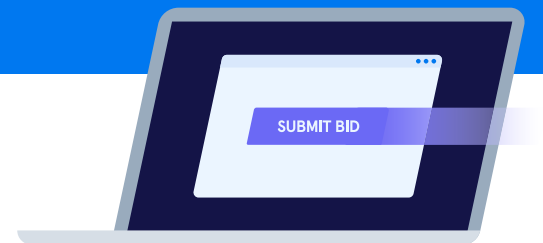
Enter Bid Express

The Put-in-Bay Port Authority works closely with RS&H, an engineering firm and Infotech customer. In 2019, RS&H recommended Bid Express to Rosann and the Port Authority Board, who jumped at the opportunity to fix the ferry problem. Bid Express eliminates paper processes and physical bid openings by allowing for online bid submission and posting of results the second the solicitation closes.

“I talked to the board and said listen, [Bid Express] pretty much does everything, they receive the bid, they

post the results when the bid opening is due, so we don’t have to worry about someone not getting their package over here on time. So we subscribed to it and it worked out great.”

In addition to eliminating nauts and wind speed from their solicitation process, Rosann no longer has to track down a board member to come into the office for the 4:00 pm bid openings since Bid Express hosts openings digitally. The Port Authority posted their first Bid Express



solicitation for a mooring project and plans to post a solicitation for a piece of snow removal equipment for one of the Bass Island airports fall of 2020. And while features like omission alerts and smart forms are great, nothing can beat the absence of the mad dash to the ferry.

“The ferry delivery was very stressful for me because I take it very seriously that everyone needs to have their bids in there on time. So Bid Express has been great.”