

Executive Summary

Board of Governors Meeting, June 24, 2020

Communications and Advertising Services

Request for Proposal No. 20-0012

Recommended Vendor: C-Com Group, Inc.

Topic

Citizens is requesting approval of a new contract for Communications and Advertising Services. These services were previously provided under contract 14-13-0021-00 which expired on May 26, 2020.

The contract anticipates a three (3) year term with three one-year renewal options. Expenditures and reimbursements under this contract are made only when services are activated by Citizens. Contract pricing does not require monthly agency retainers or additional management fees paid to the vendor. A contract amount of \$600,000 has been estimated, if needed, for services required during the potential six-year life of the contract, including renewal options. This estimated amount includes both the expenses for advertising buys and commission payments invoiced through the awarded vendor. These advertising and communication efforts are primarily for catastrophe and crisis communications, where messaging is needed on an expedited basis and for potentially unforeseen situations.

History

These services were previously procured through Invitation to Negotiate 13-0021, which resulted in a six (6) year contract, which has now expired. As a result, Citizens issued Request for Proposal (RFP) number 20-0012 on April 1, 2020, to re-secure similar services of a media broker or agency as a communications solution that allows Citizens to broadcast messaging across various media markets using multiple channels.

The new contract was procured in accordance with chapter 287.057, Florida Statutes. RFP 20-0012 was posted publicly on April 1, 2020. A total of 19 vendor proposals were received on April 24, 2020 to compete for this award. After the completion of the Responsible Vendor Review on May 20, 2020, three proposals were disqualified from further consideration. Scoring by the Evaluation Committee was completed on the remaining 16 proposals. On May 26, 2020, the Evaluation Committee held a public meeting to collectively score the competitive proposals, rank them, and announce the intent to award to C-Com Group, Inc.

Consolidated services were specifically sought to maximize economic efficiencies when working through a media broker or agency with established relationships and access to market providers versus attempting to place more costly and inefficient piecemeal advertising packages. Using a media broker or agency helps to ensure that Citizens can reach the widest audience using all media markets at a negotiated price in impacted areas by leveraging the expertise and knowledge of the selected vendor when information sharing is most critical.

Under this contract, Citizens will use C-Com Group's services and market access to apprise external stakeholders of educational and informational initiatives, CAT preparation and response, and/or reporting of other emergencies that require notification through traditional media outside of normal operational communications methods.

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In addition, this solicitation sought to provide flexible broad-scale media access for unforeseen non-weather related emerging issues and crises that consumers and stakeholders need to be made aware of, as seen with the recent COVID-19 pandemic impacts or the corporation's previous experience with mail fraud, in addition to the operational needs of Citizens to advise audiences on catastrophe or severe weather activity and response.

Recommendation

Citizens recommends the Board of Governors to:

- a) Approve the contract for services, procured under RFP No. 20-0012 Communications and Advertising Services, for a three (3) year term and three (3) optional one (1) year terms, in an amount not to exceed \$600,000.00 with C-Com Group, Inc. as described in the Action Item; and
- b) Authorize staff to take any appropriate or necessary action consistent with this Action Item.

ACTION ITEM

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CONTRACT ID	Communications and Advertising Services Request for Proposal No. 20-0012 RECOMMENDED VENDOR: C-COM GROUP, INC.
BUDGETED ITEM	This is an operating expense budgeted annually, which includes an allocation for education and outreach ad placement throughout the year. Expenditures and reimbursements under this contract are only made when services are activated by Citizens. Additionally, in the event of a named storm or a declared weather-related emergency, funds may be available from the Catastrophe budget. Additional funds may be approved as needed.
CONTRACT AMOUNT	Estimated at up to \$600,000 for services, if needed, during the life of the contract (Three years with three one-year renewal options). This estimated amount includes both the expenses for advertising buys and commission payments invoiced through the awarded vendor. These advertising buys and commission efforts are primarily for catastrophe and crisis communications, where messaging is needed on an expedited basis and for potentially unforeseen situations.
PURPOSE / SCOPE	<p>Citizens issued Request for Proposal number 20-0012 to secure the services of a media broker or agency as a communications solution that allows Citizens to broadcast messaging across various media markets using multiple channels. Citizens sought this solution to provide coordinated access to all media markets at a negotiated price when information sharing is most critical. Using the vendor's services allows Citizens to apprise external stakeholders of educational and informational initiatives, CAT preparation and response, and/or other emergencies that require notification through traditional media outside of normal operational communications methods.</p> <p>This solicitation seeks to provide flexible broad-scale media access for unforeseen emerging issues and uncharted scenarios that consumers and stakeholders need to be aware of, as seen with the recent COVID-19 pandemic impacts, coupled with the additional operational need to inform and educate audiences on catastrophe activity and response.</p>
CONTRACT TERM(S)	The contract term will be three (3) years, and at Citizens' discretion, three (3) optional one (1) year renewal terms.
PROCUREMENT METHOD	Citizens issued Request for Proposal (RFP) No: 20-0012, Communications and Advertising Services on April 1, 2020. On April 24, 2020, Citizens received responses from 19 vendors. Three vendors were disqualified from further consideration after the vendor responsibility review (outlined in Section 3.6 of the RFP) was performed. The Evaluation Committee reviewed and scored the remaining 16 proposals. A public meeting was held on May 26, 2020, for the Evaluation Committee to rank the scored proposals and announce an intent to award. The awarded vendor was selected by the Evaluation Committee during a public meeting on May 26, 2020.
RECOMMENDATION	It is recommended that Citizens' Board: a) Approve the contract for services, procured under RFP 20-0012, for a three (3) year term and three (3) one (1) year renewal terms, in an amount not to exceed \$600,000 with C-Com Group, Inc. as set forth in this Action Item; and

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	b) Authorize staff to take any appropriate or necessary action consistent with this Action Item.
CONTACTS	Christine Ashburn, Chief of Communications, Legislative and External Affairs