



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL PALM BEACH COUNTY

CONTRACT OVERSIGHT NOTIFICATION (2011-N-0002)

Sheryl G. Steckler
Inspector General

"Enhancing Public Trust in Government"

Palm Beach County Solicitation, All Planimetric and Digital Ortho Photography Mapping Services Required for the Palm Beach County Geographic Information System (GIS)

ISSUES

Palm Beach County (PBC) Policy and Procedures Memorandum (PPM) CW-O-048, titled Selection of Professional Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects, Land Surveyors and Mappers, outlines five (5) criteria areas on which proposal evaluations are to be based. One of the five areas is "Volume of Previous Work", wherein applicants can be awarded up to 10 points during both the Short List and Final Selection Committee evaluation meetings. The "Volume of Previous Work" selection criteria are structured to benefit firms that have been awarded the least amount of County work. Thus, proposals with the least amount of volume of previous work, referred to as "Fee Considered," are awarded the most points based on a pro-rata calculation method covering the previous four fiscal years.

PBC Engineering Department maintains an electronic database wherein County-wide Fee Considered information is recorded and used to evaluate the "Volume of Previous Work" by a Contractor or Sub-contractor. However, the accuracy of this database is dependent upon every affected County department's consistent, timely, and complete reporting of Fee Considered data to Engineering. There is no PPM directing County Departments on when and how to report this data to Engineering.

In addition, PPM CW-O-048 states that Prime Contractors' Fee Considered information is to be self-reported as part of their proposal. If a discrepancy exists between what is self-reported and the Engineering database, the higher of the two will be reported on the Consultant Summary information sheet which is then distributed to selection committee members for use in scoring proposals.

OIG staff attended both the Short List and Final Selection meetings for the procurement of All Planimetric and Digital Ortho Photography Mapping Services Required for the Palm Beach County Geographic Information System (GIS), where they observed the following:

During the Final Selection meeting (July 19) the Chair, Steve Carrier (Assistant County Engineer), noted that the Consultant Summary information sheet inaccurately reported Fee Considered information for two of the three incumbent Contractors as "none"; when in fact, Mr. Carrier knew that all three of the incumbent Contractors had performed work

for the County (GIS and Environmental Resource Management (ERM)) during the past three years. Upon further inquiry, Mr. Carrier determined that the same inaccurate information was submitted to the Short List Selection Committee (May 17) for their use in ranking all the proposals. Mr. Carrier confirmed with Engineering staff that the data reported on the Consultant Summary information sheet ("none") reflected the data contained in the Engineering database. He then made an attempt to obtain the missing Fee Considered information directly from GIS and ERM staff during the final selection meeting, but was unable to do so. Nonetheless, the final selection committee continued with their evaluation by deducting one point from each of the incumbent's proposal scores which resulted in a Volume of Previous Work score of nine (9) points. (Non-incumbent proposal scores were assigned the maximum of 10 points.)

This oversight highlights two issues:

- 1. The accuracy of the PBC Engineering database used to determine each consultant's Fee Considered points.** According to David Young (Engineering), all County departments are to report all Consultant/Sub-consultant PBC fee information to the Engineering Department. However, there is no written PBC policy that outlines such procedures.
- 2. Proposers can gain an unfair advantage in the evaluation process by inaccurately reporting the Fee Considered information.** The likelihood of gaining the advantage is greater when Engineering's database fails to indicate otherwise.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend:

- The Volume of Work scores for this selection be re-computed using actual "Fee Considered" data; and
- That policies be amended to ensure that accurate, timely and complete Fee Considered information is available for evaluating Volume of Previous Work criteria for all selections.

RESPONSE FROM MANAGEMENT

George Webb, County Engineer, provided the attached response to this Notification, wherein he concurred with the OIG's recommendations.



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and Public Works**

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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 16, 2011
TO: Sheryl G. Steckler, Inspector General
FROM: George T. Webb, P.E. *G. T. Webb*
County Engineer
RE: **Contract Oversight Notification 2011---N-0002**

A response to your correspondence dated August 8, 2011 is attached regarding the results from the July 12, 2011 Selection Committee involving All Planimetric and Digital Ortho Photography Mapping Services.

In summary, the response to the first recommendation for the re-computed Volume of Work scores for this selection have been updated utilizing fee information provided by the user department and the re-calculation scores did not change the results. In fact, of the three changes made by the Committee at the meeting, two were found to be correct when re-calculated. The third gave an additional point to the unanimous top ranked firm-not changing its final ranking.

In response to the second recommendation for an amendment to the policies regarding accurate, timely and complete Fee Considered information be provided, PPM CW-F-050 and PPM CW-O-048 will be revised to either require all County Departments provide a copy or notice of all authorizations involving the referenced professional services.

Please call if you have any questions.

Enc.

cc: Robert Weisman, County Administrator
Tanya N. McConnell, P.E., Deputy County Engineer

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