



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 42

Agenda Date: December 15, 2022

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Government Affairs

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Sally Basurto

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Approval of Federal Consultant Services Contracts

SUMMARY:

An ordinance authorizing federal consultant services contracts with: A) Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld in an amount not to exceed \$270,000 per year for Washington D.C. based consultant services from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024 with two, two-year renewal options in an amount not to exceed \$1,620,000, and; B) Serna and Serna in an amount not to exceed \$45,000 per year for consultant services from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024 with two, two-year renewal options in an amount not to exceed \$270,000.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City retains consultants to support and strengthen the City's advocacy efforts with federal agencies, members of Congress, and the Administration to advance legislation and seek federal funding that is beneficial to the San Antonio community. The City's federal priorities for each of the two-year Congressional sessions are developed by the Government Affairs (GA) Department in collaboration with other City departments and Intergovernmental Relations Committee input and direction. The City's federal priorities for each Congressional session are approved by the City Council.

Federal consultants will be responsible for supporting and implementing the City's federal legislative program and a strategic plan. The strategic plan includes timelines, goals, objectives and expected outcomes to advance the City's priorities. Consultants will provide their input and expertise on the proposed San Antonio Federal Legislative Program for the 118th U.S. Congress. Consultants will continuously monitor legislative and regulatory activities, develop strategies to advance the City's interests, schedule meetings with elected officials and government agency representatives, and coordinate with City staff and the local representatives. The consultants' activities will be tracked through performance measures developed jointly by the City and consultants and be included as part of the contract.

Staff from GA and the Finance Department collaborated with the Small Business Office and City Attorney's Office to develop Request for Proposals (RFP) for federal representation services, issued on June 9, 2022.

The RFP was published in The Hill, the San Antonio Express News, the City's webpage and TVSA (Chanel 21). In an effort to increase the number of respondents, notice of the issuance of the RFP and its location on the City's webpage was sent directly to 35 vendors. The deadline for submission of proposals was July 25, 2022. A total of six (6) proposals were received from Washington D.C. based firms and two (2) proposals were received for a local liaison. The evaluation committee consisted of City staff from the City Manager's Office, Government Affairs Department, Aviation Department, Transportation Department, City Attorney's Office. Additionally, the committee included community members from Valero and the NRP Group.

The evaluation committee evaluated and scored the proposals for the Washington D.C. RFP based on the published criteria which included: Experience, Background, and Qualifications, Proposed Plan, Price, and the Veteran Owned Small Business Preference Program (VOSBPP). In addition, the evaluation committee evaluated and scored the proposals for the local liaison RFP based on the published criteria which included: Experience, Background, and Qualifications, Proposed Plan, Price, the Small Business Enterprise Prime Contract Program, the Minority/Women-Owned Prime Contract Program, the Local Preference Program (LPP) and the VOSBPP. After an initial review and scoring the committee recommended the firm of Serna and Serna for award of the Local Liaison representation contract and reached a consensus to short-list and interview five (5) respondents for the Washington D.C. based RFP. The evaluation committee conducted final interviews and scoring and selected Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld (Akin Gump) for the Washington, D.C. representation contract.

The following firms and members are proposed for the delivery of contract services: Akin Gump will be the Washington based firm on the city's federal legislative team with Hans Rickhoff as lead partner. Mr. Rickhoff will act as relationship manager and primary point of contact for the team assigned to the City of San Antonio. Other members of the team who will serve the City of San Antonio include former Congressman Filemon Vela, former Congressman Lamar Smith, Transportation Team Lead Susan Lent and former Capitol Hill staffer Jose Borjon. Walter Serna, as the local liaison, will coordinate activities with the Washington DC firm and GA staff to advance the City's legislative priorities and act as an intermediary between San Antonio and federal and local elected officials.

The initial contract term will be January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024 and will include two, two-year performance-based extensions at the City's option.

This solicitation was included in the memo to the Audit and Accountability Council Committee on November 21, 2022 as a post-solicitation item and recommended to move forward for the full City Council for consideration. The City Council Intergovernmental Relations Committee was briefed on the proposed firms on November 28, 2022.

ISSUE:

Obtaining federal representation services is consistent with City policy to supplement the City's advocacy efforts with federal agency personnel, Congressional members of key committees of jurisdiction and the presidential administration. It is also consistent with the City's policy of building strategic alliances with officials in Washington, D.C. to further the City's interests. Finally, it is consistent with City policy of developing a detailed strategy to further the City's adopted Federal Legislative Program.

ALTERNATIVES:

If contracts for federal representation services are not supported, the alternative is for staff to conduct all efforts related to the Federal Legislative Program. This would result in a loss of capacity in the City's ability to effectively pursue its advocacy with the federal government and would likely result in a potential loss of federal funding for the City.

FISCAL IMPACT:

An ordinance authorizing federal consultant services contracts with:

A) Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld for Washington D.C.-based consultant services from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2024, with two, two-year renewal options for a total amount not to exceed \$1,620,000. Funding in the amount of \$236,250 is available from the FY 2023 General Fund Budget.

B) Serna and Serna for consultant services from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2024, with two, two-year renewal options in an amount not to exceed \$236,250. Funding in the amount of \$45,000 is available from the FY 2023 General Fund Budget.

Funding for future years for both contracts is contingent upon City Council approval of the annual budget and funds.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed federal representation services contracts.