

for items of work proposed for construction with the Livernois Road Bridge Replacement project in the amount of \$27,597.00 and any additional costs to complete the project and further authorizes the Mayor to execute the agreement on behalf of the City.

2012-0252 Request for Purchase Authorization - MAYOR: Contract/Blanket Purchase Order for governmental representation and consulting services in the amount not-to-exceed \$60,000.00 through August 1, 2013; Strategic Communication Solutions, Inc., Novi, MI

Mayor Barnett stated that the Administration has looked to see what communities have done in these relatively challenging economic times to address various concerns in the community. He noted that unfunded mandates, health care regulations, legislation such as that which set speed limits on gravel roads, and challenges in finding more resources are just a few of the areas where the City could strive to gain influence. He explained that a dozen firms responded to a Request for Proposal (RFP); and after intensive meetings, Strategic Communication Solutions, Inc., was selected.

Robert Law, President, Strategic Communication Solutions, Inc., highlighted his firm's background noting that they do Federal, State and local Government Affairs work. He introduced his team:

- **Lisa Nocerini**, coordinates governmental accounts and works with consultant Former Congressman Joe Knollenberg, to work with Federal agencies.
- **Sarah Ledford**, works in Lansing on a day-to-day basis.
- **Dan Pero**, Former Chief of Staff for Governor John Engler, works in Lansing.
- **Stephanie Moran**, Public Relations Specialist for the firm, performs grant writing duties.
- Research Assistants **Aron Wortham** and **Richard Jordan**, assist in filings.

Mr. Law noted that he was a part of the original team involved in the development of Oakland Technology Park and while involved in State government, wrote the legislation that created the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), beginning as the Michigan Strategic Fund. He commented that team members will periodically attend Council meetings to keep abreast of local issues.

Council Discussion:

Mr. Kochenderfer commented that retaining such a firm is an excellent idea, as the reinvention of Michigan is not yet complete. He stated that it is essential that the City's voice is heard in Lansing and in Washington. He pointed out that the contract will obligate the City to use this firm's services through August 1, 2013, and stated that he would encourage the Administration to review benchmarks next year to ensure that the City is receiving a value for its investment.

Mr. Tisdell stated that the competition for upstream governmental dollars is intense and questioned how the City will measure or identify the success of the

firm's services.

Mr. Law responded that the firm will look for resources that will help the community. He mentioned several issues that affect Rochester Hills, including the elimination of Personal Property Tax, and policies set which have an economic impact. He stated that the firm will develop a list of prioritized issues and there needs to be a good understanding of what the firm's job needs to be in order to develop a success ratio.

Mr. Tisdell requested an example of a recent victory.

Mr. Law responded that one of its client communities had a prison that they had been trying to get rid of for over 20 years. The firm was successful in influencing the passage of legislation which allowed the community to sell the prison land in a manner where it can be developed. He noted that another example is a community's receipt of Land Trust funding to undertake a cleanup. He mentioned that one of the projects the firm is currently working on is an interesting and viable technology, and they have brought out top people in the Environmental Protection Agency to support the project.

Mayor Barnett stated that one of the first questions he asked was how to measure success. He noted that grant funding is a top priority, while the success of influencing specific legislation is more difficult to measure. He commented that of those responding to the RFP, there were firms that had many municipal clients and those that had none. This firm was in the middle. He noted that one community's council accepted this firm's contract on a four-three vote in the first year. Subsequent renewal years received a seven-zero vote with the same Council.

Mr. Yalamanchi questioned what the specific scope of work will be.

Mayor Barnett responded that while difficult to define initially, discussions with Directors yielded 40 different issues, ranging from pending legislation to building codes and grant funding. He stated that the Administration will prioritize what its needs are.

Mr. Law stated that his firm's job is to work with the Mayor, City Council and the Directors to define priorities and how their representation can have an impact.

Mr. Yalamanchi questioned whether Council and Directors can work together to define these issues before approval is granted. He noted that Tara Presta, Chief Assistant, prepares grant applications and questioned whether other means of partnering with other communities could be done, such as through the Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Barnett responded that there would never be a completed scope of work, as new legislation is always being developed.

Mr. Yalamanchi stated that he wished to defer a decision until the department heads become engaged.

Mr. Webber commented that while he understands Mr. Yalamanchi's concerns, he can speak from experience working in State Government that it helps to have a presence at the Federal, State and County level and constitutes having "boots on the ground" in committee hearings. He noted that this type of representation is different from what the Michigan Municipal League and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments can provide. He stated that politics can be viewed as a game, and commented that while the City did not invent the game, it needs players to represent its interests. He commented that the City needs to qualify and quantify its investment and Council will see a return-on-investment moving forward.

Mr. Klomp stated that there is a move at the State level to emphasize grants. He commented that hiring an individual to do grant work has yielded countless benefits and stated that entering into this contract will be an investment.

Mr. Rosen commented that he worked in a similar capacity for over 40 years in the automotive industry and stated that public affairs people need to know intimately the business and organization of the entity they serve. He commented that the firm must spend innumerable hours getting up to speed on Rochester Hills. He mentioned that he has quite a bit of skepticism and commented that the City already has a public affairs group in its own Mayor and Administration. He stated that while he is willing to try this for a little while, he is reluctant to do so. He commented that the biggest influence should be focused on Lansing as the City will have almost no impact in Washington.

Mayor Barnett stated that the measure of success is reliant on the Administration's ability to relay the City's priorities. He mentioned that when he first proposed a grant writer position on staff, Council approved the position by a four-three vote. He noted that the cost of the position of approximately \$100,000 per year has yielded over \$3 million in grants. He commented that the City must continue moving forward to protect the community, and noted that neighboring municipalities have engaged similar firms.

Mr. Webber stated Council needs to be involved in the process and the City will get out of this contract what it puts into it. He commented that it would be a shame if the City pays \$60,000 and does not use this firm's expertise to better Rochester Hills.

President Hooper expressed his support, stating that the City must have access to the contacts that have been developed over the years. He commented that the firm must get to know Rochester Hills.

A motion was made by Webber, seconded by Tisdell, that this matter be Adopted by Resolution. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Hooper, Klomp, Kochenderfer, Tisdell and Webber

Nay 2 - Rosen and Yalamanchi

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills City Council hereby authorizes a Contract/Blanket Purchase Order for governmental representation and consulting services to Strategic Communication Solutions, Inc., Novi, Michigan in the amount not-to-exceed \$60,000.00 through August 1, 2013 and authorizes the Mayor to execute a contract on behalf of the

City.

Further Resolved, that the City's acceptance of the proposal and approval of the award of a contract shall be contingent and conditioned upon the parties' entry into and execution of a written agreement acceptable to the City.

2012-0257 Request for Approval of an amendment to the City Pension Plan Document in order to be in compliance with IRC 401(a)(9) based on the Worker, Retiree, and Employer Recovery Act 2008 (WRERA)

Keith Sawdon, Director of Finance, stated that the Worker, Retiree and Employer Recovery Act of 2008 affects qualified pension and retirement plans and suspends the minimum distribution requirement for persons 70-1/2 and above for the 2009 period. He explained that the City is required to amend its Pension Plan Document to comply with the legislation; and noted that changes were made on Page 30 regarding Minimum Distribution Requirements and on Page 31 regarding definitions related to a non-spousal beneficiary.

Mr. Rosen questioned whether the suspension of minimum distribution requirements in 2009 was due to the volatility of the stock market at that time.

Mr. Sawdon responded that he believed that was the reason.

A motion was made by Rosen, seconded by Webber, that this matter be Adopted by Resolution. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Hooper, Klomp, Kochenderfer, Rosen, Tisdell, Webber and Yalamanchi

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills City Council hereby adopts the July 16, 2012 amendment to the City of Rochester Hills Group Pension Plan to be in compliance with IRC 401(a)(9) based on the Worker, Retiree, and Employer Recovery Act 2008 (WRERA).

2011-0575 Discussion relative to support of the Older Persons' Commission (OPC)

President Hooper stated that Council is aware of the City of Rochester's Council's actions relative to the Older Persons Commission (OPC) Budget for the 2012 Fiscal Year, and explained that a proposed resolution has been drafted for discussion and possible adoption. He noted that Mayor Barnett drafted a letter for submission to the State Attorney General through State Senator Jim Marleau with questions prepared regarding the OPC budget process.

Mr. Yalamanchi questioned whether the Mayor's letter has been transmitted to the State Attorney General.

Mayor Barnett responded that the letter was sent to both State Senator Marleau and State Representative Tom McMillin at the end of June. Both officials indicated that they would carry the letter on to the State Attorney General.

Mr. Yalamanchi suggested that the last paragraph of the proposed resolution end with the words "continue to support the OPC".

President Hooper responded that he included the final paragraph as he