

County Of Sonoma Agenda Item Summary Report

Clerk of the Board Use Only
 Meeting Date Held Until
 / / / /
 Agenda Item No: Agenda Item No:
 _____ _____

Department: Sonoma County Water Agency, Occidental CSD, Russian River CSD, Sonoma Valley CSD, and South Park CSD

4/5 Vote Not Required

Contact:
Lynne Rosselli

Phone:
(707) 524-3771

Board Date:
10/6/2009

Deadline for Board Action:

AGENDA SHORT TITLE:
Grant Research, Writing, and Management Services.

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION:

Concurrent actions to:

1. Authorize Chair to execute the First Amended Agreement for As-Needed Grant Research, Writing, and Management Services between the Sonoma County Water Agency and all County Sanitation Districts and Sylvir Consulting, Inc. (\$50,000).
2. Authorize the Agency's General Manager/Chief Engineer to further amend the Agreement, if necessary, provided amendments do not cumulatively increase the total cost by more than \$25,000 and do not substantially change the scope of work.

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT

EXPENDITURES:

ADDITIONAL FUNDS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL:

Estimated Cost	\$50,000	Contingencies (Fund Name:)	\$0
Amount Budgeted	\$50,000	Unanticipated Revenue (Source:)	\$0
Other Available Appropriations (Explain Below)	\$0	Other Transfers (Source:)	\$0
Additional Requested	\$0	Additional Funds Requested	\$0

Explanation (if required):

Funding is available in the Fiscal Year 2009/2010 budget for the fund entitled General Fund (Account No. 672105 6570).

Prior Board Action:

None.

Alternatives – Results of Non-Approval:

Non-approval of the proposed amendment to the consulting agreement will make it challenging for the Agency to efficiently and effectively pursue future funding including federal stimulus funding opportunities.

Background:

SELECTION PROCESS

Since the Sonoma County Water Agency (Agency) does not have the resources to perform all necessary grant writing services in-house, the Agency contacted Sylvir Consulting, Inc. (Consultant) and the Glen Price Group to discuss as-needed grant writing services. Consultant was selected to perform the work because Consultant is already familiar with the water transmission and sanitation industry as Consultant is an Association of California Water Agencies-approved service provider. In addition, Consultant was highly recommended by another water transmission agency for its ability to provide funding research, grant writing, and grant management services.

HISTORY OF ITEM

The Agency and Consultant entered into an agreement for grant research, writing, and management services, dated December 27, 2007, in the amount of \$25,000.

Under the original agreement, Consultant has performed the following services:

1. Funding research services: Advised the Agency on numerous grant and loan programs available for Agency projects;
2. Grant writing services for federal and state grants and loans.

To date, Consultant has prepared the following federal and state grant applications:

1. Santa Rosa Aqueduct Seismic Hazard Mitigation Project under FEMA;
2. Four applications for the Airport Business Park Regional Geoexchange Energy Efficiency Project under several U.S. Department of Energy and California Energy Commission grant solicitations;
3. Applications to the State Water Resources Control Board for grants and low interest loans for South Park County Sanitation District wastewater infrastructure projects.

The Agency is still awaiting notification from the funding sources on the success of these applications. The Agency is not expected to receive notification from the funding sources until the end of Calendar Year 2009. Consultant's work has met and exceeded the required standards defined in the original consulting agreement.

The Agency finds itself in the position of needing additional grant funding – and therefore additional grant writing services – than in prior years. Historically, the Agency has relied largely on tax revenue to fund its programs and services. In recent years, the Agency has seen a sharp decline in tax revenue. The state budget crisis and funding freeze has put additional pressure on the Agency's financial resources prompting the need to seek other sources of revenue. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) resulted in the infusion of federal stimulus funding in the form of grants and loans. The Agency has one full-time staff dedicated to grant and loan writing and management. Technical writing staff supports the grant writing work on a temporary part-time basis. With the availability of ARRA stimulus funding, the prospect of future state funding, and potential support from foundations, the Agency foresees increasing its efforts and emphasis on procuring funding from outside sources. Having a consultant to assist the Agency's efforts to obtain funding will not only assist the Agency in maintaining self-sufficiency but enable the Agency to offer services and programs that have community, environmental, and economic benefits. Consultant has provided a valuable and quality service to the Agency.

Funding for additional work was not included in the Agency's Fiscal Year 2009/2010 budget. Funding is available from the fund balance of the Agency's General Fund. A Technical Adjustment has been approved for the additional funding. Because the Agency is proposing to use the General Fund for these activities, the expenses for these efforts will have no impact on water rates paid by the Agency's customers. Since Consultant was able to prepare six detailed and complex applications for \$25,000, given similar circumstances it is expected that nearly twelve applications could be prepared for \$50,000.

TERMINATION

The Agreement includes provisions for the Agency's General Manager/Chief Engineer to terminate the Agreement.

Attachments:

None.

On File With Clerk:

Amended Agreement (4 Copies); Working Copy of Amended Agreement (1 Copy).

CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY

Board Action (If other than "Requested")

Vote: