

Agenda Date: 8/1/2017

TO:

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH:

Mark Danaj, City Manager

FROM:

Sanford Taylor, Information Technology Director

Liza Tamura, City Clerk

George Gabriel, Management Analyst

SUBJECT:

Resolution Awarding RFP No. 1095-16 and Approve a Contract with QuickCaption Inc. for a Three-Year Agreement Not-to-Exceed \$88,455 for Closed Caption Professional Services with an Option to Extend the Term for Up to Two Additional One-Year Periods if Approved by City Council (Information Technology Director Taylor and City Clerk Tamura).

ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 17-0082

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council: a) award RFP No. 1095-16 to QuickCaption Inc. and adopt Resolution No. 17-0082 with an estimated three-year contract value of \$88,455, and b) authorize the City Manager to extend the term of the agreement for up to two additional one-year periods if deemed in the City's best interest.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Funds totaling \$46,000 are budgeted in the computer contract services line item within the City Clerk's budget. Due to the uncertainty in the length of City Council and Planning Commission meetings, staff can only estimate costs for closed captioning services. Therefore, staff has projected costs based on meeting time lengths over the past four years and estimated that closed captioning services will amount to approximately \$29,485 annually.

BACKGROUND:

The City provides Government television to the residents of Manhattan Beach through two cable television franchisees to broadcast and re-broadcast City Council and Planning Commission meetings. The City provided Closed Captioning services to residents on the City's Government television.

As part of the City's efforts to increase transparency, an Ad Hoc Open Government Subcommittee was formed in June 2011 to discuss and consider making recommendations to the City Council regarding open government initiatives. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee held multiple publicly noticed meetings from June 2011 to March 2013, to receive public input, establish goals, and develop initiatives to improve openness and transparency in City government. One of the initiatives directed by the Subcommittee was closed caption services as a means to supplement meeting minutes and offer assistance to the hearing impaired.

On November 17, 2015 the City adopted a Sunshine Policy memorializing these initiatives to enhance the City's open government initiatives. Section 2.A.3. of the Sunshine Policy states:

"The City shall also provide closed captioning of all City Council meetings and Planning Commission meetings (excluding Closed Sessions) for the hearing impaired."

To abide by the City's Sunshine Policy and enhance the City's broadcast services, the Information Technology Department installed a closed caption encoder to provide closed caption services to the cable television franchisees viewers and began offering the service on March 5, 2016.

From the initial deployment of the captioning equipment the City has used two different vendors to provide pilot closed caption and transcription services but did not like the quality of transcription or level of service.

DISCUSSION:

In order to enhance the quality of service, the City of Manhattan Beach sought proposals from qualified vendors to provide transcription services for real-time closed captioning of city meeting broadcasts and, as needed, transcription and subtitling services for other agency video, events and projects.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was posted on the City's website as well as BidSync, a public bid notification board. Staff required that services must be provided by a person and that speech recognition and captioning software cannot be used at any time for services.

Deliverables for broadcasts would include accurate closed captioning services of broadcasted meetings and an output of the transcription to a text file to serve as documentation of the meeting. Transcripts would include the date, time and location of meeting and any other pertinent information. Staff evaluated each vendor based on experience, qualifications, pricing, accuracy guarantee, government clients, and short notice scheduling.

A total of five responses were received and the list below details the name of the company, company location, and hourly cost.

1. QuickCaption Inc. - Riverside, CA - \$110
2. Vitac - Canonsburg, PA - \$125
3. Aberdeen - Santa Margarita, CA - \$110
4. National Captioning Institute - Santa Clarita, CA - \$132
5. Granicus - Denver, CO - \$150

Upon initial evaluation of the bids received, staff recognized that a higher level of service was desired to ensure more accurate transcripts. Therefore, staff solicited additional options from the top three vendors (QuickCaption Inc, Granicus Inc, and National Captioning Institute) and required the vendor to edit the transcript or provide verbatim transcription services.

In response, QuickCaption Inc. offered the City to produce an edited transcript file within 36-48 hours after the meeting for an additional \$35 per hour. Granicus Inc. and National Captioning Institute responded but could not meet the City's needs in a cost-effective or timely manner. A sample of QuickCaption Inc.'s work from the City of Berkeley has been attached for reference.

Staff recommends that the City Council award a three-year closed caption services agreement to QuickCaption Inc. Additionally, staff is recommending that the City Manager be given the authority to exercise the two one-year extensions should it be determined to be in the City's best interest. The City may cancel the contract at any time without cause if necessary.

POLICY ALTERNATIVE:

ALTERNATIVE #1:

Do not award contract to QuickCaption Inc.

PROS:

- Budget savings

CONS:

- Continue to receive poor quality of service from current closed caption vendor

ALTERNATIVE #2:

Discontinue offering Closed Caption services.

PROS:

- Budget savings

CONS:

- Non-compliance with the City's Sunshine Policy
- Lack of assistance offered to hearing impaired.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST:

This bid was advertised on the City's website as well as BidSync, a public bid notification board.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The City has reviewed the proposed activity for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that the activity is not a "Project" as defined under Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines; therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines the activity is not subject to CEQA. Thus, no environmental review is necessary.

LEGAL REVIEW

The agreement has been reviewed by the City Attorney and is approved as to form.

Attachment/Attachments:

1. Resolution No. 17-0082
2. QuickCaption Inc. Contract
3. Sample of Work from City of Berkeley