



Title: Authorization to Release Request for Proposals for Government Relations Services

Resolution number: 23-059

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Recommended action: Authorize release and publication of RFP

Schedule: 9/29/2023 – Release RFP
10/30/2023 – Deadline for Submissions
Through 9/17/2023 – Internal review and/or vendor interviews
12/14/2023 – Staff recommendation to Board for Approval

Budget Considerations: Fund name and code: 4-4002-2320 Contract Services
Fund budget 2024: \$144,300

Summary:

Under Minnesota Statute 103B.227 a Watershed District is required to solicit interest via an open request for proposals (RFP) process for professional or technical consultant services at least every two years. The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's (District's) current Government Relations consultant contract expires on December 31, 2023 and requires a new RFP process. The following is a description of the services provided under the District's government relations services contract.

RFP Scope of Services – Government Relations Consultant

The Government Relations Consultant will:

1. Provide lobbyist services during the regular legislative sessions and advocacy services for the remaining months of the agreement.
2. Meet annually with MCWD staff and Board Members to develop a legislative policy agenda that supports the District's strategic priorities.
3. Provide legislative research and updates on legislative proposals that may affect the MCWD and its operations.
4. Conduct weekly verbal briefings with MCWD staff during the legislative session.
5. Provide monthly written reports to MCWD staff during the legislative session on proposals that may affect the MCWD and its operations.
6. Meet with MCWD staff and Board members to debrief and adjust the policy agenda, after each legislative session.
7. Provide legislative representation for the MCWD by coordinating with others interested in legislation, meeting with legislators, attending appropriate committee hearings, developing written lobbying materials and providing or arranging testimony before legislative committees as needed.

RFP Timeline

The anticipated timeline for the RFP process is as follows:

Board Approval of RFP: September 28, 2023

RFP Posted: September 29, 2023

Proposals Due: October 30, 2023

Staff Review / Interview: October 31 – November 17, 2023

Selection and Recommendation to Board: December 14, 2023

Contract Negotiation and Execution: December 18 – 29, 2023

Supporting documents (list attachments):

RFP for Government Relations Consultant



RESOLUTION

Resolution number: 23-059

Title: Authorization to Release Request for Proposals for Government Relations Services

WHEREAS, Under Minnesota Statutes 103B.227 at least every two years watershed districts are required to solicit interest proposals for professional services before retaining the services of a consultant; and

WHEREAS, the professional services contract for the government relations consultant expires on December 31, 2023; and

WHEREAS, staff has prepared the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Government Relations Consultant; and

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed the RFP and scope of services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes staff to post the Request for Proposals for Government Relations Services and to forward the requests to firms in the metro area.

Resolution Number 23- 059 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: September 28, 2023.

Secretary Date: _____

Request for Qualifications Government Relations Consultant

Overview:

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) seeks a Government Relations Consultant to provide an ongoing process of advancing the interests of the MCWD by assisting in the development and promotion of the District's legislative agenda and by:

- Identifying the legislative consequences of choices;
- Discussing alternatives;
- Educating the Board and District staff about the issues involved; and
- Informing the District Administrator of potential legislation that might affect District governance, programs, or operations.

In this function the District Government Relations Consultant shall possess an understanding of current MCWD programs and priorities; establish and maintain a professional relationship with key legislators and other elected or appointed officials and agency representatives; and seek to advance MCWD priorities in formal and informal settings.

The District Government Relations Consultant shall possess considerable experience in; 1) legislative process, 2) watershed/natural resource governance, and 3) agency and local government, as related to water and natural resource management. In addition, the District Government Relations Consultant will have a working knowledge of the statutes and rules under which watersheds operate.

Scope of Services

General Lobbyist Services on Retainer

- A. The District Government Relations Consultant shall provide lobbyist services, during regular legislative sessions and advocacy services on behalf of the client for the remaining months of the agreement.
- B. Retainage shall also provide for:
 1. Meet annually with MCWD staff and Board Members to develop a legislative policy agenda that supports the District's strategic priorities.
 2. Provide legislative research and updates on legislative proposals that may affect the MCWD and its operations.
 3. Conduct weekly verbal briefings with MCWD staff during the legislative session.
 4. Provide monthly written reports to MCWD staff during the legislative session on proposals that may affect the MCWD and its operations.
 5. Meet with MCWD staff and Board Members to debrief and adjust the policy agenda, after each legislative session.
 6. Provide legislative representation for the MCWD by coordinating with others interested in legislation, meeting with legislators, attending appropriate committee hearings, developing written lobbying materials and providing or arranging testimony before legislative committees as needed.

Understanding of State, Regional and Local Government and Watershed Management

The District Government Relations Consultant will:

- A. Demonstrate a current understanding of issues relative to District governance, projects, or programs.
- B. Maintain a current understanding of MCWD programs and activities.
- C. Be aware of state and regional plans and priorities related to watershed and natural resource management.
- D. Possess a high professional regard among his/her peers.

District Policy Relating to Member Communities and Other Governmental Jurisdictions

It is the policy of the District that District Consultants may not simultaneously represent governmental jurisdictions fully or partially located within the District without prior written approval from the District Administrator.

District Policy Related to Non-Discrimination

In performing the Services the District Government Relations Consultant will ensure that no person is excluded from full employment rights or participation in or the benefits of any program, service or activity on the ground of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, public assistance status or national origin; and no person who is protected by applicable federal or state laws, rules or regulations against discrimination otherwise will be subjected to discrimination.

Submittal Requirements (please limit your response to 5 pages or less):

Proposals shall be submitted electronically to admin@minnehahacreek.org by 4:00 p.m. on October 30, 2023. Proposals shall include the following:

- A. A summary of your firm's experience and expertise to meet the requirements outlined in the Scope of Services.
- B. The names and qualifications of consultants working for MCWD.
- C. A list of other staff, their qualifications, and a description of the type of activities they will do on behalf of the MCWD.
- D. A list of sub-consultants, their qualifications, and a description of the type of activities they will do on behalf of the MCWD.
- E. The proposed fee structure including those charged by sub-consultants.