



Title: Selection of Vendor and Authorization to Enter into a Contract with IT Managed Services Provider

Resolution number: 21-011

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Reviewed by: Name/Title: Becky Christopher – Policy Planning Manager

Recommended action: Authorization for District Administrator to execute the contract/master services agreement for IT managed services with Solution Builders, Inc.

Schedule: Date: 2/8/2021 – Contract term starts, service transition begins
Date: 3/15/2021 – Service transition completed

Budget considerations: Fund name and code: Information Technology – Contract Services (1003-4320)
Fund budget: \$230,000
Expenditures to date: N/A
Requested amount of funding: \$37,500

Past Board action: Res # 20-085 Title: Authorization to Release RFP for IT Managed Services

Background:

Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 103B.227 a watershed district is required to solicit proposals for professional services at least every two years. Minnehaha Creek Watershed District relies on the professional services of a managed service provider (MSP) to monitor, maintain and administer the District’s Information Technology (IT) infrastructure – critical work which ensures the stability of systems, security of data and resolution of issues.

As the District’s IT continues to grow through the strategic IT update implementation, a MSP plays a crucial role in the District’s technology governance. Through an understanding of the District’s current systems and strategic direction – a MSP will serve as the technical expert to ensure technology investments grow and scale as the District’s IT continues to become more complex.

On November 19, 2020, the Board of Managers authorized a request for proposals (RFP) for IT managed services. The RFP was distributed to qualified vendors in the Twin Cities, posted on the District’s website, and posted on the League of Minnesota Cities website. In response, the District received proposals from IT managed service vendors.

Summary:

Each proposal was evaluated and scored on the vendor’s qualifications, experience, services, ability to deliver those services, in addition to fees and expenses. The vendor’s proposed approach towards communication with the District was an important evaluative criteria. A clear communication framework is key to the vendor’s transparency in project planning, issue resolution and most importantly, understanding the District’s mission and long-term technology needs.

The 2 top-scoring vendors were selected to participate in a 60 minute interview with the District team, which were held on January 18 and 19, 2020.

The District interview team included:

- Alex Steele – GIS Coordinator
- James Wisker – District Administrator
- John Mackiewicz – WSB Vice President of Technology (consultant to MCWD for strategic IT update)
- Manager Bill Olson – Board of Managers IT Liaison

Interviews were conducted via Zoom. The vendor was given 15 minutes to provide an overview of their proposal, with 45 minutes for questions from the District team.

Following the interviews, the District team met to evaluate both vendors. The team concluded with unanimous agreement that Solution Builders, Inc. is qualified and the best fit to serve as the District's IT MSP.

Key takeaways from Solution Builders' proposal and interview are summarized below:

Service Delivery:

Solution Builders is well-qualified to provide desktop support for the District's end-users through ticketing and resolution. MCWD's IT infrastructure will be managed through network/server support and administration services. Solution Builders' expertise in security and industry best practices will help ensure that MCWD has stable systems that are able to scale and grow with the organization.

Projects:

The ability to scope, budget and execute IT projects is an area of need for MCWD. Solution Builders demonstrated experience and competence in their ability to plan and deliver projects in a timely manner. These are important services as the District migrates to Microsoft365 and replaces a firewall in 2021.

Long-term Planning:

Solution Builders will provide a dedicated virtual Chief Information Officer (vCIO) who will assist with IT roadmaps, strategic IT planning and long-term budgeting. This vCIO service from Solution Builders will be a key resource as the District continues to refine its long-term technology strategy.

Cost:

Of the 7 proposals MCWD received in response to its RFP for IT managed services, monthly costs ranged from \$2,220 to \$8,190. Solution Builders' monthly cost of \$3,125 ranked 3rd lowest, in other words 2 proposals were submitted with a lower monthly cost. MCWD currently pays \$4,309 per month for IT managed services - therefore costs for Solution Builders' services are within budget for 2021. Additionally, Solution Builders is the only vendor to provide no-cost migration and onboarding as services are transferred from our current vendor to Solution Builders.

Supporting documents (list attachments):



RESOLUTION

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- WHEREAS, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 103B.227, at least every two years watershed districts are required to solicit proposals for professional services before retaining the services of a consultant; and
- WHEREAS, professional services needed by MCWD, and subject to 103B.227, include Information Technology (IT) managed services; and
- WHEREAS, IT managed services include monitoring, maintenance, issue resolution and administration of IT systems; and
- WHEREAS, MCWD relies on IT managed services to ensure the stability and security of the District server, network and workstations; and
- WHEREAS, the MCWD Board of Managers authorized release of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for IT managed services on November 19, 2020; and
- WHEREAS, MCWD received proposals from 7 IT managed service vendors, which were evaluated and scored based on qualifications and experience, service delivery, communication approach and costs; and
- WHEREAS, the 2 top-scoring vendors participated in interviews with a District interview team comprised of District staff and leadership, an advisor and Board liaison; and
- WHEREAS, the District interview team evaluated Solution Builders as best qualified to support District IT needs in monitoring, issue resolution, project execution, and long-term planning; and
- WHEREAS, the District interview team unanimously recommends the selection of Solution Builders, Inc. as the District’s IT managed service provider, at a monthly cost of \$3,125, for a 24 month contract;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby authorizes the District Administrator to execute an IT managed services contract with Solution Builders, Inc. for the period of February 8, 2021 to January 31, 2023.

Resolution Number 21-011 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: 1/28/2021

 Secretary Date: _____