CITY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

TO: Mayor Gunter and Council Members

FROM: Andrea R. Russell, City Auditor

DATE: December 1, 2022

SUBJECT: Procurement of Charter Schools Pressure Washing

Background

On August 31, 2022, a council member expressed concerns to the City Auditor's Office (CAO) about the City's procurement of pressure washing services for the Charter School Authority. Some concerns relayed included the City paying too much for the services and unclear information relayed to one vendor. To address these concerns, the CAO gathered information regarding the pressure washing project and conducted a brief review of the available information.

As part of a new summer cleaning program, during June 2022, Public Works - Facilities Management began the process of obtaining quotes for pressuring washing services at the Charter Schools. Due to the total cost of the job, formal bidding was not required according to City policy and procedure (see Ordinance 52-19). Pressure washing services typically cost approximately $20,000 or less for this size of a project. The custodial supervisor conducted onsite walkthroughs with four vendors as part of the quote process. The quotes were due to Property Management by July 8, 2022. Property Management would work with the Procurement division and the lowest quoted vendor to procure these services. It was the City's intent to have pressure washing completed before the start of the new school year on August 10, 2022. This date was chosen to minimize interference with daily school operations and activities.

Criteria

- Ordinance 52-19, Procurement Ordinance, adopted December 2, 2019
  - Estimated cost of $5000 - $19,999 Three quotes are required and can be verbal or written with the selection of the lowest provided quote unless a valid reason is provided.
  - Estimated cost of $20,000 - $100,000 Three written quotes are required with the selection of the lowest provided quote unless a valid reason is provided.

P O Box 150027
815 Nicholas Pkwy.
Cape Coral, FL 33915-0027
Phone 239-242-3383 Fax 239-242-3384

- FY22 Year-end Closing Procedures memo dated June 1, 2022
    - Requisition and change order - Deadline August 26, 2022
- Jessica Lunsford Act - Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) background check requirements

Methodology and Procedures
The CAO requested and reviewed the following information from the Property Management Manager, Damon Grant (Grant):

- Detailed estimates provided by each vendor
- Email correspondence between Property Management, Procurement, Human Resources, and pressure washing vendors
- Any additional supporting documents submitted by the vendors

Work performed for this project did not constitute an audit and therefore we did not follow Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards in conducting this review. The review was performed at the request of a Council Member to provide a response to concerns presented to the CAO on August 31, 2022.

Results
During June 2022, Property Management staff met with three vendors; Dome Enterprise, Ryan Pressure Washing, and Under Pressure Cleaning and Sealing to walk the Charter Schools grounds to discuss the details of pressure washing service. Interested vendors had to provide cost estimates for the project by July 8, 2022. The intent was to have a vendor selected and work completed prior to the start of school on August 10, 2022, to minimize interfering with school operations.

On June 30, 2022, Grant received an email from Barron stating Brightside Exteriors (Brightside) wanted to provide a quote for the Charter School pressure washing. Property Management agreed to meet with Brightside on July 7, 2022, to walkthrough the Charter School property similar to what was already completed with the other three interested vendors. Brightside provided their quote on July 7, 2022. The other three vendors provided their quotes between June 29th and July 1st. All vendors provided their respective quotes before the July 8, 2022, deadline. [1]

After evaluation of the four quotes, Brightside was selected with the lowest quote of the vendors. On July 8, 2022, Alison Colello (Colello), Custodial Supervisor, notified Brightside they had been selected and requested copies of their business license and insurance certificates. Brightside provided the requested information on July 8th. There was further correspondence between the City and the vendor, and it appears the vendor submitted the requested information several additional times between July 12th and July 15th.

On August 5, 2022, Property Management entered requisition #22004247 into Munis for the pressure washing services from Brightside. Upon review of the requisition, Wanda Roop (Roop), Procurement Manager, rejected the requisition because it appeared the

[1] Ryan Pressure Washing- 6/29; Dome- 6/30; Under Pressure Cleaning- 7/1; Brightside- 7/7

proper paperwork was not on file to proceed any further with the services. In her email to Inga Pewitt, Colello, Grant, and Steven Blum (Procurement), Roop questioned the project start date, completion of services before school start, and the vendor's need to obtain Level 2/FDLE background check clearance which is required for any services provided at the school in compliance with the Jessica Lunsford Act.[2] Roop also stated, if a selected vendor does not have the proper background check but is willing to obtain it, then the purchaser must decide to allow for extra time to obtain the proper background or select the next lowest quote that has the proper background check completed. Property Management should not have entered the requisition in the system prior to obtaining all required paperwork such as background check, insurance certificates, and licenses. Procurement review prevented further processing of the requisition.

Brightside contacted Human Resources to obtain the appropriate FDLE background check. On September 1, 2022, Brightside Exteriors contacted Human Resources requesting the status of their background checks. Human Resources informed Brightside the project had been suspended until Thanksgiving when the school will be closed for a week and informed Brightside funds were no longer available to perform services in FY22 but would be available in FY23. Human Resources did not respond to the background check inquiry. The CAO determined background check clearance was complete on August 17, 2022. It is unclear when this information was communicated to Brightside based on the information we were provided for review.

Conclusion

Based on our review of the information provided to us documenting the sequence of the events concerning the procurement of pressure washing services at the Charter Schools, it appears that proper procurement procedures for obtaining quotes were followed; however, it appears confusion over documentation requirements and obtaining background checks delayed the start of the project. It also appeared that Property Management was unaware of the background check requirements for vendors working on school property and entered a requisition prior to obtaining all required paperwork. In addition, vendors should obtain necessary background check information on their own and not rely on City departments (Human Resources) to obtain the information. Going forward, we suggest City departments work more closely with Procurement to ensure all procedures are followed and the departments are aware of all requirements prior to submitting quotes for projects.

C: Rob Hernandez, City Manager
Connie Barron, Assistant City Manager
Dolores Menendez, City Attorney
Kimberly Bruns, City Clerk
Mark Mason, Financial Services Director
Mike Ilczyszyn, Public Works Director
Audit Committee

[2] Procurement communicates required information for background checks, licenses and insurance as part of a formal solicitation. Department Certified Agency Buyers (CABs) are responsible for communicating this information as instructed by Procurement. Facilities' CABs should have been aware of all required information and communicated it to the vendors.