

MEETING AGENDA & MINUTES



Event: *St. John the Baptist Parish
Pre-proposal Meeting for Title/Legal*
Location: *SJBP Council Chambers*

Date: *October 15, 2014*
Time: *10:00 AM*

Chair:	Scott Reddoch and Paul Barcelona
Attendees:	Kia Price, Myra Alexis-Valentine, Cory Martinez, Myra Alexis-Valentine, Angelic S. Keller, Tara Lear, Dwan LaBranch,
Agenda:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I. Overview of RFPII. Q&A Session

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Overview of RFP (18 minutes)

Dr. Kia Price, Purchasing and Procurement Director for St. John Parish, welcomes everyone to the Community Development Block Grant Hurricane Isaac Title and Legal Services Pre-proposal Meeting. The Parish has re-advertised to establish a qualified set of attorneys for this project. The team introductions begin with Cory Martinez, CDBG Project Manager working with Royal Engineers for the Parish. Next is Paul Barcelona the CDBG Program Manager with Royal Engineering. Scott Reddoch is the Parish Program Manager with Royal Engineering. Angelic Sutherland-Keller works in Administration and Myra Alexis-Valentine is the Grants Administrator with St. John Parish.

Before the presentation begins, Cory issues copies of the RFP and questions and answers from the last solicitation for review. In addition to all of this information, Scott says the policies and procedures for the program will be uploaded to the Parish's website. The CDBG Program is a HUD funded grant awarded to the Parish in the amount of \$32M for Hurricane Isaac. Within that overall program, there are several sub-programs: Homebuyer Assistance, Homeowner Rehabilitation which contains an elevation component for repairing houses, Housing Elevation Program and Small Rental Rehabilitation Program. An intake period will begin on October 27th for these programs so all the residents of St. John Parish that sustained damages from Hurricane Isaac can go to the intake center to fill out an application. The application process is pretty extensive and the intake firm is going to be 100% responsible for that. Once the application is approved, it will move in different areas throughout the lifecycle, one area being title and legal services. With all of the programs regarding housing/real estate, we must make certain that the same folks filling out these applications are in fact the owners and there aren't any issues associated with the titles, etc.

Scope of Work/Exhibit A

Paul directs everyone to Exhibit A/Scope of Work on page 13 of the RFP. Each firm shall provide written responses to all of these requests in the same order as requested or stated. Company shall address the following with sufficient detail to allow the Parish to understand how the company will fulfill the Parish's needs.

Company Qualifications – Company's written response should include a demonstration of experience to providing title and legal services. Background should demonstrate knowledge of HUD and CDBG programs and requirements.

Past Performance – Must provide a minimum of 3 written references for work completed within the last 5 years. Describe any special capabilities that your company possesses to accomplish the work. Emphasize any past coordination and cooperation with clients. Provide company's achievements on past or current projects.

Technical Capabilities – Demonstrate that the company has the capacity either through existing staff or through new hires or subcontractors to undertake the services as specified.

Current Work Loads – Describe activities in which your organization is currently engaged. Detail company's approach to managing capacity as title and legal requests are issued by the Parish.

Pricing – See pricing schedule in Exhibit B on page 16. The first unit pricing is for providing a final settlement statement to the Parish ten business days prior to closing and that's going to be on a per applicant basis. Next item is to provide a copy of the title commitment which includes the legal description of the property and that's per applicant also. File subordination agreement, deeds, land use restriction, notes, on behalf of the Parish. Provide copies of final deed, note, amortization schedule to the Parish within 5 days after closing. Provide a copy of the appraisal report. Also, there is an item for miscellaneous services that your company will supply a list of classifications with billable rates.

Kia clarifies some items in the Scope of Work section. It's very important when reviewing the requirements and the specifications section (Exhibit A) that these are the key areas where you will be scored so it's very important to follow the instructions that are given. For example, item 2 your past performance, the Parish will often receive packets from interested parties that they will provide names and phone numbers of their references. The Parish is asking for references in writing to be included in the packet, not mailed separately. References should elaborate on the work completed and express any recommendations they may have moving forward into contracting a project with the Parish.

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Cory adds that the Pricing Schedule/Exhibit B must be filled out completely or it will be deemed unresponsive.

Paul moves on to Exhibit C on page 18. This is the scoring criteria that will be used by the selection committee to review proposals. In addition to cost, Qualifications and Experience, Past Performance, Technical Capabilities and Current Work Load or capacity to successfully provide the services required will be considered.

At the bottom of page 18, is the CDBG Compliance Provisions for Professional Services Contract. These provisions will be included in any contract that is awarded so it's important to read through and understand.

Scott jumps back to the pricing schedule to further explain a few items. It will be done on a lump sum per applicant basis. An applicant is considered a household. Each application is per property address for the programs that you will be working on. It's the owner and the initial property itself that you will be doing a lump sum price per item request or pricing schedule for that item. It's important to keep this in mind when you do your pricing. "There may be items that you all may know of that could possibly come up that we haven't considered in the pricing schedule. That's why we requested a rate sheet. Anything at all that comes up in your mind that's needed, just include your pricing schedule along with the bid form in your proposals for anything that we might have missed or something that you think might be closely related to the project."

Cory points out that each proposer must provide 1 original, 7 marked copies and the front of the packages must be clearly marked.

Kia references page 5 of 31 of the RFP under the Submission of Proposals section 2.3. She reiterates that all interested firms must submit 7 copies, one has to be marked original, and to include an electronic copy of the packet on CD and/or a thumb drive. The general terms and conditions of the RFP from the RFP process throughout page 6 of 31 are critical pieces of this project that need to be addressed in your proposal. It's very important that these instructions are followed otherwise it could cause a firm to be disqualified in the procurement process. Kia wants everyone to be mindful that questions often trigger revisions to the advertisement so an addendum must be issued by the Parish in response to those questions. Therefore it is important that everyone share any questions in writing so that those questions can be addressed in an addendum.

Cory says all questions are due by October 27th at 2:45pm and should be emailed to Dr. Kia Price. Her contact information can be found on the front page of the RFP.

Paul references page 3 of the RFP which provides background information for each of the programs.

Homebuyer Assistance – Any title searches or closing will be done by the title company furnished for the process and that will be handled between the buyer and the seller. There will be limited involvement for this program. The firm will be involved mainly with any appeals or awards, etc.

Homeowner Rehab Program – This will be in the form of a grant. There will be a grant agreement between the Parish and the applicant. Also, there will be a construction contract between the homeowner and the contractor. General contractors will be selected by the Parish.

Housing Elevation Program – This is in the form of a grant. The requirement for the Housing Elevation and Homeowner Rehab programs is that the homeowner has to live in the home for a period of 3 years.

Small Rental Rehab Program – This is a forgivable deferred zero percent interest loan. The affordability period for that is 5 years. Only LMI units will be assisted for this program and the units have to be rented to LMI households for a period of 5 years as part of the agreement.

Scott opens the floor for questions, comments and points of clarification.

Cory reminds everyone that all of the program policies and procedures and grant applications will be uploaded to the Parish's website.

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Kia has one more thing to clarify before the Q&A session begins. There are various forms throughout the RFP that must be filled out in its entirety. Your company or firm's legal name must be on the required signature pages. The legal entity that is responsible for submitting or is legally authorized to submit or respond to any advertisement/RFPs/RFPs on the company's behalf is the authorized person that should fill out the forms. Make sure that your firm is in good standing with the Secretary of State's office. Once proposals are received, the Parish will screen each company to make sure they are in good standing, that there is no disbarment, etc. before any of the packets are turned over to the scorers. Make sure any and all issues with your firm have been cleared before the packets are sent to the Parish.

Q&A Session (13 minutes)

Q: In order to make the 250 applicants that you plan to serve, how many applications do you anticipate having to process to make that number?

A: That's difficult to quantify right now. We've made allotments with our intake firm. We've developed a process for intake. Obviously we have a finite amount of money. At this point in the calculations we have an infinite amount of applications. We don't know how many we're going to receive but we have project budgets for each of the programs and we know how many people we could possibly serve under each one of those. To answer your question completely, we don't really have a gauge on that right now. Once the intake process begins, we'll be able to start monitoring that and looking at it from that perspective. (Scott)

Q: How many subdivisions did these properties come out of?

A: There are areas that were obviously hit harder than others but it's encompassing all of St. John Parish. You have some areas that had wind damage, wind driven rain, areas that flooded severely but it's going to encompass everything in the Parish. (Scott)

Q: In the Homebuyer Assistance Program, that is only for property in St. John Parish. They can't go to St. Charles or anywhere else?

A: The house has to be in St. John Parish. (Scott)

A: For all of the Rehab programs and for the Elevation program, there has to be a link to Hurricane Isaac. That's part of the federal requirements. (Paul)

Q: Once the bids are submitted, what do you expect the timeframe to be on making a decision?

A: The bids are submitted on the 30th. It will probably be another week and a half to two weeks and you have to consider the holidays so I would anticipate 2 ½ weeks after that we will prepare to make an award recommendation to Council. All of the submittals, the awarding company will be notified by someone in my office that it is going to be a recommendation to the Council. That person will be invited to the Council meeting in case the Council has any questions, comments or concerns that you can address based on your expertise with the company and what your company will offer to this project. Any companies that are not selected will receive a letter from my office. It's not a given timeframe on when we will distribute those letters but they will be sent out via mail. We typically don't get into the reasons why you are not selected but you are notified that you were not selected. (Kia)

A: We have already informed the Council at the last Council meeting that we plan to make an award recommendation at the November 11th meeting. I'm sorry November 11th is the normally scheduled date, however, we do have a holiday that day. They have not officially changed the meeting but it will likely be moved to Wednesday the 12th. (Angelic)

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Q: Who would we work with at the Parish? Will we work with somebody at the Parish or with Royal Engineering?

A: Royal Engineering is the Program Manager for the program so we would be facilitating between yourself and the intake firm. Any individuals or any individual applicants that would require legal services, we would get that work item to you all and then it would be back and forth between...(Scott)

Q: Do you issue task orders or notice to proceed and then we would have 'x' amount of time to complete it?

A: Yes we will. In the contract, we will have a schedule of the turnaround time on certain items. Obviously if there is an issue that comes up that is directly communicated between us and the firm but we will be issuing the task directly to you all and receiving it and funneling it back to whichever party is involved in that part of the work. As far as invoicing is concerned and things of that nature, it's done on a monthly basis. The invoices will come to the Program Manager, us. We will review it with you all to make sure all of the items were performed that month. Then we make a payment recommendation and forward it to the Parish for approval. (Scott)

A: It's very important that everyone understands this because it often delays your payment process when the steps that we ask are not followed in that order. You have our consultant Royal Engineers that oversees the programs. Any concerns, issues or questions that you may have are directed to Royal in addition to the invoices to verify that the work has been done. It is then turned over to a representative probably out of the Grants Department to verify as well because along with our consultants, a Parish employee will be that liaison between the consultants, the firm as well and then it's sent to my office for payment. We don't process any payments without verifying that the work has been done. (Kia)

A: We have a pretty simplified pay application process that we put together. You would essentially take that bid form and whatever services performed for that month, put it into the Excel sheet, everybody signs off on it and... It's fairly simplistic. We don't expect any issues. Everybody is on the same page at the beginning. We may put a sample pay application in the contract or work with you all to develop one that will fit a little better for you as long as the Parish is ok with it. (Scott)

Q: Regarding the invoicing, the filing that is done by the title service company, would there be a separate account set up with the Clerk of Court for actual filings or will that process...(Note: Couldn't hear the end of her question because her voice trailed off @ 25:33)

A: I think that question was asked at the last meeting. (Scott)

Q: I see the question but it's really a different question because the difference is the service of filing is clearly something that belongs to the title company. The actual fees that are charged by the Clerk of Court, most of us probably have accounts with ___inaudible@ 26:25___. Would it be an account that is established that would then be sent to your office to be paid or would we actually pay the Clerk of Courts fees and then be reimbursed?

A: We'll verify what you are asking. I understand what you are asking. I want to say it would be a reimbursable process but let's verify that's the route that you guys are going to take. (Kia)

Q: Did you say you've already selected the intake firm so they are going to be kind of ramping up and ready for us?

A: Yes the intake firm has been selected. The recommendation for award was made in the last Council meeting. Procurement is in the process of contracting right now and intake period will begin on October 27th. Intake will run for 2 months. (Scott)

Scott adds, "The spirit of the program is we want to get applicants money to get started with repairs. It's unmet need so that's the reason we got the money in the first place. The State and HUD have some pretty aggressive performance methods that go with it so if the intake firm can get a completed application done where legal services are going to be required at a certain point, we want to be able to get the process moving as soon as possible."

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Q: At what point during the intake process do you order title work? Is it after you determine certain eligibility pieces then you order the title?

A: It would be twofold. First of all the applicant is approved, then the property has to be checked to make sure it is in fact applicable damage to Isaac then we do a cost benefit analysis to make certain that we're not spending \$100,000 to fix a \$50,000 house. At that point, it would trigger any title legal items. (Scott)

In closing, Kia points out that it is very important that everyone continue to check the Parish's website and/or Central Bidding. All of the information gathered here or any other pieces of information believed to be relevant to this project will be posted periodically until the October 27th deadline at 2:45pm. After such time, the Parish cannot respond to any additional questions or inquiries until after the proposals close. At that point it is just for informational purposes but no other addendums will be issued at that time. Any questions that may surface as a result of this meeting or any questions that arise in the process of preparing your proposals, please submit to Kia in writing via email preferably before October 27th.

Cory advises everyone to frequently check the website because they will have to acknowledge all of the addenda within their submittal.