

City of Bristol, Connecticut
Board of Finance – Purchasing Committee

Meeting Minutes – April 11, 2019 at 5:30 pm
First Floor Meeting Room, Bristol City Hall

Present: Ron Burns, Chair, Orlando Calfe, Nick Jones (entered at 5:50 pm)
Others: Roger Rousseau, Purchasing Agent
Peter Fusco and Ray Rogozinski

Meeting was called to order at 5:40 pm.

Commissioner Calfe made a motion seconded by Commissioner Burns, to move up Item 3. on the Agenda. Motion approved.

To review Dollar Thresholds for bidding, and to take any action as necessary

The Chair asked the Purchasing Agent to summarize the current quoting and competitive bidding/RFP limits for the City of Bristol and the report of various bidding thresholds as prepared by Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), conducted in 2014. Roger explained the City of Bristol currently obtains three quotes for up to \$9,999 and sealed bids for over \$10,000. The State of CT legislation requires the limit cannot exceed \$25,000 unless otherwise specified in the City's Charter, which it does not for the City of Bristol. The Committee looked at different towns similar to Bristol, such as Glastonbury, which require a verbal quote for \$2,500 - \$10,000, written quote \$10,000-\$24,000 and sealed bids for \$25,000+. The chairman and Roger both discussed this with Pete Fusco (BOE) and Ray Rogozinski (Public Works) to see how it would impact their operations. The chairman questioned why the City's current threshold is at \$10,000 and if there are any cons to raising it. Roger explained it was at \$5,000 until it was increased to \$10,000 in 2005. Discussion was held and there doesn't appear to be any cons as each Department tries to appropriately manage their budget while following the Purchasing guidelines. Roger provided an example he received today for Parks apparel, which will most likely be awarded to a vendor out of state instead of local due to the bidding thresholds, but in some cases there are requirements where you want to sit down and discuss things with a vendor face to face, time constraints and shipping deadlines. Orlando questioned the number of bids issued each year and how many fall between the \$10,000-\$25,000 thresholds. Roger stated he issues approximately 125 bids and 20% would fall in-between.

Pete explained how an on call contractor could be called in to fix an issue with HVAC and it turns into something bigger, since the minimum amount to receive quotes is \$3,000 you are sometimes stuck as you don't want to stop the job to then obtain the quotes from two other vendors when the job is in progress. There are also costs to issue the RFPs associated with the projects. Per Pete, costs of projects and doing business have also increased, \$3,000 isn't going to buy much nowadays.

Commissioner Jones made a motion seconded by Commission Calfe, "to raise the sealed bid threshold to in excess of \$25,000 and refer to the full Board of Finance for approval." Motion approved.

Roger questioned if the Committee was interested in increasing the minimum amount from \$3,000. Discussion was held on the impact this would have on Departments, both positively and negatively. The Roger explained Departments are expected to do their due diligence when making purchases that don't fall within the bidding thresholds.

Commissioner Calfe made a motion seconded by Commission Jones, "Transactions greater than \$10,000.00 but not exceeding \$25,000.00 shall require written competitive quotations from at least three (3) vendors and refer to the full Board of Finance for approval." Motion approved.

Commissioner Calfe made a motion seconded by Commission Jones, "Transactions greater than \$5,000.00 but not exceeding \$10,000.00 shall at minimum require verbal competitive quotations from at least three (3) vendors and refer to the full Board of Finance for approval." Motion approved.

All changes, once approved by the full Board of Finance, will be incorporated into the Purchasing Policies and Procedures with an effective date of July 1, 2019.

To review Policies and Procedures relative to Debarment, and to take any action as necessary.

The chair asked the Purchasing Agent to summarize the debarment policy; the reasons for debarment, the notification and hearing processes, and duration of debarment were reviewed. Roger explained the policy was established two years ago, in which a hearing was held and the Purchasing Committee did use the policy on a contractor who failed to perform for the Parks Department. Roger explained since then the Public Works Department has cited two snowplowers for failing to perform for snow plowing operations recently, in which they were notified because of repeated failures they would not be called for 18 months. Roger noted the snowplowing guidelines will be updated to match the current debarment guidelines of two years. Discussion was held as there are other companies the City will not do business with for circumstances specific to a project, but they have not been formally debarred.

At 6:45 pm, motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Calfe and seconded; motion approved.