



**CITY OF PLANO
COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

CITY SECRETARY'S USE ONLY				
<input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Statutory				
Council Meeting Date:		04/26/10		
Department:		Purchasing		
Department Head		Mike Ryan		
Agenda Coordinator (include phone #): Glenna Hayes x 7539				
CAPTION				
Proposal No. 2009-76-B for EOC Audio Visual Project for the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security to Audio Fidelity Communications Corporation dba The Whitlock Group in the amount of \$404,969.45, and authorizing the City Manager to execute all necessary documents.				
FINANCIAL SUMMARY				
<input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPLICABLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OPERATING EXPENSE <input type="checkbox"/> REVENUE <input type="checkbox"/> CIP				
FISCAL YEAR: 2009-10	Prior Year (CIP Only)	Current Year	Future Years	TOTALS
Budget	0	472,500	0	472,500
Encumbered/Expended Amount	0	-11,350	0	-11,350
This Item	0	-404,969	0	-404,969
BALANCE	0	56,181	0	56,181
FUND(S): GENERAL FUND				
COMMENTS: Funding from the FY 2008-09 Budget was carried-forward to the FY 2009-10 Budget to purchase Audio Visual and Technical Service Equipment for the new Emergency Operations Center / Training Facility per Bid Sync Bid #2009-76-B. Remaining balance will be used for other Implements and Apparatus purchases. STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL: Providing Audio and Visual Equipment purchases relates to the City's goal of a "Financially Strong City with Service Excellence."				
SUMMARY OF ITEM				
Staff recommends the Competitive Sealed Proposal of Audio Fidelity Communications Corporation dba The Whitlock Group, in the amount of \$404,969.45 for the design, purchase, installation and maintenance of audio visual equipment for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) be accepted as the best value, and conditioned upon timely execution of any necessary contract documents. (2009-76-B)				
List of Supporting Documents: Award Memo, CSP Recap			Other Departments, Boards, Commissions or Agencies	



DATE: April 15, 2010
TO: Glenna Hayes, Buyer Supervisor
CC: Diane Palmer, Purchasing Manager
FROM: S. Shane Stovall, Director
SUBJECT: Award Recommendation and Justification for 2009-76-B EOC AV

This memo is being written to describe the process and methodology used in the selection of the Whitlock Group as the AV provider and installer for the new City of Plano Emergency Operations Center (EOC) / Training Facility.

Description of Project

This project includes all design, purchase, and installation of new audio-visual equipment for the new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) / Training Facility. The specifications were developed by the Director of the City of Plano Department of Emergency Management under the technical advisory of a consultant who has experience in the development of EOCs and facilities with similar audio-visual needs and requirements.

On a day-to-day basis, the facility will serve as a city-wide training facility. During large scale emergencies and disasters, this facility will serve as the coordination point for agencies responding to and recovering from the event. The AV project is designed to take into account that the facility needs to be capable of operating on a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week basis. All equipment in the EOC must be capable of functioning for continuous, long term use during emergency and disaster situations. Ease of use of the equipment is essential in both environments in order to allow for flexibility and efficiency during use of the facility.

It has been established that the total budget provided for this project is not to exceed \$470,000. This figure was based on original estimates put forth by the consultant using market pricing based on an original set of estimated AV needs.

Request for Proposals (RFP) / Original Respondents

The RFP for this project was issued on March 20, 2009. A pre-bid meeting was held by the City of Plano Purchasing Division on April 3, 2009, where we had more than twenty (20) companies that were represented. Fifteen (15) of these respondents submitted proposals by the April 22, 2009 deadline. These included:

1. ABLe Communications
2. AVL-SPL
3. CCS Presentation Systems

4. Db Integrated Systems
5. Electra Link
6. ESP of Texas
7. Exhibit One
8. Ford Audio
9. Infinity
10. J&S Audio Visual
11. JAVS
12. Norris
13. Solutionz
14. Visionality
15. The Whitlock Group

Evaluation Team

The evaluation team for proposals associated with this project included end users for the project, to include City of Plano Emergency Management, City of Plano Fire Department, and City of Plano Facilities Management. This team was provided technical assistance from an independent AV consultant, and evaluations were facilitated by the City of Plano Purchasing Division.

Evaluation Criteria

The City of Plano Purchasing Division worked with the Director of Emergency Management to develop a set of evaluation criteria, including their scoring weights, for the Request for Proposals. The criteria established are as follows:

1. **Project Plan (25%) (as evidenced by the project plan)**
 - a. Understanding the Scope of Work
 - b. Qualifications of the Implementation Team
 - c. Technical approach to project (including but not limited to procurement, installation, adherence to schedule and costs)
2. **Client Performance History (20%) (as evidenced by CPH form)**
 - a. Experience with Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs)
 - b. Audio / visual equipment project experience (including but not limited to procurement, installation, adherence to schedule and costs)
 - c. Ability to meet project completion time requirements.
3. **Ongoing Support (15%) (as evidenced by on-going support worksheet)**
 - a. Support levels, fee structure, on-site response time and support, qualifications of support staff, and any additional resources available to the City.
4. **Price / Fee Structure (20%) (under separate cover)**
 - a. Price / fee structure as requested.

5. Training (10%)

- a. Training on usage of equipment and systems.

6. Other (15%)

- a. Location of company relative to the City of Plano
- b. Training on usage of equipment and systems
- c. Warranty

Evaluation Process

Phase I - Evaluation and Scoring

The evaluation team met with the Senior Buyer from the City of Plano Purchasing Division to “kickoff” the evaluation process. Each team member was provided a set of proposals for review. At this point, pricing for each proposal was withheld in order to ensure objectivity in the evaluation and scoring process. Team members were instructed to review all 15 proposals and score each section (as listed above in the “Evaluation Criteria”). The scoring chart that was provided is as follows:

Proposal Evaluation Scoring	
Score	Explanation
0	Non-responsive
1	Merely Responsive
2	Fair (Meets Some Needs)
3	Good (Meets ALL Needs)
4	Above Average (Meets ALL and EXCEEDS some needs)
5	Excellent (Innovatively EXCEEDS ALL Needs)

Evaluation team members then reviewed each proposal and provided a score for each of the sections of the proposal (listed in the Evaluation Criteria above). The scores were submitted to City of Plano Purchasing for compilation. Following the compilation of scores, a series of meetings were held with the Evaluation team members to discuss any major disparity in section scores. The following were the discussions held on each section:

Project Plan

After initial scoring, it was determined by evaluation team members that the team did not possess enough subject matter expertise to be able to do a technical review of all of the components and designs set forth in the project plan of each proposal. Team members could not determine whether certain designs were better than others, or if certain equipment was better than other equipment. Therefore, it was decided to bring in our AV consultant to provide technical reviews of the project plans for each proposal. Scoring for the Project Plan section of each proposal was developed based on input from the consultant.

Client Performance History / References

The City of Plano Department of Emergency Management and the Purchasing Division collaborated and developed a set of questions to ask each of the respondents to the RFP for this project. Department of Emergency Management staff called each reference for each vendor and asked the following questions:

1. Do you currently use (list vendor) _____ ?
2. Was an evaluation of various vendors carried out and why was this vendor chosen?
3. How long have you worked with this vendor?
4. What type of project did the vendor complete for you? EOC?
5. Did the vendor complete the project within the expected budget and timeframe?
Were there any “change orders “which increased the original price structure or scope of work?
6. What training has the vendor provided you?
7. Were there any bugs or problems encountered during or after installation of the AV equipment?
8. Have you used the vendor’s customer support? If so, how responsive was the vendor?
9. What are the limitations to the system / equipment that you had installed?
10. Are you considering an alternative vendor or product (s) at this time?

Scoring for this section was based on the reference responses to these questions.

Ongoing Support

In scoring this section, the evaluation team members did not have a good feel for what an acceptable industry standard was for ongoing support. After initial scoring, evaluation team members met and looked at the ongoing support packages offered by each respondent and determined an acceptable level of ongoing support that would meet the needs of the City of Plano. This included an annual support package which included:

- Minimum semi-annual preventative maintenance checks on all equipment,
- Firmware upgrades,
- Manufacturer qualified / certified personnel for maintenance and repair issues,
- 24/7 phone support for troubleshooting problems,
- Timely response for onsite repair and troubleshooting, and.
- Cost of on-site troubleshooting calls (if applicable).

Scoring for this section was updated based on these factors.

Training

The training section was scored by evaluation team members based on the following factors:

- Allocation and amount of hours devoted to each type of training (administrator and end user),
- Amount of personnel allowed per class, and
- Number of refresher courses offered to accommodate system updates, or additional personnel that require training on the system and equipment use.

Warranty

The warranty section of each proposal was scored by each team member based on the following factors:

- Warranty on parts and equipment,
- Warranty on labor, and
- Cost of repairs outside of warranty (most covered this in the on-going support section).

Phase II - Interviews and Evaluation

All scores from Phase I of the evaluation process were tabulated, and the evaluation team met to discuss the results. At this point, the Purchasing Division introduced points associated with their pricing (lowest price had highest points). This, combined with the weighted technical scores (per the process above), gave us a total point score for each vendor. The Purchasing Division made a recommendation that we move forth with all RFP respondents who scored an overall 3 (Good - Meets ALL Needs) or above. This narrowed the list of respondents to 6. This included:

1. ABLe Communications
2. CCS Presentation Systems
3. ESP of Texas
4. Ford A/V
5. JAVS
6. Whitlock Group

NOTE: *No actual prices had been shared with the evaluation team at this point – only points associated to the proposed prices.*

Once these 6 semi-finalists were identified, we began the process to set up interviews with the evaluation team, consultant, the Purchasing Division, and the vendors. The Department of Emergency Management and Purchasing Division compiled a set of interview questions. These questions were posed in order to clarify information or get answers to questions raised during the Phase I evaluation process.

Interviews

Interviews were set with each vendor. The questions posed to each vendor included the following:

1. What is your design capability to produce drawings showing the logical layout of the proposed system initially and also making revisions as you work with the City toward a final design?
2. What percentage of your business is installing, programming and servicing these types of systems?
3. What percentage of your total local staff is dedicated to these types of AV projects?
4. What is your company's philosophy on training as it related to the installation, programming, and support of these systems? Who will own the programming rights once the system is programmed?
5. Who will be ultimately responsible for the successful installation of this project?
6. Will the same personnel be on the project from the start to finish or is it phased?
7. Is the post-installation service performed by the same staff that installed the system?
8. Is the post-installation service performed by sub-contractors?
9. Can you provide a breakdown of all costs not covered by warranty?
10. What is your timeline for project completion?
11. What are the qualifications of the instructors who will be providing the training AND the support?
12. What are the costs associated with refresher courses if requested?
13. How is your on-going support program flexible enough to meet the needs of an Emergency Operations Center that operates 24/7?
14. What is your preventative maintenance program? Explain costs, frequency of maintenance, etc.

Once interviews were complete, the evaluation team compiled all of their answers. From this point, enough information had been gathered to determine who would be requested to submit Best and Final Offers to the City of Plano Purchasing Division.

Elimination From Consideration

The following is a justification for elimination of 3 of the 6 respondents that had been selected to go into Phase II Scoring. All companies are considered good companies. However, after reviews and evaluations that were completed in Phase I and Phase II, it was felt that the following companies did not meet the City of Plano's needs for this particular project:

1. ABLe Communications

The original proposal that was submitted by vendor (ABLe Communications) indicated that they would be sole provider of services (installation, maintenance, etc.). However, during the presentation given by ABLe Communications, they included another company in a “joint venture” (MGR) that would be doing everything but the cabling work. This other company in the joint venture was not disclosed in the original proposal. Nor were there any joint signatures in the proposal paperwork. This led to a few concerns:

- a. It was evident to the reviewers that ABLe Communications themselves, as was originally proposed, are not capable of completing the project on their own.
- b. If the “joint venture” fails or is dissolved, then there is strong concern that ABLe Communications (who is the 51% owner of the venture) will not be capable of providing satisfactory warranty or ongoing support to the City of Plano. This includes warranty and support work for all systems and equipment associated with this AV project.
- c. There is question as to whether ABLe Communications is an authorized installer for the system proposed. (MGR seems to be, but no certifications were provided in the proposal for ABLe Communications).
- d. This “joint venture” that was proposed (late in the process) does not have any experience in Emergency Operations Centers or like facilities. MGR has done AV work at Great Wolf Lodge, other resorts, and Detroit Ford Field – none of which are similar to our project. ABLe Communications has done an AV project that does not have any similarities to our project. They also did some work at Pizza Hut Park, in which the description indicates a majority of the work was cabling work (ABLe Communications is a known cabling company – further evidenced by their website).
- e. There is no indicated experience in the proposal (either the original or information supplied during the presentation) that there is any history of these two companies as a “joint venture.”

These are my concerns, and with other qualified vendors in the process, I feel that there is a lot of potential risk in considering them. The preceding were reasons that it was felt to move forth with a different vendor for this project.

2. ESP of Texas

In the interviews during Phase II, ESP of Texas explained that they have a five man team and no experience with Emergency Operations Centers or other facility that runs a 24/7 operation. Due to the lack of experience, and lack of depth, it was felt that there were more qualified and experienced AV vendors that could better fulfill the needs of the City of Plano for this project.

3. JAVS

Due to a miscalculation in scores, JAVS was inadvertently included in Phase II of the evaluation process. Once this was recognized, they were eliminated from consideration. Their original proposal did not meet all of the needs set forth in the RFP.

Phase III – Best and Final Offers

After Phase II interviews and evaluations, the list of AV vendors was narrowed down to three (3). This included:

1. CCS Presentation Systems
2. Ford AV
3. Whitlock Group

The Director of Emergency Management met with the Purchasing Division and provided written recommendation to proceed with seeking Best and Final Offers from the remaining companies. The following items were asked to be addressed in the Best and Final offer in order to ensure the most up to date information had been received from these companies:

- Pricing (Room by Room and Total Price)
- Project Plan and Timeline
- Warranty
- Training (for Administrators of system and end users)
- Service Plan (for years 1, 2, and 3) to include 24/7 Call Center Helpdesk, a four hour response time for emergency repairs, 24 hour response time for non-emergency repairs, and quarterly preventative maintenance visits.

Best and Final Offers were received by all three companies and reviewed by the Director of Emergency Management.

Phase IV – Selection of Possible Vendor for Award

The Director of Emergency Management reviewed the Best and Final Offers from the three remaining vendors, and has determined that all of the remaining vendors met and/or exceeded the needs set forth for this AV project. All three companies remaining companies are quality companies with experience in completing similar projects. It was felt that, at this point in the process, it was prudent to use cost as the factor in deciding a company to move forward with.

The following are the costs and explanations associated with each Best and Final Offer that was submitted (in alphabetical order):

1. CCS Presentation Systems (Total Proposed Cost = \$438,284.26)

- Service Plan costs for years 2 and 3 would total \$20,000 (not included in cost above)
- *Long term costs over 3 years would equal \$458,284.26*

2. Ford (Total Proposed Cost = \$443,459.00)

- Service Plan costs for year 2 and 3 would total \$12,100 (not included in cost above).

- Recommended critical spare equipment to have on hand (not included in price)
- *Long term costs over 3 years would equal \$455,459.00*

3. Whitlock Group (Total Proposed Cost = \$406,969.84)

- Priority Service Plan costs for years 1, 2, and 3 would total \$22,500 (not included in cost)
- Long term costs over three years would total \$436,574.39

Based on the above information, the Director of Emergency Management sent a recommendation to the Purchasing Division to enter into negotiations with the Whitlock Group based on price and quality derived from evaluation and scoring.

Negotiations

The negotiations process was facilitated by the Purchasing Division with Emergency Management staff and the Whitlock Group in attendance.

Equipment Substitutions

The Whitlock Group offered substitutions in their initial Best and Final Offer. After review with the technical consultant, it was determined that two equipment substitutions could be made and would not affect the quality or functionality of the project. These substitutions were factored into a revised Best and Final Offer which allowed the City of Plano to recognize another \$33,320 in cost avoidance for this project.

Service Plan

Service Plan costs were discussed. The Director of Emergency Management requested a cost for the Service Plan if all three years were to be purchased all at one time. Whitlock agreed to reduce the three year cost of the Service Plan by 10%. This dropped the three year cost of the Service Plan from \$22,500 to \$20,250. This reduction allows the City of Plano to recognize another \$2,250 in cost avoidance for this project.

Critical Spares

This was not included in the original cost of the proposal. In the Whitlock Group proposal, there is a list of critical spares provided. These spare parts allow for repairs to be made more expeditiously should there be a failure of a critical piece of the system. After discussion on the critical spare parts, it was decided to reduce the number of suggested critical part. This brought the cost of the recommended spare parts down from \$14,235 to \$4,228. This cost is added onto the cost of the price of the proposal and is included in the final contract price.

After final review, the City of Plano Purchasing Division and Department of Emergency Management worked with the Whitlock Group to make further adjustments that increased the cost avoidance for this project. The summary of the history for the proposed pricing of this project is as follows:

	Original Proposal	Best and Final (1/22)	Best and Final with substitutions(2/25)	Revised Best and Final (3/19)
Base Cost	\$440,809.34	\$406,969.84	\$381,618.93	\$373,521.46
Bond Estimate	\$7,662.69	\$7,104.55	\$6,724.28	\$6,969.99
BASE SUBTOTAL	\$448,472.03	\$414,074.39	\$388,343.21	\$380,491.45
Service Agreement (3 yr term)	\$22,500	\$22,500	\$20,250*	\$20,250*
Critical Spares	\$14,235	\$14,235	\$4228.00**	\$4228.00**
TOTAL	\$484,648.89	\$450,809.39	\$412,821.21	\$404,969.45
* Includes 10% discount on Service Agreement for 3 year term				
** Includes cost avoidance due to decrease in recommended critical spare items				

Executive Summary

The review process for the proposals associated with this project is felt to have been very thorough and comprehensive. Each section of every proposal was reviewed multiple times by the review team in order to ensure fair and complete reviews were carried out. After review and negotiations, it is felt that the Whitlock Group best fits the needs of the City of Plano for this project based on the following findings:

1. Cost

Of the three Best and Final Offers, provided to the City of Plano for this project, The Whitlock Group provided a viable solution at the lowest cost of \$404,969.45. This includes a Service Plan with a 3 year term, and critical spare parts that would expedite repair of the Audio-Visual System should there be an unexpected failure.

2. Experience and References

Based on review of references during the review processes, it appears evident that The Whitlock Group provides a quality service / product with good customer satisfaction per the references. It is also evident that they have experience in developing and completing similar projects that require 24/7 operation capabilities.

It is believed that, based on this information, that The Whitlock Group can provide the City of Plano a quality project at a reasonable cost. Therefore, it is recommended that the contract for this project be awarded to The Whitlock Group.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions at (972) 941-5554.

CITY OF PLANO

BID NO. 2009-76-B CSP – EOC AUDIO VISUAL PROJECT

BID RECAP

Bid opening Date/Time: April 22, 2009 @ 3:00 pm

Number of Vendors Notified: 1888

Vendors Submitting “No Bids”: 90

Number of Bids Submitted: 16

Able Communications
AVI-SPL
CCS Presentation system
db Integrated Systems
Electra Link
ESP of Texas
Exhibit One Corporation
Ford Audio Video Systems Inc.
Infinity Sound
J&S Audio visual
JAVS
Norris Audio Video
Schoolhouse Audio Visual - no bid
Solutionz Inc.
The Whitlock Group
Visionality

Recommended Vendor:

The Whitlock Group

Glenna Hayes

Glenna Hayes C.P.M., A.P.P.
Buyer Supervisor

April 15, 2010

Date