

Draft

Minutes of a special meeting of the Standing Building Committee held on March 8, 2016

Present: Greg Broderick, Jim Goodridge, Peter Rader, Bob Shove

Also present: Cliff Gurnham, Director of Operations;

Mr. Shove called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. Conduct interviews of firms for A & E services.

BL Companies

Scott Pellman, Barbara Joslin, Greg Longo and John Malary introduced themselves as representatives of BL Companies. The representatives noted that BL Companies has been in business since 1986 and has 255 employees. The business is 100% employee owned. They have 13 offices in 8 states and have diverse experience with both the private and public clients. They offer services in multi disciplines including architecture, mechanical, plumbing, structural, electrical, landscape, civil and environmental areas. Mr. Pellman reviewed the experience of BL Companies as the on-call firm for municipalities, the DOT, CT DAS/DCS, and UConn. He noted that they have many recall clients. Services that are included when they do a project include a kick-off meeting, weekly meetings, detail task schedule, establishment of a deliverable list, internal third party review. He also noted that managing expectations include adherence to the budget with minimal change orders. He believes the advantage of BL Companies are their proven experience, municipal focus, ownership culture and performance in getting the job done.

Mr. Goodridge noted that it is important to the Committee that the on-call A/E firm be able to manage projects with a comprehensive scope with minimal change orders. He asked for input on BL's history with change orders, Mr. Pellman noted that the staff understands the importance to focus on detail when developing a project in order to minimize possible change orders. They are very proud of their records of submitting competitive bids but also having a very low change order track record.

Mr. Gurnham noted that for some of the building, older records and information about existing conditions is limited or not available up front. He asked how BL would deal with this situation in a way that insures the plans will be accurate and the project will not end up with multiple change orders. Mr. Pellman noted that the staff would work carefully with timing necessary investigations of the buildings when they are available to provide for detailed study. They have the ability to conduct full and thorough planning because they have so many different disciplines available in-house. They also understand the importance of requesting information on unit pricing for items that could be unknowns.

In response to a question by Mr. Goodridge, Mr. Pellman noted that their main office is in Meriden.

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In response to a question by Mr. Broderick, Mr. Pellman noted that BL utilized many different areas of innovation, communication and new technology.

The representatives from BL Companies left the meeting.

CWA

Mr. Williams noted that CWA has been in business for 30 years in New Haven and has 10 employees. They service long-term institutional and private clients. They have project expertise and experience in infrastructure, ADA upgrades, public settings, the public bid process, historic preservation, phased projects, comprehensive renovations and adaptive re-use. Project types they have worked on include infrastructure upgrades, offices, public works facilities, roofs, landscape, classrooms, retail, theaters, and athletic facilities. On-Call clients that they currently service include Yale University, CT DCS and the University of Connecticut. Mr. Williams reviewed the sub-consultants they use for M/E/P, Structural, Site/Civil/Landscape, Geotechnical/Environmental, CT Code Consulting, and roofing/envelope.

Mr. Williams reviewed their project management approach which they believe should always maintain an equal balance of scope, schedule and budget. They do this by insuring a thorough execution of the discovery phase, by considering practical solutions while considering budgetary constraints, using modern technology for solving complex coordination issues and understanding the importance of the construction process.

Mr. Williams reviewed relevant experience CWA has had at Yale University and State facilities.

In response to a question by Mr. Broderick, Mr. Williams noted that they are very sensitive to change orders and he believes that CWA's experience helps them manage change orders. They are very thorough with their documents, create models and generate a bid documents that is very thorough and makes any assumptions very clear and to provide a base for negotiations. They also use unit pricing to provide options for additions or subtractions. They also have a good understanding of the estimate pricing process, make sure their schedule of values is not too simple or complex and organize their drawings to be clear. He also believes his experience in the construction business is helpful in understanding the projects in detail.

In response to a comment by Mr. Shove, Mr. Williams noted that if appropriate they will cost an item for a not to exceed time and materials. They will also hire people to open up areas if necessary and to survey the pre-design. It is important to scan the spaces and update as-builds as information is located. If a change order is submitted CWA is very careful to request back-up and any breakdown of items. They also understand it is important to get input from the owners as a part of the team. Ultimately they believe the architect is responsible for design so they spend adequate time looking at the drawings to make sure they are complete. They understand that they serve as the advocate for the owner but also try to be fair to the contractors.

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The representatives from CWA left the meeting.

DeCarlo & Doll, Inc.

Ron Nault noted that DeCarlo Doll has been around for 65 years and is located in Meriden and employs 30 people. They specialize in municipal work and have worked extensively with towns and with the DOT. He reviewed projects with the Town of Trumbull, City of Meriden, UConn and roadway projects to show their flexibility in working with both large and small projects. He also reviewed civil experience with utility construction and experience with historic structures which includes code work.

Mr. Gurnham noted that for some projects the contractor might need to work without original plans or drawings and he questioned how they would handle this situation. Mr. Nault noted that they have the expertise to work from scratch.

In response to a question by Mr. Goodridge, Mr. Nault noted that the work hard to minimize change orders by pre-qualifying bidders, providing an accurate scope, conducting a thorough investigation and having the Town very involved in the design process. They also confirm what is found in their investigation with thorough field review.

Mr. Nault review experience with projects in Guilford including 66 High Street which turned a mill into residential units and municipal and school buildings. He also showed an example of their 3D visualization service which shows what a building will look like in different settings. Mr. Nault noted that DeCarlo & Doll is a firm that is very responsive and responsible and will not sacrifice quality for the fee.

The representatives from DeCarlo Doll left the meeting.

Mr. Gurnham noted that the general procedure for on-call architects is for the Committee to grade the firms interviewed and select 3 – 4 firms to recommend to the Board of Selectmen. Consideration should be given to the type of projects that are anticipated to be forthcoming in the next few years.

On motion made by Mr. Broderick, and seconded by Mr. Rader, the Committee voted unanimously to return to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Terry Holland-Buckley
Clerk