

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 3, 2013

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER /s/

SUBJECT: Consideration Of Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Towing Services Advisory Board

ISSUE: The Ad Hoc Towing Services Advisory Board's recommendations on the City's proposed solicitation for towing services.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council receives the Ad Hoc Towing Services Advisory Board's recommendations regarding the City's proposed solicitation for City authorized towing services and forward these recommendations to the Finance Department for consideration.

DISCUSSION: Section 46.2-1217 of the Virginia State Code requires that local jurisdictions appoint an advisory panel of citizens from the local towing community, general public, and local law enforcement, to review and make recommendations relative to the specifications contained in any contract for City authorized towing services. City Council appoints the Towing Advisory Board as they do other boards and commissions. This advisory board must be in place and make its recommendations to City Council before the City awards a new contract for towing services. The Purchasing Agent will be responsible for the final contract award decision, in consultation with the user agencies. The City's Procurement division reviewed the Boards recommendations and will coordinate with the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) to incorporate the comments, where appropriate, into the solicitation.

The following recommendations are made by the Towing Advisory Board -

Include the following definitions in the solicitation:

- Rollback wrecker – A flatbed style tow truck that transports vehicles on the bed. Rollback's may also tow a second vehicle behind the truck.
- Standard duty wrecker – A tow truck capable of towing passenger sized vehicles.
- Medium duty wrecker – A tow truck capable of towing vehicles less than 10,000 pounds in weight.
- Heavy duty wrecker – A tow truck capable of towing vehicles over 10,000 pounds in weight.
- Owner's request – A tow which results in the damaged vehicle being towed by a company specified by the owner, often for insurance reimbursement purposes, or to a location requested by the owner.

- Section 2.0.C: Remove section 2.0 C. from the scope of services because the section is redundant and not needed.
- Section 2.5.C: Replace the phrase “*is expected to*” to the word “*shall*” to indicate that the 30 minute response time is a contractual requirement.
- Section 2.5 C: Penalties, aka liquidated damages, is there an appeals process?
- Section 2.7 Clean up language in contract; what is standard duty, regular duty?
- Section 2.7.A.1: Delete the requirement to have a frame fork capacity of at least 4,000 pounds because this requirement is obsolete.
- Section 2.7.A.2: Reconsider the requirement for a minimum number of Rollback trucks. Rollbacks are good for accidents because they can handle two vehicles.
- Section 2.7.B.6: Remove the requirement for an air tank in section 2.7. B. 6. This is a vehicle removal contract so there is no need to provide motorist assistance services.
- Section 2.8.C: Consider dividing the tow classifications as follows:
1. Regular Tows: Vehicles under 10,000 pounds
 2. Heavy Tows: Vehicles 10,000 pounds and over

Section 2.3(A): Requires the City to conduct background checks on principals of the Bidder organization. The Board questioned the need for background checks. If the city is going to require a background check, there is no language defining what offenses disqualify the bidder. For example, if the background check finds the bidder to be a sex offender, should that disqualify the bidder from being awarded the contract? Should the City require a background check on company owners or just managers? Henry’s Wrecker, the city’s current provider of towing services, is owned by Bain Capital. Does the City perform a background check on the CEO of Bain Capital?

The City does not need to perform a background check on tow truck drivers because if they are licensed in Virginia, the State has already performed the background check.

Section 2.3 B iii: Requires tow truck operators to be certified in accordance with the standards of the Towing and Recovery Association of America (TRRA). The TRRA certification program only requires drivers to take a written test and has no skills component. This should be changed to require drivers to have training and certification based on nationally adopted standards. The Virginia Association of Towing and Recovery Operators (VATRO) is developing a training program that may be useful.

Section 2.4(A): Change the first sentence from “*At the time of delivering the towed vehicle to the impounding facility, located at 5249 Eisenhower Avenue...*” to “*At the time of delivering the towed vehicle to the **City of Alexandria** impounding facility...*”

Section 2.7. A.1: Change the first sentence from: “*Two (2) standard duty wreckers, five (5) years old or less, equipped with dual rear wheels, dual winches, a recovery boom...*” to “*Two (2) standard duty wreckers, five (5) years old or less **at time of bid**, equipped with dual rear wheels, dual winches, a recovery boom...*”

Section 2.7. A.2: Change the first sentence from: “*Five rollback carriers with twin line booms...*” to “*Five rollback carriers **five (5) years old or less at time of bid**...*”

Section 2.7.E.2: Delete the requirement for a heavy duty sling.

Section 2.7.E.3: Change: “*Lock ~~pick~~ing tools...*” to “*Lock **out** tools...*”

Section 2.8.A: Delete the second to the last sentence: “*~~This radio contact shall be on a frequency other than that of the City’s Police Department in order to avoid interference with the Police Department.~~*”

Section 2.8.C: In the second paragraph, *Heavy Tows*, change the 5 tons to 10,001 pounds – this is really the same thing.

Itemized Bid Prices: Change the “*Light Vehicle Towing*” weight from 7,500 pounds to 10,000 pounds and under.

Itemized Bid Prices: Delete “*Medium Vehicle Towing*”

Itemized Bid Prices: Change “*Heavy Vehicle Towing*” from a unit cost to time and materials.

New Requirement: Consider including language requiring that all bidders be in compliance with section 46.2-2800 through 46.2-2825 of the State code which requires tow truck drivers to carry proper Identification.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Ad Hoc Towing Services Advisory Board Recommendations
2. Virginia State Code Section 46.2-1217
3. Procurement Office comments on Recommendations

STAFF:

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