

2/14/24

Review of Proposals Submitted in response to MUA Request for Proposals to Conduct a Water Rate Study

Background: The Authority Board authorized the use of the competitive contract method at its regular Board meeting of September 20, 2023. Proposals were due on January 9, 2024 at 11:00. The Authority received three (3) proposals: New Gen Strategies & Solutions; NW Financial Group, LLC; and Government Strategy Group. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4.5d, this summary is being made available to the public at least 48 hours prior to the award of the contract.

The RFP included the evaluation factors for the basis of the award:

- Proposal contained all required checklist information
- Relevance and extent of qualifications and experience
- Relevance of similar engagements
- Project plan is reasonable, thorough and demonstrates understanding of MUA needs
- Reasonableness of the cost proposal

Of a total 200 points, New Gen Strategies and Solutions received 188 points, NW Financial Group received 175 points and Government Strategy Group received 90 points. New Gen Strategies cost proposal was the highest at \$81,440, NW Financial Group's cost proposal was based on an hourly rate with total billings to range between \$35,000 and \$50,000 and Government Strategy Group's cost proposal was a flat fee of \$36,900. Although New Gen's cost proposal was the highest, it was the most transparent, breaking down the project phases by numbers of hours to complete multiplied by the hourly rate of personnel assigned to the project. Comparatively, NW Financial Group's proposal did not include a component for public engagement, which made up for a substantial differential between its proposal and New Gen Strategies proposal. NW Financial Group provided no information on how they intended to proceed with the project or deliverables; thus, their cost proposal, though the lowest, was deemed unreliable.

New Gen Strategies and Solutions proposal was impressive, comprehensive and thoughtful. It covered all of the points raised as concerns by the MUA and outlined specific deliverables for each phase of the study. It would also leave the MUA with tools to manipulate the projections going forward, in the event of changed circumstances.

The review committee, consisting of India Still, Executive Director and Anita Thapa, Assistant Director of Finance, recommends the contract for the rate study to be awarded to New Gen Strategies and Solution.