

October 15, 2007

A Special Meeting of Town Council was held on the above date at Town Hall, all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied:

Present were: Carl J. Smith, Mayor
Patrick O'Neil, Mayor Pro-Tem
Charles Howle, Councilman
Jerry Kaynard, Councilman
Mike Perkis, Councilman
Everett Presson, Councilman
Mary Jane Watson, Councilwoman

Nicky Bluestein, Planning Commission Representative
Anne Kilpatrick, Planning Commission Representative
Randy Robinson, Building Official
Andy Benke, Town Administrator

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order for the purpose of reviewing the Accreted Land Management Request for Qualifications (RFQ) submittals. Mayor Smith asked the panel and Town Council to state if they had any contact with the applicants since receiving the proposals, or if they had a business relationship with the candidates now or in the past. There being no comments, the meeting proceeded.

Mayor Smith stated the submittals would be reviewed in the order they were received.

1. **HLA, Inc.** – Councilman Howle stated that it appeared that HLA, Inc. and Woolpert were both using the same engineering firm, WPC. He said he reviewed HLA's website, and while they may be qualified, he could not locate any expertise in what the Town is looking for. Councilwoman Watson commented that while HLA, Inc. and Woolpert both subcontract WPC as the engineering firm, the billable hours of overhead might be more for the larger company of Woolpert versus HLA, Inc. Councilman Kaynard commented it was interesting that both a national and local company chose WPC as a subcontractor, so he gave WPC a double endorsement as a good addition to the package, and looked closely at those two companies. Councilman Perkis stated he also looked on HLA's website, and it appeared their primary experience was in utilizing land for human intervention and community design rather than public use design. Councilman O'Neil stated it appeared that the WPC subcontractor brings to the table things that are not necessarily relevant – subsurface analysis and construction. He also stated he did not see anything as to what their project approach was going to be other than the organizational chart. Mr. Bluestein stated the lack of coastal experience, the fact that they appear to have a conglomerate of different subs, and the total cost, concerned him.

2. **Earthworks.** Councilman Howle stated he looked at their website, and liked the work this company had been involved in, including coastal work. Other Council members disagreed. Mr. Bluestein stated their proposal noted they had experience with other coastal locations, so he might have rated them high compared to everyone else.

3. **Tidewater Environmental Services.** Administrator Benke stated that Tidewater was the engineering firm for Toler's Cove concerning the dredging project. Charlie Caughman was the graduate student who worked on the Norm Levine College of Charleston study. Councilman O'Neil stated they are local, and have three subcontractors listed; one is a law firm. Mr. Benke commented that Mary Shahid is an environmental type lawyer with the firm. He also stated that the Town had previously worked with Pete Barber, an engineer who helped the wastewater treatment plant with environmental issues. Councilman Kaynard was concerned that the company is only three years old, and the Town would not receive the benefit of experience on projects. Councilman Perkis stated that while the company is new, the people behind it have lots of experience. He continued that he looked at the work Tidewater did at Kings Grant, and they took into consideration the social economic factor. They are one of a few that recognized the impact on the adjacent neighborhood. Ms. Kilpatrick stated that this company wrote one of the best Scope outlines in terms of knowing the Town, and also noted that they have experience with Isle of Palms and the bridge. Mr. Bluestein stated they have no coastal projects; this is something new to them and they have no track record. Their lack of experience concerns him.

4. **Tideland Consultants.** Councilmen Kaynard and Perkis expressed concerns that the skill sets were weak. Councilman Presson agreed. Councilman O'Neil stated he saw strong points; however, he does have serious questions about it. He stated they have experience studying coastal processes, but was unsure how many projects the principal of the firm was involved with. Also, one of his teams is a biologist either with DNR or retired from DNR, but it appears he had good experience. Administrator Benke clarified that the biologist is still employed with DNR and wanted the Town to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with DNR.

5. **Woolpert, Inc.** Councilman O'Neil stated they are obviously a large, well-established firm, but he was unsure of the correlation between their qualifications/expertise and what the Town is looking for. Councilman Perkis stated that environmentally, he did not see anything about the beach. Mayor Smith noted that if they are chosen, we do not know if we could afford them as an amount has not been set at this point; and he was concerned if the Town needed a firm that large. Mr. Bluestein stated that the company has interesting experience with the wetlands at the air base. Councilman Kaynard stated that while a larger firm might have a higher overhead than a smaller firm, if that project comes at their slow time, they could put a lot of people on a project. He did not want to shy away from the company due to price because they have a lot of capability.

6. **Coastal Science & Engineering.** Councilman O'Neil stated he rated them fairly high. They had experience with coastal processes, their project approach was good. Councilman Kaynard agreed, and noted their technical approach was good. The Senior Coastal Scientist had a very impressive resume. They also mentioned grants in their proposal, which is good.

7. **Applied Technology Management (ATM).** Councilman Howle stated he thinks this company is worth talking to. Councilwoman Watson stated she saw some of their projects down in Bluffton and Hilton Head. The projects are wonderful, but there is a slow process to get them completed. Councilman Perkis noted that ATM stated they worked for the Town regarding erosion in 1998. Councilman O'Neil noted they have done a lot of commercial work.

Motion was made by Councilman Kaynard, seconded by Councilman Howle, that Council interview the following four consulting firms that submitted applications in response to the Accreted Land Management RFQ: the Woolpert Group, the HLA, Inc. Group, the Coastal Science and Engineering Group, and Tidewater Environmental Service Group, carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Presson, seconded by Councilwoman Watson, that we use the rating system after the interviews are done, carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Howle, seconded by Councilman Kaynard, to go into Executive Session to discuss contractual matters, carried unanimously.

After returning to Regular Session, Mayor Smith noted that no action or votes were taken. There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen McQueeney
Town Clerk