

AGENDA ITEM BRIEFING

Commissioners Court – June 02, 2020

AI Number: 75543

Project Number: 2020-187

Information: [Requesting authority to authorize a discretionary exemption for engineering services for Hidalgo County Health Department Remodel and Repair of county-owned Modular Building *in order to assist with County functions related to medical and public health measures.*]

Description of AI: (A) Exemption from Competitive Bidding; (B) Presentation of Scoring Grid; (C) Authority to negotiate service agreement

Funding Source: CARES Act Relief Fund (TBD) **Acct. #** 0-1287-441-42-115-096-0-334

Requested by: Eduardo “Eddie” Olivarez, Health Director **Department:** Health Department

Prepared by: Tanya De Lira, Contract Specialist II **Department:** Purchasing Department

BACKGROUND

On March 17, 2020, pursuant to the authority under Texas Government Code Section 418.108, Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency due to the imminent threat arising from the Coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 22, 2020, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 418.108(b), the Commissioners Court of Hidalgo County issued an Order of Continuance of Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency that affirmed the activation of the Hidalgo County Emergency Management Plan and extends the Declaration of Local Disaster.

Professional engineering services are required for the repair and remodel of a county owned modular building that was donated to Hidalgo County by Mission Regional Medical Center approved by Commissioners Court on 12/18/2018, through AI-68139.

The lease of a new building and renovation of an existing building will be used to accommodate the new staff (contact tracers) being hired to perform the required epidemiological activities to trace all of the Covid-19 infections. Our current building does not have sufficient space to accommodate the new staff being hired and we are currently using our conference rooms as office space. The buildings will also house a testing site where specimen collection and rapid testing could be conducted. The “Site Improvements” are the preparation of the location where the temporary buildings will be placed. Utility services (water, electricity and data

communications) need to be extended to service those facilities as well as grading the area to provide a smooth and level surface for the building placement. It will also provide for a “caliche” parking area for staff to park their vehicles.

COMPLIANCE

Discretionary exemptions are authorized by the Texas Local Government Code 262.024 (a) states “a contract for the purchase of any of the following items is exempt from the requirement established by the section 262.023 if the commissioners court by order grants the exemption.” This request is being made under LGC 262.024 (a) (2), an item necessary to preserve or protect the public health or safety of the residents of the county, and LGC 262.024 (a) (4) a personal or professional service. The procurement of services complies with 2 CFR 200 requirements.

ADMINISTRATION

Approval of the item is consistent with Hidalgo County’s intended purpose to mitigate the spread of COVID–19. The goal is to provide efficient and effective delivery of services in light of change in technology, the public’s expectations, and the area’s population and economy. Hidalgo County Health is taking the lead in responding to the COVID-19 health emergency for our community as a whole.

AGENDA ITEM CAPTION

- A. Discussion, consideration, and action to approve a necessary CARES Act Relief Fund expenditure to cover cost not accounted for in the current budget and cannot be lawfully funded by line item, allotment or allocation, for the [**Hidalgo County Health Department Remodel and Repair of county-owned Modular Building**], in order to assist with County functions related to medical and public health measures addressing the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency; the Court having reviewed the Agenda Item Briefing, herein finds that such expenditure is reasonable and necessary for the intended use.
- B. Requesting exemption from competitive bidding requirements under the Texas Local Government Code, Section 262.024(A)(4) professional service (probably need to add the public health and safety exception as noted in the legal impact and compliance with 2 CFR 200;
- C. Presentation of scoring grid of the firms graded & evaluated by the Evaluation Committee for Architectural Services related to the design and Construction of a Testing/Bio-Safety Laboratory for the Hidalgo County Health Department.
- D. Authority for the Purchasing Department to negotiate a professional architect service agreement commencing with the NO. 1 ranked firm of _____.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Approval of the items will allow the Hidalgo County Health Department to proceed with securing the laboratory design necessary to address the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. Recommending that Commissioners Court authorize the exemption for said architecture services as stated as they are reasonable and necessary expenditures related to the County’s COVID-19

Public Health Response. Expenditures will be charged to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Relief Grant Fund and/or other grant assistance available to address the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Attachments:
