



City of Culver City

Staff Report

File #: 18-01341, **Version:** 1

Item #: C-9.

CC - (1) Approval of a New Three-Year Agreement with Tripepi Smith and Associates (TSA) for Communications Support; and (2) Consideration of a Budget Allocation of an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$127,900 for Fiscal Year 2018-19; and (3) Authorization to the City Manager to Approve Amendments to the Agreement for Two Additional One Year Terms.

Meeting Date: June 11, 2018

Contact Person/Dept: Shelly Wolfberg/City Manager's Office

Phone Number: (310) 253-6000

Fiscal Impact: Yes No

General Fund: Yes No

Public Hearing: **Action Item:** **Attachments:**

Commission Action Required: Yes No **Date:**

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Tripepi Smith and Associates (06/06/18); Meetings and Agendas - City Council (06/05/18);

Department Approval: John M. Nachbar, City Manager (06/05/18)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council (1) approve a new three-year agreement with TSA for communications support; and (2) consider a Budget Allocation of an amount not-to-exceed \$127,900 for Fiscal Year 2018-19; and (3) authorize the City Manager to Approve Amendments to the Agreement for two additional one year terms.

BACKGROUND

In 2016, the City entered into an agreement with TSA to conduct a communications assessment. The firm was selected based on its extensive experience with local municipalities.

Additionally in that same year, TSA worked with the City to produce an educational campaign for Measure CW: The Clean Water, Clean Beach Parcel Tax, which was approved by the voters. Funds raised by Measure CW will be used for improvements in water quality in Ballona Creek, Marina del Rey, Santa Monica Bay, and the Pacific Ocean.

Since TSA's engagement for ongoing communications support began in late January 2017, the City has experienced an increase in the posting activity on City social media channels. TSA has also collaborated with City staff on the "In the News" articles on the City website and Press Releases. TSA team members have regularly participated in strategy sessions with City staff to review issues that have arisen, offer their expertise on how to communicate on those issues, and aid in the development of communications plans for those stories. TSA has also conducted trainings for City staff and facilitated planning sessions to elevate messaging and awareness of future story options for consideration by all City staff. With the understanding that the City of Culver City has placed a high priority on increased civic engagement, TSA has been acutely aware and helpful with implementing this goal.

Because the current Agreement for communications consulting services will expire on June 30, 2018, City staff released a Request for Proposals (RFP) on April 26, 2018 to obtain bids from interested and qualified individuals and firms. Responses were due on May 17, 2018, and TSA was the only firm to respond to the RFP.

DISCUSSION

TSA has provided a proposal to extend its work with the City. Over the past several months, during the current agreement, the City has taken the opportunity to revisit the scope of work the TSA team is performing and proposed a few minor updates for the RFP, in order to best match the needs of the City. The City has identified the following scope of services:

1. Execute two weekly strategy discussions with designated City contact(s) by phone;
2. Read the City Council Meeting Agendas for opportunities for information sharing with the public;
3. Monitor local and national publications and online alerts for stories about Culver City;
4. Provide on-call services for the City Manager and Assistants to the City Manager to answer questions, develop strategies, or otherwise aid in efforts related to the scope of the retainer (Consultant's cell phone number will be provided to staff and will be available 24-7);
5. Monitor and report on communications metrics on a monthly basis;
6. Develop and manage a 12-month calendar for city communications and a related plan for executing on that plan;
7. Revisit the 12-month calendar every quarter with a two-hour, on-site strategy/training session with senior staff or staff focused on communication matters from each department;
8. Connect with other leaders and communication staff in sister agencies and organizations that serve Culver City residents (utility agencies, school district, community service groups, etc.);
9. Connect with other leaders and communication staff in sister agencies and organizations that serve Culver City residents (i.e. utility agencies, Chamber of Commerce, Culver City Unified School District, community service groups, etc.);
10. Monitor traditional and digital media for Culver City coverage and mentions and notify the City Manager's Office of stories that should receive their attention;
11. Champion, manage, and monitor the use of all forms of communication including social media platforms, the city's media channels, print materials, surveys, and other communication methods that are available or might become available in the future;

12. Create Nextdoor Posts on the City's Main Nextdoor account on behalf of the Assistants to the City Manager; various departments post their own announcements on Nextdoor directly;
13. Design and schedule posts to City's social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Nextdoor;
14. Respond to all inquiries from the public's posts and direct messages on the City's main above mentioned accounts after verifying information from City staff (if required);
15. Advise identified City social media managers on use of their social media platforms including responses to inquiries on social media;
16. Provide recommendations to staff to improve the City's website;
17. Provide City staff with guidance on email marketing best practices and emails as a key source for social media content.
18. Identify appropriate imagery to use, where possible to aid the work impact and reach of social media posts;
19. Provide City staff with advice on stakeholder outreach, communication efforts, and public engagement initiatives;
20. Prepare three Press Releases per month based on content provided by City staff;
21. Prepare one Vision Pulse information webpage on the City's website per month, working with staff to develop content.
22. Provide leadership and direction for the implementation and maintenance of a citywide strategic communication plan that keeps the public and the workforce highly informed, engages the public in local government, and manages media relations.
23. Advise the City Leadership team during crisis management when responding to emergencies, including coordinating communications efforts with key external stakeholders;
24. Perform ad hoc work including: additional press releases beyond the scope identified above, photography services, video production services, newsletter development and assembly, graphic design support, writing speeches and letters to the editor, presentation preparation, letters to the editor, media training session, drafting or reviewing policies and procedures, organizing press conferences or writing articles for the websites or other publications, marketing campaigns and the strategies, tactics and resources necessary to support the strategic mission of the City. Campaigns may be developed in conjunction with external consultants. Ad hoc work must be approved by the City in advance.

To accomplish the goals and strategies of this engagement, TSA proposes a monthly retainer of \$9,825 for FY 2018-19. TSA also provides ad hoc work for services that are out of scope for the monthly retainer. TSA Rates are reduced from the firm's standard rates, reflecting TSA's discounts for retainer customers. Examples TSA's potential ad hoc work include: writing additional press releases, photography services, video production services, newsletter development and assembly, graphic design support, writing speeches for elected officials, media training session, drafting or reviewing policies and procedures, organizing press conferences or writing articles for the websites or other publications. Ad hoc work would be approved by City staff in advance and is proposed to be in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 annually. In total, TSA's agreement for FY 2018-19 would be in an amount not to exceed \$127,900.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Staff is requesting an amount not to exceed \$127,900 for Fiscal Year 2018-19. Staff will propose

future budget allocations for subsequent years of the agreement, which will be determined by the City Council.

ATTACHMENTS

None

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Approve a three-year agreement with Tripepi Smith and Associates in amount not-to-exceed \$127,900 for Fiscal Year 2018-19; and
2. Authorize the City Manager to approve optional fourth and fifth years; and
3. Authorize the City Attorney to review/prepare the necessary documents; and,
4. Authorize the City Manager to execute such documents on behalf of the City; or
5. Provide alternate direction as deemed appropriate.