

American River Flood Control District

Use of Cooperative Purchase Agreements from Sourcewell, Formally Known as National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA)

Staff Report

Discussion:

State law requires that any purchase costing over \$25,000 must be made through a public bidding process. This ensures that public funds are spent on items at the best available price. In the past, the District has acquired large equipment through solicitation of public bids and also through a cooperative purchasing program ran by the State of California.

The State of California cooperative purchasing program, known as the CA Multiple Award Schedule, is a publicly bid and awarded list of vendors with items at the best available price. Items can be purchased off this list from the listed vendors with the assurance that it is the lowest price for that item.

The District recently learned a national cooperative purchasing group known as Sourcewell. Many California agencies, Cities, and Reclamation Districts are currently using Sourcewell to comply with public bidding requirements for their purchasing.

A recent staff report to the Sacramento City Council stated the benefits of cooperative purchasing agreements as:

“In an ongoing effort to maximize cost savings and staff resources, many government agencies share contracting efforts through cooperative purchasing. This procurement method increases pricing competitiveness and lowers capital costs through volume buying. When comparing the administrative costs of procurement, staff considers product research, source selection, specifications, advertising, staff reports, awarding, protest, and administration of the contract. It is often more cost-effective to eliminate the cost and time spent on these administrative processes and purchase items and services through a cooperative purchasing program.

The City has used both regional and national cooperative purchase agreements to complement its own contracting initiatives. Cooperative purchasing enables City departments to evaluate a broader range of contracting opportunities and to share resources with other jurisdictions. Cooperative purchasing also leverages internal and external resources to maximize cost savings opportunities for the City.”¹

Recommendation:

The General Manager recommends that the Board of Trustees approve the use of Sourcewell to obtain lowest cost pricing and to satisfy our requirement for public bidding.

1. Garcia, Stevens, City of Sacramento, 11/17/15

California Legal References

State Agencies:

Cal. Pub. Con. Code § 10298 (2017). Consolidation of needs of multiple state agencies; assistance to local governments

(a) The director may consolidate the needs of multiple state agencies for goods, information technology, and services, and, pursuant to the procedures established in Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 12100), establish contracts, master agreements, multiple award schedules, cooperative agreements, including agreements with entities outside the state, and other types of agreements that leverage the state's buying power, for acquisitions authorized under Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 10290), Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 12100), and Chapter 3.6 (commencing with Section 12125). State and local agencies may contract with suppliers awarded those contracts without further competitive bidding.

Local Governments:

Cal. Gov. Code § 6502 (2017). Authority for agreement; out-of-state agencies

If authorized by their legislative or other governing bodies, two or more public agencies by agreement may jointly exercise any power common to the contracting parties, including, but not limited to, the authority to levy a fee, assessment, or tax, even though one or more of the contracting agencies may be located outside this state.

It shall not be necessary that any power common to the contracting parties be exercisable by each such contracting party with respect to the geographical area in which such power is to be jointly exercised. For purposes of this section, two or more public agencies having the power to conduct agricultural, livestock, industrial, cultural, or other fairs or exhibitions shall be deemed to have common power with respect to any such fair or exhibition conducted by any one or more of such public agencies or by an entity created pursuant to a joint powers agreement entered into by such public agencies.

School Districts:

Cal. Pub. Con. Code § 20118 (2017). Authorization of public corporation or agency to make leases or purchases; warrants; costs of corporation or agency

Notwithstanding Sections 20111 and 20112, the governing board of any school district, without advertising for bids, if the board has determined it to be in the best interests of the district, may authorize by contract, lease, requisition, or purchase order, any public corporation or agency, including any county, city, town, or district, to lease data-processing equipment, purchase materials, supplies, equipment, automotive vehicles, tractors, and other personal property for the district in the manner in which the public corporation or agency is authorized by law to make the leases or purchases from a vendor. Upon receipt of the personal property, if the property complies with the specifications set forth in the contract, lease, requisition, or purchase order, the school district may draw a warrant in favor of the public corporation or agency for the amount of the approved invoice, including the reasonable costs to the public corporation or agency for furnishing the services incidental to the lease or purchase of the personal property, or the school district may make payment directly to the vendor. Alternatively, if there is an existing contract between a public corporation or agency and a vendor for the lease or purchase of the personal property, a school district may authorize the lease or purchase of personal property directly from the vendor by contract, lease, requisition, or purchase order and make payment to the vendor under the same terms that are available to

the public corporation or agency under the contract.

About Sourcewell:

Sourcewell is a service cooperative created by the Minnesota legislature as a local unit of government. Minn. Const. art. XII, sec. 3. As a public corporation and agency, Sourcewell is governed by local elected municipal officials and school board members. Minn. Stat. § 123A.21 Subd. 4 (2017). Under its enabling statute, Sourcewell is explicitly authorized to provide cooperative purchasing services to eligible members. Id. at Subd. 7(23).

Sourcewell follows the competitive contracting law process to solicit, evaluate and award cooperative purchasing contracts for goods and services. Sourcewell cooperative purchasing contracts are made available through the joint exercise of powers law to member agencies. Minn. Stat. § 471.59 (2017). Membership in Sourcewell is available for all eligible state and local governments, education, higher education and nonprofit entities across North America. § 123A.21 at Subd. 3.

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