



City of Bristol CT
Purchasing Committee for the Board of Finance
Meeting Minutes – April 25, 2024

A Meeting of the Purchasing Committee of the Board of Finance was held on April 25, 2024 at 5:15pm in Meeting Room 1-1 within Bristol City Hall, 111 North Main Street, Bristol CT.

Present: Ron Burns, Mark Whitford, David Maikowski.

Also present: Purchasing Agent Roger Rousseau.

Meeting was called to order at 5:15 pm.

To discuss the state prequalification list of vendors, and to take any action as necessary.

The State of Connecticut maintains a list of prequalified vendors for a variety of trades, toward the objective of ensuring that properly vetted contractors perform work for the state and its political subdivisions (e.g. municipalities). C.G.S. 4a-100 mandates the establishment of the list, and C.G.S. 4b-91 mandates that every contract greater than \$500,000.00 for a state agency (or for a political subdivision that is using state funding for its contract) shall be awarded to a prequalified contractor from that list. The State of Connecticut has a full department dedicated to maintenance of this prequalification process.

The City of Bristol has, in certain instances, sought prequalification of vendors for a specific project, in cases where there is a specific skill involved; the decommissioning of the glycol-based geothermal system at Greene-Hills K8 School was determined to be a specific skill set, and Bristol directly prequalified contractors for that project. The City of Bristol does not have sufficient staffing, however, to properly manage a comprehensive prequalification program for all of its projects, and the Purchasing Department has routinely used the state prequalified list for projects, regardless of funding source.

The Board of Education recently solicited bids for a series of building improvement projects that involved ARPA/ESSER 2 (federal) funding; the Purchasing Department included state prequalification as a requirement for award for these projects. For two boiler replacement projects, all but one of the five bidders were on the prequalified list; the non-prequalified bidder was the lowest bidder on one of the projects. Bristol subsequently made award to the lowest bidder that was on the prequalified list.

The vendor that was not on the prequalified list took exception to Bristol's use of the list; although the contractor did not submit a formal protest, the Purchasing Department consulted with both the Office of Corporation Counsel and the City's ARPA consultant (UHY), who both concurred with the acceptability of its use in legal terms and compliance with ARPA eligibility guidelines.

Although the Purchasing Department had used the list in this manner before and its use for these bids had precedented use, the Purchasing Agent recommended that formal acknowledgment of the practice should be incorporated into Purchasing guidelines, specifically when bidding for work in specialized trades such as HVAC.

Motion was made by David Maikowski, seconded by Mark Whitford, and unanimously approved:
To modify Article 3.E.4 "Prequalification" of the Purchasing Manual via inclusion of the following:

The Purchasing Department shall require State of Connecticut DAS prequalification of HVAC vendors for all projects estimated to cost greater than \$250,000, regardless of funding source, unless specifically prohibited by the funding source.

To discuss calendar year 2024 meeting dates and to take any action as necessary.

Motion was made by David Maikowski, seconded by Mark Whitford, and unanimously approved:

To approve calendar of meetings to be held on the third Thursday of the month at 5:15pm, through December 2024.

Adjournment.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger D. Rousseau, Purchasing Agent