



Legislation Text

File #: ID#19-6770, **Version:** 1

SUBJECT/RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize award of Request for Proposals Number 40-19, Tourism Marketing Services, to Bandwagon, LLC, for destination marketing, in the annual amount of \$200,000 for the initial two-year term (\$400,000), and \$200,000 per year for one, two-year renewal option (for a total of \$800,000) and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same.

SUMMARY:

Since 2010, the City has selected through a competitive proposal process a destination marketing and public relations firm to implement a comprehensive program to strengthen nationally and statewide the city's brand awareness as a top tourism destination. On May 8, 2019, the City released Request for Proposals No. 40-19 (RFP) which detailed the city's objectives and requested scope of services. The RFP requested respondents propose an annual marketing and public relations plan and provide recommendations on activities to achieve stated objectives and maximize return on investment.

Thirteen proposals were received by the June 5, 2019 deadline. The Selection Committee met on June 28, 2019 to discuss and rank the proposals. Proposals were evaluated and ranked based on approach to the scope of work, experience, proven performance/similar work, personnel/time availability, creativity, and proposed plan costs. The Selection Committee was comprised of three city staff and five community members each representing a different tourism sector.

Staff members included Denise Sanderson, Director of Economic Development and Housing; Joelle Castelli, Director of Public Communications; and Audra Aja, Economic Development and Housing Marketing & Communications Coordinator.

Community members included Jeff Castner - Opal Sands Resort (Hospitality); Lisa Chandler - Pier 60 Sugar Sand Festival (Events/Attractions); Frank Chivas - BayStar Restaurant Group (Restaurant); Jeff Clauss - St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport (Transportation/Travel); and Lynn Fuhler - Flying Compass (Public Relations/Marketing).

The four top ranked firms were asked to make proposal presentations to the Selection Committee on August 8th.

Bandwagon, LLC, New Orleans, LA
BCF, Virginia Beach, VA
Carolynn Izzo Integrated Communications, Nyack, NY
Turner, New York, NY/Miami, FL

Bandwagon received the Committee's highest ranking based upon the following proposal highlights:

- Research-based approach including analysis of top competitor markets
- Custom content creation
- Team of professionals experienced in public relations including pitching and media missions, media evaluation, destination marketing, research, digital strategy, website development and design, visual creative (photo, video, graphic design), blog content creation
- Measurement and transparency through use of technologies that provide real-time project status, online approvals and communications log

- Fixed, flat fee pricing
- Shortened onboarding process
- Frequency of in-market access

The two-year contract with an option for one, two-year renewal, is not to exceed \$200,000 per year (total \$800,000) inclusive of all public relations, event and media mission(s), website development and maintenance, content marketing, and account management activities. These activities also include all vendor travel expenses.

APPROPRIATION CODE AND AMOUNT:

Funding is budgeted in the proposed FY2019-2020 Economic Development budget (0109216 530300). Remaining term of the contract will be budgeted within the same.

USE OF RESERVE FUNDS: N/A