

Vendor Day 6/6/19 Q&A Transcript

Q: If a vendor has a new accessory or product, how will they get it exposed to building managers and engineers? If County staff don't know it exists, there will be no bid.

A: Usually, vendors have an idea of which County department would be most likely to use their products and services. We encourage you to contact them directly in that regard. You can also send it to our attention, and it will be distributed to the departments that are most likely to be interested. It is left to the department's discretion to follow up. The County always wants to be forward thinking and expansive in its efforts. However, resources are limited. There are many great ideas out there that we may not have the bandwidth to take on. We are always interested in vendor ideas. Vendors often know better how to do what we need to do than we do. That's why we come to vendors. The people change, technologies change, companies change, opportunities change, the needs of the County change. This is a constantly evolving environment and your ideas are crucial to creating a more effective future.

In the event that a department decides to solicit the goods or services you suggest, there will be a competitive process including advertising in Newsday and on the Bid Board.

Q: What fees must be paid to participate in County contracts?

A: There is no fee to register as a County vendor and participate in County solicitations. Under \$10,000 there is no fee to have a contract. Over \$10,000 there is a graduating scale based on the amount of the contract. It was important to Nassau County that the law rescinding the annual vendor registration fee was revenue neutral.

The Office of Purchasing or contracting department should be able to tell what the fee is for a given award. In the case of an emergency or blanket contract, the fee will be returned if the contract is not used. Some contracts may go on for three years and not be used (ex. a hurricane protection contract). In this case, the fee will be reimbursed.

Q: Are there administration fees for Not-For-Profit Organizations?

A: No.

Q: Are you establishing the value of the bid ahead of time?

A: We are required to establish an amount as part of the Procurement process. We are required to provide a proposed award amount to the Legislature and Comptroller.

Q: Are there any thoughts for advantages given to Nassau County businesses?

A: Obviously, any government wants to award contracts to the vendors that are living in the community, spending money in the community, and building the economic base in the

community, but the County can't give a preference based on locality by law. The County is prohibited from doing that.

Q: Follow up on the previous question. What exactly does “preference” mean?

A: By State Law, a public goods purchase must be awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder. The bidder that is responsible (the one that has the necessary capacity and integrity), submits the bid on time in the manner required, and offers the lowest price while meeting the specifications is selected for award. If a vendor offers a low price, but the offer does not meet the specifications, the vendor cannot be awarded the contract. It is the responsibility of the County to make sure that the vendor meets the specifications.

Q: Does that mean best value?

A: The State allows best value goods awards, but the County does not have a law on the books to allow this. Here, it is strictly the low price responsive responsible vendor that is awarded a contract. Per State and County law, the County does award some service contracts by best value (best combination of cost, quality, and efficiency).