

AGENDA ITEM REPORT

DATE: April 16, 2024
DEPARTMENT: Natural Resources
REQUESTER: Roland Ottolini
TITLE: Award Annual Contract for Fertilizer Education and Outreach Program

I. MOTION REQUESTED

A) Award Request for Proposal No. RFP240031KLB, Fertilizer Education and Outreach Program - Annual to Priority Marketing of Southwest Florida, Inc. for the development of a public education campaign to continue to engage and educate the citizens on the responsible use of fertilizer, proper disposal of pet waste, and the potential impacts of personal actions on our local waterways, on an as-needed basis, for an initial term of three years, as approved in the department's annual adopted budget.
B) Authorize the Chair to execute the contract documents on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners.
C) Grant the County Manager or designee the authority to renew the contract for up to three additional one-year periods, and to execute all associated documents, as approved in the departments' annual adopted budgets, if doing so is in the best interest of Lee County, and there are no cost increases associated with the renewal.

II. ITEM SUMMARY

Awards a contract to Priority Marketing of Southwest Florida, Inc. to develop a public education campaign to continue to engage and educate the citizens on the responsible use of fertilizer, proper pet waste disposal, and potential impacts of personal actions on our local waterways, on an as-needed basis for an initial three-year period in the amount of \$220,000.00 annually. The contract can be renewed up to three additional one-year periods, upon agreement of both parties. The project is budgeted in the current fiscal year.

III. BACKGROUND AND IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION**A) Board Action and Other History**

On May 13, 2008, the Board adopted Lee County Ordinance #08-08 which regulates landscape management practices including the application and use of fertilizers.

On November 10, 2023, Procurement Management advertised Request for Proposal No. RFP240031KLB for Fertilizer Education and Outreach Program – Annual on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners. On the proposal deadline of December 15, 2023, Procurement Management received 3 proposals. At the first evaluation meeting held on January 18, 2024, the Evaluation Committee considered criteria listed in the solicitation: Qualifications of Firm, Company Relevant Experience & Reference, Firm Plan of Approach and Personnel. Two firms were then short-listed. On February 7, 2024, at the second evaluation meeting, interviews were conducted, and the Evaluation Committee provided a final ranking and it was determined that Priority Marketing of Southwest Florida, Inc. was to be the responsible and responsive vendor recommended to begin negotiations. Negotiations were successful and staff recommends awarding a contract for use on an as-needed basis for an initial three-year period as approved in the department's annual adopted budget of \$220,000.00. The contract can be renewed for up to three additional years upon the agreement of both parties.

B) Policy Issues**C) BoCC Goals**

Water Quality

D) Analysis

Excessive nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) from fertilizer used on urban lawns and landscapes can have a detrimental effect on water quality in Southwest Florida. This is particularly true during Florida's rainy season (June – September). Excess nutrients in stormwater runoff can stimulate algae blooms, including drift algae, blue-green algae, and has been implicated in red tide blooms. These blooms can result in damaging impacts to our beaches, wildlife, and the local economy.

Responsible use of fertilizer, including rainy season blackout periods imposed by local ordinances, is a cost-effective way of controlling nutrient pollution entering our waterways and estuaries. Equally effective, possibly more so, would be to increase awareness among urban fertilizer users of the risk to our local waters from fertilizer runoff. Among these users are the many citizens who regularly apply fertilizer to promote the health and growth of their lawns and landscapes.

The purpose of this program is to develop a public education campaign to engage and educate the citizens of Southwest Florida on the responsible use of fertilizers. This educational campaign will include several different educational and outreach components utilizing print, radio, TV, web, and social media to deliver the message. The primary goal of this campaign is to educate citizens on the connection between excessive fertilizer use in commercial and urban landscapes and its resulting impact on our coastal water quality and economy. The broad-based outreach effort will seek to inform and educate the public about the effects of nutrient loading on our waters and the link between improved water quality and the implementation of proper fertilizer use and associated best management practices. Because the campaign seeks to increase awareness about the impacts of personal actions on local waterways, an additional objective is to

educate the public about the importance of picking up pet waste and other practices that support the County's efforts to protect and improve water quality.

E) Options

IV. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

A)	Current year dollar amount of item:	\$220,000
B)	Is this item approved in the current budget?	Yes
C)	Is this a revenue or expense item?	Expense
D)	Is this Discretionary or Mandatory?	Discretionary
E)	Will this item impact future budgets? If yes, please include reasons in III(D) above.	No
F)	Fund: CIP - General Fund Program: Capital Improvement Project Project: Caloosahatchee TMDL Account Strings: 20858830100	
G)	Fund Type?	Other: General Fund - CIP
H)	Comments:	

V. RECOMMENDATION

Approve

VI. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

The fertilizer outreach campaign will be developed in the spring and rolled out in early June with a concentrated focus through September. Other educational campaign elements will be produced throughout the year.

VII. FOLLOW UP

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Vendor Executed Contract	4/4/2024	Agreement

REVIEWERS:

Department	Reviewer	Action	Date
Natural Resources	Tucker, Mary	Approved	4/4/2024 - 2:45 PM
Natural Resources	Ottolini, Roland	Approved	4/4/2024 - 3:10 PM
Budget Services	Guttery, Angela	Approved	4/5/2024 - 12:29 PM
Budget Services	Winton, Peter	Approved	4/5/2024 - 12:42 PM
County Attorney	Adams, Joseph	Approved	4/8/2024 - 10:25 AM
County Manager	Mora, Marc	Approved	4/9/2024 - 1:33 PM