



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTABILITY
STATE CONTRACTING STANDARDS BOARD

Draft Minutes

Friday, July 8, 2016 Meeting of the State Contracting Standards Board
999 Asylum Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut
5th Floor Conference Room

Members Present:

Claudia Baio, Chair
Alfred W. Bertoline
Charles W. Casella, Jr.
Lawrence S. Fox
Donna Karnes
Salvatore Luciano
Stuart Mahler
Jean Morningstar
Robert Rinker
Brenda Sisco

David L. Guay, Executive Director - ex-officio board member
Julia Marquis, Chief Procurement Officer

1. Call to order

Meeting called to order by Chair Claudia Baio at 10:04 A.M.

2. Approve the Minutes of the June 10, 2016 Meeting

Chair Baio entertained a motion to approve the draft minutes from the June 10, 2016 Board meeting.

Motion made by Robert Rinker and seconded by Alfred Bertoline to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2016 Board meeting. All voted in favor, with Jean Morningstar abstaining.

3. Strategic Planning

Executive Director David Guay introduced the latest FY 17 Strategic Plan update, which includes Board member submissions since the June 10, 2016 meeting.

Chair Baio stated that Executive Director Guay would be taking the comments provided and putting the plan into a final form.

Chair Baio announced the work group assignments based upon previous Board member comments.

The two Board standing Committees remain the same:

The Privatization Contract Committee

Claudia Baio, Chair
Thomas Ahneman
Charles Casella
Lawrence Fox
Brenda Sisco

The Contested Solicitations and Awards Subcommittee

Robert Rinker, Chair
Stuart Mahler
Roy Steiner

Additionally, the following work groups were added:

Data Analysis

Bruce Buff
Alfred Bertoline
Donna Karnes
Roy Steiner
David Guay - ex-officio

Training and External Communications

Claudia Baio
Salvatore Luciano
Jean Morningstar
Brenda Sisco
Julia Marquis
David Guay - ex-officio

Investigations/Audits

Thomas Ahneman
Alfred Bertoline
Stuart Mahler
Robert Rinker
Brenda Sisco
David Guay - ex-officio

Operating Regulations

Claudia Baio
Bruce Buff
Charles Casella
Larry Fox
Salvatore Luciano

Stuart Mahler raised the question of target dates for completion of the work groups of the plan's tasks. Chair Baio responded that the draft plan includes some target dates and it would be up to the individual work groups to finalize the dates, though the end of the calendar year has been discussed as a reasonable date for completion.

Alfred Bertoline noted that sections of his responses to the draft plan appear to be misplaced in the document. Executive Director Guay noted the error and will correct it.

4. Continued Review of Labor Relations Contracts

Based upon discussions at the last meeting, Ms. Marquis recapped the Board's tasks for her. The Board ask her to follow-up with the Board of Regents about its labor relations contracts to confirm that they had not performed a cost effectiveness evaluation on their labor relations contracts. Board of Regents Legal Counsel Ernestine Weaver responded saying the BOR did not perform cost effectiveness evaluations as they were not deemed necessary or prudent. Robert Rinker noted that it is interesting that the Office of Labor Relations (OLR) within the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) did perform cost effectiveness evaluations on their labor relations contracts. Mr. Rinker further noted that it is his understanding that the Board of Regents in the past has performed labor relations in-house and has not used outside counsel. Adding further that the answer from the Board of Regents is not responsive to this contracting out, the response raises more questions than answers.

Executive Director Guay asked what would be a suggested course of action.

Motion made by Charles Casella and seconded by Salvatore Luciano to write to the Secretary of the OPM to see if OPM believes a cost effectiveness evaluation is appropriate. All voted in favor.

Brenda Sisco asked Ms. Marquis to forward to her the chain of emails from the Board of Regents.

5. DESPP possible rape kit processing outsourcing

Ms. Marquis reported that based upon the Hartford Courant article forwarded to the Board she contacted the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection reminding them that a cost benefit analysis may be required to outsource the processing of rape kits and after the June 10, 2016 meeting she telephoned and emailed again and to date she has not had a response.

Ms. Marquis will be sending out a more formal request for an answer and share that with the Board at the August 12, 2016 meeting.

6. Report from Privatization Contract Committee

Committee Chair Baio reported that the Committee met yesterday, July 7, 2016 and it was the first meeting to begin the review of the bridge safety inspection contract, starting with a session of information gathering of relevant material to be reviewed by the next meeting scheduled for August 12, 2016. After reviewing the material the next meeting will begin with confirming that it makes sense to continue with the bridge safety inspection contract review and develop substantive questions and confirm a timeline.

The Committee also discussed the potential issue of the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) privatization of interpreter services with preliminary information provided by Mr. Luciano. Staff was directed to investigate further. Mr. Luciano also alerted the Committee of a potential privatization issue at Western Connecticut State University and possibly all of Higher Education concerning an Information Technology (IT) contract. Staff was again directed to investigate further.

Mr. Mahler expressed concern and frustration as a long term Board member about the bridge safety inspection contract review; noting the previous review, the Department of Transportation (DOT) produced a cost effectiveness evaluation and expressed a desire to act now with the current information. Chair Baio reminded Mr. Mahler that not all Board members were part of the Board when it was last constituted in 2009 and did not yet have the same level of understanding on the issue.

Mr. Luciano shared Mr. Mahler's concern and added his concern on the Board's nimbleness to act quickly on the issue of the DORS' privatization of interpreter services with the interpreter unit being eliminated within a week. Mr. Luciano expressed concern with the Board's efficacy.

Ms. Marquis noted that the concern raised by Mr. Luciano were raised in the Privatization Contract Committee as well. Ms. Marquis informed the Board that she had a telephone conversation with Commissioner Porter of DORS prior to today's meeting and that Commissioner Porter informed her that a contract for providing interpreter services had been in effect for approximately fifteen years and for that time period both state employees and the contractor were providing the services. Ms. Marquis asked Commissioner Porter whether a cost benefit analysis was being done and was told that the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) would be handling the master agreement. Ms. Marquis noted that DAS has been an incredible back stop for this Board in ensuring that a cost benefit analysis is done.

Commissioner Porter conveyed to Ms. Marquis that she thought that the Board and the Committee were a little early in the process as DORS is early in its process and they were intent on complying with contracting requirements. Ms. Marquis noted that Commissioner Porter shares the concerns for the community served by interpreters that Mr. Luciano has.

Jean Morningstar followed up Mr. Luciano's comments with questions to Ms. Marquis about the current contract. Ms. Morningstar asked Ms. Marquis to obtain a copy of the current contract.

Mr. Rinker noted that in an earlier comment it was mentioned that they would be doing a new contract and not modifying an existing contract. Ms. Marquis indicated that was her understanding. Mr. Rinker stated he expects a RFP on a new contract to be issued providing the details that Ms. Morningstar is looking for. Mr. Rinker raised concerns about a diminishment of services under the existing contract and thoughts about modification of the contract. Chair Baio noted that all of the comments had been raised and preliminarily discussed at yesterday's Committee meeting.

Mr. Casella offered that he was remiss yesterday at the Privatization Contract Committee meeting in not raising the issue on the bridge safety inspection program of whether or not it is a core governmental function.

7. Report of the Contested Solicitations and Awards Subcommittee

Mr. Rinker, Chair of the Contested Solicitations and Awards Subcommittee reported the Subcommittee met on June 10, 2016. After the Subcommittee's meeting of April 28, 2016 a letter was sent to Commissioner Bremby of the Department of Social Services (DSS) asking whether they were going to re-score the bids with a request for a July 15, 2016 response. A quick reply was received from DSS indicating that a formal reply will be forthcoming. To date a formal response has not been received and the Committee through Ms. Marquis asked DSS to provide a status of the response and no communication has been received. The Subcommittee may reconvene prior to the August meeting of the Board to make a recommendation to the Board.

8. Other business

No other business.

9. Adjournment

Motion made by Jean Morningstar and seconded by Alfred Bertoline to adjourn. All voted in favor, the motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 10:38 A.M.

Respectfully submitted: David Guay