



Executive Director's
Report to the
Board of Harbor Commissioners

DATE: MAY 14, 2025

FROM: MEDIA RELATIONS

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION NO. _____ - AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES HARBOR DEPARTMENT AND DOROTHEA DIEMER-KOVACEVICH DBA DDK COMMUNICATIONS, FULL VISION PRODUCTIONS, LLC, NATALIE SHORE PETERSON, CALIFORNIA RESERVOIR LLC, AND SIMPLY MEDIA NOW, LLC FOR AS-NEEDED PROFESSIONAL WRITING, PRESENTATION COACHING AND VIDEO PRODUCTION SUPPORT SERVICES

SUMMARY:

Staff requests approval of five separate Agreements with Dorothea Diemer-Kovacevich DBA DDK Communications, Full Vision Productions, LLC, Natalie Shore Peterson, California Reservoir LLC and Simply Media Now, LLC to provide as-needed services in support of the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department's (Harbor Department) shipping industry outreach, business development, and media relations programs. Selected through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process, the contracted writing, video production and coaching professionals will provide the following as-needed services, generally at times when the project queue is full and outside help is essential to keep up with workflow: video script writing and production assistance; writing news releases and articles for general media distribution and the Harbor Department's website archives; writing background papers on a variety of Port of Los Angeles (Port)-related topics; drafting scripts, talking points, and speeches; and coaching and training Harbor Department staff on public speaking and speech delivery, and producing other promotional materials as needed.

The proposed Agreements are for a term of three years each with one, two-year renewal option per Agreement. The total sum of the five proposed Agreements shall not exceed \$175,000 per year or \$875,000 over the five-year term, if the renewal option is exercised by the Executive Director. The Harbor Department will be financially responsible for payment of expenses incurred under the proposed Agreements.

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RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Harbor Commissioners (Board):

1. Find that the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is administratively exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines;
2. Find that in accordance with Los Angeles City Charter Section 1022, it is more feasible for outside contractors to perform this work than City employees;
3. Approve the Agreements with Dorothea Diemer-Kovacevich DBA DDK Communications, Full Vision Productions, LLC, Natalie Shore Peterson, California Reservoir LLC and Simply Media Now, LLC for three years with one, two-year renewal option per agreement for a sum not-to-exceed \$175,000 per year, or a total of \$875,000 for five years;
4. Direct the Board Secretary to transmit the Agreements to the Los Angeles City Council for approval pursuant to Charter Section 373 and Section 10.5 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code;
5. Authorize the Executive Director to execute and the Board Secretary to attest to the Agreements; and
6. Adopt Resolution No. _____.

DISCUSSION:

Background - The Harbor Department's Media Relations & Strategic Communications Division (Division) interfaces with a wide range of local, national and international media including newspapers, radio and television, podcasts, trade publications, web publications and blogs. The Division generates and oversees content on the Port website, social media platforms and a range of publications. The Division serves as a conduit of information about the operations of the Harbor Department, the status of Port-related projects, the marketing of the Port to the shipping industry and business community at large, and LA Waterfront related communications.

The Division handles the day-to-day writing and editing workload, including special writing projects for other divisions. In 2024, the Division responded to more than 800 media inquiries to provide timely and accurate information, served as spokespersons (as appropriate), and arranged interviews for senior staff or subject area experts. With the

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recent elimination of the Senior Director of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement position, the Division has taken on significant additional responsibilities, including producing the script for the State of the Port and drafting remarks and speeches for a wide range of executives throughout the year.

The proposed Agreements provide the resources to augment existing Harbor Department staff with on-call writers/editors and video professionals who have the expertise to assist in creating high-quality business development, public outreach, news, reports, scripts and collateral materials. These professionals would provide assistance during unpredictable or overflow work periods. The consultants' mix of business writing, environmental writing and multi-media backgrounds bring a significant level of expertise to particular topics such as the environment, security and international commerce.

An example where a contractor may be called upon to support staff includes assisting in the writing and production of a video that connects our customers, the public and the industry with the business trends and advantages connected to shipping through the Port. Depending on staff workload and project deadlines, contractors may also be called upon to assist in producing collateral materials, such as brochures for marketing or public outreach; drafting scripts, talking points and speeches to be used by Harbor Department staff for industry events, panels and presentations; and the editing/writing of news releases, white papers and background materials for a variety of multimedia distributions. These projects occur sporadically throughout the year and often require evening and weekend work to accommodate short-term deadlines.

Additionally, working with our presentation coaching professionals, the Port has offered a Presentation Training Workshop to 30 employees at all levels over the past two years. The program focuses on public speaking, presentation skills and audience engagement. Further group training and one-on-one coaching is planned during the term of these proposed Agreements.

The proposed five Agreements establish a pool of funds for Dorothea Diemer-Kovacevich DBA DDK Communications, Full Vision Productions, LLC, Natalie Shore Peterson, California Reservoir LLC and Simply Media Now, LLC. The consultant pool of funds allows for more flexibility to use budgeted funds with any of the five approved consulting firms based on the firm's availability and expertise. The proposed budget for writing, video and coaching professionals in the upcoming 2025/26 Fiscal Year (FY) Budget is \$175,000.

Selection Process - The professional writing, presentation coaching and video production support services RFP was released on November 27, 2024 and posted on the Port website and Los Angeles Business Assistance Virtual Network (LABAVN). The Harbor Department received 17 proposals by the January 22, 2025 deadline, two of which were non-responsive.

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The proposals were evaluated by a selection committee that included the following three individuals: Director of Communications (Harbor Department); Public Information Director (Harbor Department) and Public Information Director (Department of Building and Safety) (Transmittal 1).

The proposals were scored based on the following criteria and weighting factors:

- Professional Experience and Qualifications (30%)
- Portfolio Samples (30%)
- Fees (20%)
- Clarity and Comprehensiveness of the Proposal (20%)

The three members of the selection committee reviewed and rated each proposal. Those ratings were combined and the selection committee concluded that the five top-ranked proposers - Dorothea Diemer-Kovacevich DBA DDK Communications, Full Vision Productions, LLC, Natalie Shore Peterson, California Reservoir LLC and Simply Media Now, LLC would provide a diverse range of professional writing, video and editing expertise on an as-needed basis. Dorothea Diemer-Kovacevich DBA DDK Communications provides expertise with respect to speech writing marketing the LA Waterfront; Full Vision Productions, LLC offers the most experience and expertise in video script writing and editing; Natalie Shore Peterson has vast experience and expertise writing about environmental issues; California Reservoir LLC provides executive coaching and speech writing expertise; and Simply Media Now, LLC provides a range of maritime writing expertise.

After a complete review, it is recommended that the Board award agreements to the following five proposers:

- Dorothea Diemer-Kovacevich DBA DDK Communications (Transmittal 2)
- Full Vision Productions, LLC (Transmittal 3)
- Natalie Shore Peterson (Transmittal 4)
- California Reservoir LLC (Transmittal 5)
- Simply Media Now, LLC (Transmittal 6)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

The proposed action is approval of five separate Agreements to provide as-needed services in support of Harbor Department shipping industry outreach, business development, and media relations programs, which is an administrative activity. Therefore, the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is administratively exempt from the requirements of CEQA in accordance with Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines.

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FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the proposed action will allow the Harbor Department to enter into five separate three-year agreements with one two-year renewal option per Agreement for as-needed writing, video production and coaching services. The aggregate amount of these agreements shall not exceed \$175,000 per year or \$875,000 over the five-year term should all renewal options be exercised.

FY 2025/26 funding in the amount of \$175,000 has been requested to be budgeted within Account 544160 (Miscellaneous Professional Services), Division 20300 (Media Relations), Project P60000006.

FY 2025/26	\$175,000
FY 2026/27	\$175,000
FY 2027/28	\$175,000
FY 2028/29	\$175,000
FY 2029/30	\$175,000
Total	\$875,000

The Harbor Department’s financial obligations after the current fiscal year are contingent upon the Board’s appropriation of funds. If any subsequent fiscal year funds are not appropriated by the Board for the work required by the Agreements, the Agreements shall be terminated. However, such termination shall not relieve the parties of liability for any obligations previously incurred. A funding out clause is included in the Agreements.

CITY ATTORNEY:

The Office of the City Attorney has reviewed and approved the proposed Agreements as to form and legality.

TRANSMITTALS:

1. Summary of Respondents and Scores
2. Agreement with Dorothea Diemer-Kovacevich DBA DDK Communications
3. Agreement with Full Vision Productions, LLC
4. Agreement with Natalie Shore Peterson
5. Agreement with California Reservoir LLC
6. Agreement with Simply Media Now, LLC

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FIS Approval JS (initials)
CA Approval SO (initials)



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