



DATE: MAY 24, 2012

FROM: MEDIA RELATIONS

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION NO. _____ - APPROVAL OF AGREEMENTS
WITH AS-NEEDED WRITING PROFESSIONALS**

SUMMARY:

The City of Los Angeles Harbor Department (Harbor Department) is proposing to enter into agreements with writing professionals to provide as-needed services in support of the Harbor Department's shipping industry, business development, environmental, tourism and public outreach programs. Selected through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process, the writing professionals would provide the following as-needed writing and editing services: video production and scripting; print and broadcast advertising and collateral materials (produced in-house); talking points, presentations and speeches for public events; and news releases and articles for the Harbor Department's web properties and news bureau. Staff is recommending the Board of Harbor Commissioners (Board) approve four agreements for a term of one year with two one-year renewal options. The total sum of the four proposed agreements shall not exceed \$200,000 per year or \$600,000 for three years.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Harbor Commissioners:

1. 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;
2. Approve the four agreements for one year with two, one-year renewal options for a total sum not-to-exceed \$200,000 per year;
3. Authorize the Executive Director to execute and the Board Secretary to attest to the agreements; and
4. Adopt Resolution No. _____.

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DISCUSSION:

Background - The Media Relations Division (Media Relations) interfaces with a wide range of local, national and international media including newspapers, radio and television, trade publications, web publications and blogs. Media Relations generates and oversees content on the Port of Los Angeles (Port) website, and supports the Public Relations team's development of content for the LA Waterfront website and the IAPH 2013 World Ports Conference website. Media Relations also manages the Port's popular social media outlets (Facebook and Twitter) and is considering the development of a Port blog, which would require outside writing support. With the majority of its deliverables in the form of written communication, Media Relations also serves as a conduit of information about the operations of the Harbor Department, the status of Port related projects, and the marketing of the Port to the shipping industry and business community at large, and LA Waterfront-related communications. On a daily basis, this team works to shape the messaging and perception of the Harbor Department and our impact on both industry and the public.

The Harbor Department's in-house team handles the vast majority of the day-to-day writing and editing workload. In 2011, Media Relations also handled more than 730 media inquiries that included a range of work to provide timely and accurate information, serve as spokespersons (as appropriate), and arrange interviews for senior staff or subject area experts. Concurrently, the media team produced more than 70 news releases, and generated daily content for more than 13,000 Facebook and Twitter followers.

The proposed agreements provide the resources to augment existing Harbor Department staff resources with on-call professional writers/editors who, as-needed, have the expertise to assist in creating high-quality business development, public outreach, news, reports and collateral materials. The as-needed writers would provide assistance during unpredictable or overflow work periods. The consultants' mix of business writing, environmental writing and journalism 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 LAitude, the Port's quarterly web-based news magazine that connects our customers, prospective customers and the industry with the business trends and advantages connected to shipping through the Port of Los Angeles. Depending on staff workload and project deadlines, contractors may also be called upon to assist in producing advertising content (the Harbor Department produces its advertising in-house); 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 multi-media

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distributions. These projects occur sporadically throughout the year, and often require evening and weekend work to accommodate deadlines.

In recent years, the Harbor Department has entered into Executive Director agreements with professional writers for as-needed services. There have been three cycles of one-year agreements with the annual aggregate amount not-to-exceed \$150,000. With growing External Relations demands and overall writing needs of the Harbor Department, the proposed budget for writing professionals in the upcoming 2012/13 Fiscal Year Budget is \$200,000. Because of the potential for a three-year term and the aggregate amount of the proposed agreements, Board approval is required.

Selection Process - The Professional Writer and Editor RFP was released on March 6, 2012 and posted on the Port of Los Angeles website and Los Angeles Business Assistance Virtual Network (LABAVN). The Harbor Department received 14 proposals by the March 27, 2012 deadline.

The proposals were evaluated by a selection committee that included the following three individuals: Senior Director of Communications (Harbor Department); Director of Media Relations (Harbor Department); and Director of the Los Angeles Maritime Museum (Department of Recreation and Parks).

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

- Professional Experience and Qualifications (40%)
- Portfolio Samples (40%)
- Fees (20%)

The three members of the selection committee reviewed and rated each proposal. Those ratings were combined and the selection committee concluded that the four top-ranked proposers - Make Over Earth, Creative Capital, Natalie Shore Peterson and DDK Communications - would provide a diverse range of professional writing and editing expertise on an as-needed basis (Transmittal 1).

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

- Creative Capital - \$105,000 per year – Video script writing, speech writing and editing (Transmittal 2)
- Make Over Earth - \$45,000 per year – Environmental writing and editing (Transmittal 3)
- DDK Communications - \$25,000 per year – Financial and speech writing and editing (Transmittal 4)
- Natalie Shore Peterson - \$25,000 per year – International maritime industry and environmental writing and editing (Transmittal 5)

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The award amounts are based on the anticipated needs of the Harbor Department and the contractors' area of expertise.

The Media Relations Division has done a "meet and confer" with representatives of the Engineers and Architects Association (EAA) regarding the proposed agreements. As a result, language has been added to the contractors' agreements which stipulates that the contractors will conduct an educational seminar for Media Relations staff for the purpose of expanding the staff's knowledge base and expertise. The EAA has approved in writing moving forward with the contractor agreements.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

The proposed action is approval of an agreement for as-needed writing professional support services. As an administrative activity, the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with Article III, Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS:

Spending under these agreements will support 1.5 full-time equivalent jobs in the five-county region.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The financial impact of the proposed action is that the Harbor Department will enter into one year with renewal option agreements with Creative Capital, Make Over Earth, DDK Communications and Natalie Shore Peterson for as-needed writing professionals. The aggregate amount of these agreements shall not exceed \$200,000 per year up to three years or \$600,000.

Fiscal Year	Creative Capital	Make Over Earth	DDK Communications	Natalie Shore Peterson	TOTAL
FY 2012/13	\$105,000	\$45,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$200,000
FY 2013/14	\$105,000	\$45,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$200,000
FY 2014/15	\$105,000	\$45,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$200,000
					\$600,000

Funding for FY 2012/13 in the amount of \$200,000 has been budgeted in Account 54290 (Outside Professional Services), Cost Center 250 (Media Relations Division), Program 000 (Base Budget). Funding for future fiscal years will be requested as part of the annual budget process upon Board approval.

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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 agreement, the agreement 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 agreement.

CITY ATTORNEY:

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

TRANSMITTALS:

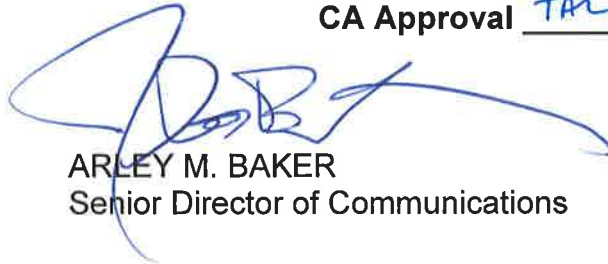
1. Summary of Respondents and Scores
2. Agreement with Creative Capital
3. Agreement with Make Over Earth
4. Agreement with DKK Communications
5. Agreement with Natalie Shore Peterson

FIS Approval WSP (initials)

CA Approval TAR (initials)



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APPROVED:



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