

PORT OF SEATTLE
MEMORANDUM

COMMISSION AGENDA
ACTION ITEM

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| Item No. | 4d |
| Date of Meeting | September 22, 2015 |

DATE: September 4, 2015
TO: Ted Fick, Chief Executive Officer
FROM: Julie Collins, Senior Director, Public Affairs
Clare Gallagher, State Government Relations, Manager
SUBJECT: State Government Advocacy contract

Est. Total Contract Cost: \$360,000 **Source of Funds:** Operating budget

ACTION REQUESTED:

Request Commission authorization for the Chief Executive Officer to execute a contract for state government relations advocacy services for monitoring of state legislation and regulatory activity, and acting on behalf of the Port at the Port's direction. The proposed contract term is a one-year contract with three, one-year options for an estimated total cost of \$360,000.

SYNOPSIS:

The Port of Seattle currently retains a state government relations advocacy firm in Olympia, WA, to assist the full-time Port manager in addressing the significant number of state actions that have a direct impact on the Port's organization and business operations. This firm acts as an advocate providing regular and consistent personal contact with key legislators, executive branch, state agency staff and organizations. This memorandum requests authority to execute a contract with a state government relations advocacy consultant to monitor legislative and regulatory activity in Olympia, WA and to provide strategic guidance on state policy and regulatory issues. The current contract for such services was competitively bid in 2012 and expires July 17, 2016. There will be a robust competitive process for future state advocacy services under the term of this contract.

CONTRACT SCOPE OF WORK AND SCHEDULE:

The proposed scope of work is to assist Port staff to support the Port of Seattle in state government relations activities in Olympia, WA, by monitoring state legislation and regulatory activity and acting on behalf of the Port at the Port's direction. This work will promote and protect the Port's interest in state matters. More specific duties will be to represent the Port at state legislative and executive branch agency meetings in Olympia WA or around the state; serve as the Port's liaison with key legislators, executive branch, state agency staff and organizations and relevant industry associations; and to provide strategic guidance related to state executive and legislative policy and regulatory issues. The consultant will provide regular reports on its activities in Olympia WA, on behalf of the Port, both orally and in writing. It will conduct other work as assigned, including but not limited to, introductory meetings for Port officials and staff; creating strategies to advance Port issues before the Legislature and Executive

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Branch; attending legislative hearings and briefings on matters of interest to the Port; drafting correspondence to state entities and; writing draft testimony and legislation; reviewing draft comments for the state regulatory process; providing state-oriented briefing materials as requested; and interacting regularly with the state legislative body, committee staffs and state regulatory staff.

While this contract may be asked to perform state advocacy work on behalf of the NWSA, the scope of work for this contract is primarily focused on the Port of Seattle's state agenda. The NWSA will retain a separate advocacy contract. The firm selected to represent the port will be able to compete for both contracts.

This contract will be procured competitively and according to Port procedures. Public Affairs will work with the Office of Social Responsibility to determine small business opportunities. To increase competition, we will advertise the Request for Proposal broadly. Many qualified firms based in Olympia and the broader Northwest provide these types of services, and we are likely to receive a competitive response.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The estimated cost of the agreement is \$360,000 for four years. Services are estimated at \$90,000 per year. Charges to this contract will be from the Public Affairs department and will be included in annual budgets.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS:

Alternative 1: Do not hire an Olympia-based advocate. Although Port staff are knowledgeable in many state issues and are able to effectively direct the work of the contractor, they do not always have the specific knowledge necessary to represent the Port on an issue, the ongoing relationship with legislators and staff to interact on the issue, or do not have available capacity to perform the amount of work required for effective representation in the state legislature and executive branch. Past experience shows the Port typically has had to hire specialized and highly skilled consultants to perform this work most effectively, especially during the legislative session each year. This is not the preferred alternative.

Alternative 2: Through a broadly advertised competitive process, hire a consultant to perform specialized and highly skilled advocacy services. Maintaining a regular presence in Olympia, with a consultant firm assists the Port not only in monitoring ongoing activity, but also in identifying opportunities such as funding for Port initiatives, and influencing the development of legislation and regulations. As both federal and state funding is affected by a downturn in revenues, it will be of increasing strategic benefit to have an informed, regular presence in Washington, D.C., to advocate for Port interests and to uniquely represent our needs in transportation funding, environmental regulation, trade regulation, maritime and aviation industry issues, and Port security. These advocacy efforts are essential to support of our mission to create jobs, stimulate economic development, promote industrial growth and advance trade and commerce in King County, the Puget Sound region and Washington state. **This is the preferred alternative.**

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OTHER DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS REQUEST:

- None.

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS:

- None.