



COMMISSION
AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Item No. 8d

ACTION ITEM

Date of Meeting January 7, 2020

DATE: December 12, 2019

TO: Executive Director Stephen P. Metruck

FROM: Bookda Gheisar, Senior Director, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Luis Navarro, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

SUBJECT: Consulting contract amendment for development and implementation of the Port's Workforce Development Strategic Plan and the Aviation Career Pathways Program

Total revised contract amount: \$162,735

ACTION REQUESTED

Request commission to (1) determine that a competitive process is not appropriate or cost-effective and exempt the contract from a competitive process consistent with RCW 53.19.020; and (2) for the Executive Director to execute a contract amendment with Robert Watrus (Watrus) to provide expert services for the workforce strategy development and to continue work on the Aviation Career Pathways Pilot Program for an increase of \$116,235, resulting in a total contract value of \$162,735.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Port of Seattle recently established the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (OEDI) and hired Bookda Gheisar as senior director. In the development of the 2020 Budget, the Port pledged to create opportunities that will, "span generations, increase support for small and disadvantaged businesses, expand job opportunities in the aviation and maritime industries, support workforce development, promote equity and protect and improve regional environmental and community health."

To accomplish these goals, the Port transferred the workforce development program to OEDI in October 2019. The OEDI then identified two priorities for the workforce development program; (1) the development of a new Workforce Development Strategic Plan that centers equity, diversity and inclusion and (2) the development of a new program: Aviation Career Pathways (AVCP).

JUSTIFICATION

1. *Workforce Development Strategic Plan Support*

The Commissioner-led Workforce Development (WFD) Special Committee requested in October of 2019 that Port staff present an updated, multi-year WFD strategic plan in early 2020. The current WFD strategic plan was developed by the former Workforce Development Manager and Bob Watrus provided research and analysis and strategic planning support in development of the plan.

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The 2014-2019 WFD strategic plan set forth a solid foundation for the AVCP program and other WFD programs in port-related industries, including maritime and construction. Watrus provided expert support in the development of the current strategic plan.

Staff completed an assessment of available in-house capacity and determined that additional resources were needed to hire a subject matter expert to conduct market research and analysis, and develop a strategic plan that is driven by the expressed needs of the community and targets investments in port related industries with the greatest workforce needs. Watrus remains the most appropriate service provider to ensure the successful creation of a robust strategic plan.

Staff recommends that Watrus continue to provide expert workforce development consulting services and historical context for the WFD strategy development in order to meet the early 2020 timeline.

In June 2018, the Port executed a non-competitive personal services consulting contract with Watrus for \$46,500.00. The Port recommends we continue with Watrus and amend the contract authorizing Watrus to continue work on the AVCP project and provide expert research and analysis for the Workforce Development Strategic Plan. In accordance with RCW 53.19.060 (1) we are requesting Commission authorization to amend the existing contract in lieu of moving forward with a new competitive process. The amended contract value will be \$162,735 which exceeds fifty percent of the value of the original contract. This amendment will be filed and made available for public inspection prior to the proposed starting date of services under the amendment.

2. *Aviation Career Pathways Program Support*

In 2017, the Port contracted ICF Consultants to research potential aviation career pathways. In June 2018, the Port executed a non-competitive personal services consulting contract with Watrus to develop an AVCP program that aims to meet the skills and workforce needs of airport employers and, at the same time, creates career and job opportunities for airport workers and job seekers, including those from underrepresented populations and economically distressed areas. Project partners South Seattle Community College and Port Jobs have co-designed the Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT) pilot project, with expert facilitation provided by Watrus. The pilot project is scheduled to start the winter quarter of 2020.

Additional resources are needed to implement, evaluate and replicate the Aviation Career Pathways Pilot Project. Staff recommends to amend Watrus' contract so he can continue to lead the AMT pilot project, provide expert workforce development consulting services and to maintain the current pace of the current and future AVCP work. Watrus is the most appropriate service provider to ensure the ongoing success of the project.

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BACKGROUND

1. *WFD Strategic Plan Development Overview*

The Workforce Development special committee of the Commission has agreed to proceed with an updated, multi-year WFD strategic plan with the completion timeline set for early 2020.

The updated strategic plan is scheduled to be presented to the commission April 28, 2020, and will require the following components:

- Collecting and analyzing job market data
- Analyzing current WFD strategies and programs
- Developing a Career connected learning strategy
- Developing new and or updated strategies with an equity lens

2. *Aviation Career Pathways Program Support Program Overview*

In 2017, Port consultant ICF identified five aviation pathways:

- Aircraft and facilities maintenance
- Dining and retail
- Ground operations
- Customer/passenger services
- Safety and security

In 2018, Port consultant Watrus and Port staff selected the aviation maintenance technician (AMT) pathway to pilot with partnership of South Seattle College and Port Jobs. The AMT pilot project includes a new on-ramp course designed to prepare airport workers for the two-year AMT certificate program at South Seattle College. The free on-ramp course will be through Airport University this winter 2020 at Airport Jobs. The 7-credit hybrid course is taught by basic and transitional studies faculty and aviation faculty in a team-teaching model, which increases English and math skills tailored for aviation and introduces key terminology. (Project partners have also revised the 2-year AMT program curriculum to include Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training curriculum.) As an incentive, AMT on-ramp course graduates who continue on to the AMT program will receive an \$800 Airport University scholarship provided by Alaska Airlines. For the pilot, project partners set a goal of 19 students for the on-ramp course and anticipate that 12 students will continue on to the AMT program.

In 2020, the AMT project team will evaluate the pilot program, apply lessons learned to the design of the other identified aviation career pathways, and conduct employer engagement.

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Scope of Work Details

1. WFD Strategic Plan Development (\$51,000 + 5% contingency)

Building on previous work, OEDI leadership seeks to develop a 3-5 year WFD strategic plan. The consultant will lead and collaborate with Port staff on the following tasks:

- Conduct labor market analysis that includes regional economic and labor market data and existing research and reports.
- Conduct a program review of current WFD programs.
- Provide WFD expert support and historical context for the WFD strategy development to the OEDI team for Commission updates and meetings, as requested.
- Support the WFD strategic planning process by participating in internal/OEDI team meetings, collaborating in the completion of the final/overall write-up of WFD needs assessment/SWOT analysis and strategic plan and providing back-up support for overall WFD strategic plan project management, partner engagement meetings and team facilitation, if needed/requested and available.

2. AVCP Program (\$59,700 + 5% contingency)

Building on previous work, the consultant will lead the following tasks associated with the AVCP program:

- Help facilitate AMT pilot project team meetings.
- Work with Port staff on next steps associated with AMT project (e.g., employer and partner engagement, etc.).
- Participate in evaluation of AMT pilot project.
- Work with Port staff and partners to plan and develop additional projects tied to airport career pathways (e.g., facilities maintenance, safety/security, ground operations, etc.).

Schedule

Staff recommends extending the current contract through October 2020. The expanded timeline is needed to support the WFD strategy development and subsequent implementation, and for the continuation of the analysis and development of additional career pathway opportunities at Sea-Tac Airport.

1. WFD strategic plan timeline overview (detailed timeline attached)

- Nov 2019 – Commission Committee meeting #1
- Dec 2019 – Community listening sessions (2), draft WFD policy directive
- Jan 2020 – Commission Committee meeting #2, listening sessions, 2:2:1, program analysis, labor market data analysis

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- Feb 2020 – Finalize WFD policy directive, draft WFD strategic plan
- Mar 2020 – Commissioner debrief
- Apr 2020 – Final WFD strategic plan presentation

2. AVCP timeline

- Jan-Mar 2020 -- Facilitate and evaluate AMT pilot project
- Mar-Apr 2020 – Apply lessons learned to AMT project
- Apr-Oct 2020 – Develop additional aviation career pathways using the AMT model

ALTERNATIVES AND IMPLICATIONS CONSIDERED

Alternative 1 – Complete the follow-on work and hire a new consultant.

Cost Implications: \$116,235

Pros:

- (1) Provide other qualified firms the opportunity to do the work.

Cons:

- (1) This alternative will not guarantee completion of the new WFD strategy by the early 2020 timeline, as it will require additional time for contract negotiation and for the new firm to get up to speed.
- (2) The WFD strategic plan will not allow for the smooth continuity of the work already completed by Watrus, and may result in a less than comprehensive strategic plan.
- (3) It may undermine the Port’s achievements already made through its AMT pilot and cause delay in advancing the AVCP program if a new consultant is selected.

This is not the recommended alternative.

Alternative 2 – Provide funding only for the portion of the WFD strategic plan and not funding the AVCP program support.

Cost Implications: \$51,000 + 5% contingency

Pros:

- (1) A new WFD strategic plan produced with a WFD expert will ensure attainable and successful outcomes.

Cons:

- (1) It will undermine the Port’s achievements already made through its AMT pilot and cause delay in advancing the AVCP program if a new consultant is selected.
- (2) Without the input of a WFD expert, the success of the AMT project will decrease and the quality of other aviation career pathways yet to be designed, potentially negatively impacting airport incumbent workers and Port stakeholders.

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- (3) Contract value increases.

This is not the recommended alternative.

Alternative 3 – Provide funding only for the portion associated with AVCP program and not funding the WFD strategic plan development.

Cost Implications: \$59,700 + 5% contingency

Pros:

- (1) AVCP program implementation will continue.

Cons:

- (1) This alternative will not guarantee completion of the new WFD strategy by the early 2020 timeline, and
- (2) The WFD strategic plan will not include the necessary WFD professional expertise resulting in a less than comprehensive strategic plan.
- (3) Contract values increase.

This is not the recommended alternative.

Alternative 4 – Fully fund the contract amendment to ensure a properly developed WFD strategy and AVCP program.

Cost Implications: \$116,265 (includes 5% contingency)

Pros:

- (1) AVCP program implementation will continue.
- (2) A new WFD strategic plan produced with WFD experts will ensure attainable and successful outcomes.

Cons:

- (1) Contract value increases.

This is the recommended alternative.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Annual Budget Status and Source of Funds

The source of funds is the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion expense budget.

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ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST

- (1) WFD Policy Directive and Strategic Plan Timeline
- (2) AVCP Program Implementation Plan Timeline

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

March 26, 2019 – The Commission established the Workforce Development Special Committee.

July 1, 2014 – The Commission adopted a motion increasing workforce development and career opportunities activities.