

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) REVIEW

June 6, 2018

2:00 PM

Councilman Bill Mulvaney called the Comprehensive Plan RFQ Review Meeting with the following present: City Manager Charles Anderson, ED/IT Manager Trisha Newcomer and Mike Bailey Building Official.

Councilman Mulvaney welcomed Debbie Pfeil, Planning Manager with KCI Technologies and asked her to come forward. Ms. Pfeil introduced Lauren Good and Nikki Davis who were also present from KCI Technologies.

Ms. Davis then came forward to give an overview of the company. In 2012, KCI opened an office in Dover, DE and they currently have 40 offices in 19 states. They are a 100% employee owned company and currently have 1,450 employees. She added that they are ISO 9001:2015 certified. She then showed a structure of the company and the various departments that they have within their company. The employees at KCI have experience in many areas including marketing, utility services, environmental, transportation and land development. A list was provided of the groups and organizations that KCI Technologies currently have a membership in, or are affiliated with. She added that they like to be involved in many groups as this provides them an opportunity to network and meet new people. Ms. Davis discussed the planning pillars of KCI which have been in place since 2016. These include being reputable, resourceful, responsible, building long-term relationships and creative partnerships. They currently have 13 on call municipal contracts and 9 comprehensive plans completed.

Ms. Good then came forward to discuss the government planning services that KCI focuses on. During the process of working with their clients, they look for grant money that may be available for their community. A list was shown of the different municipalities and the grant money that they have received for various projects. KCI also focuses on Downtown Development District Planning by attending local events in the community. While working with the Town of Georgetown, their staff did an outreach project with the ESL community to gain feedback from them. They also did a vacant building inventory to create a map of the vacant buildings. This allows for potential renters or buyers to see what is available in the downtown district. While working with the City of Harrington, they did an online survey to help determine what their residents wanted to see in their downtown area. They also do a development plan review in various formats to get resident feedback. Another focus is regulation review and updates. This allows the time to review the regulations and update any that may be outdated. Comprehensive Planning is another primary focus for KCI Technologies. They are currently working with the Town of Georgetown to provide an update to their comprehensive plan and are about 70% completed. They have also worked with the Town of Blades, City of Harrington and Town of Millville. During the comprehensive plan service for these municipalities, they used many different methods to get feedback from the residents. These include holding public hearings, doing surveys, going to local events and using social media.

Ms. Pfeil then came forward to discuss some areas of expanded services. She said that KCI Technologies has many years of experience doing comprehensive plans and she added that in her career, she has done 15 plans. The City of Seaford last comprehensive plan was completed in January of 2008 and is up for renewal in 2020. She then discussed some areas of consideration for the upcoming plan since the last one was adopted. These include citywide initiatives, healthy community initiatives, advanced technology/broadband initiatives, community organizations, coordination with local schools and emergency services, tourism, economic development and community policing initiatives.

It was asked who would be the project point of contact for the City during the project. Ms. Pfeil stated that she will be the project manager and for the day to day work, Lauren Good, certified planner will be the contact for the City.

It was asked how KCI staff sees key City staff contributing to the project and its successful completion. Ms. Pfeil stated that she sees multiple staff contributing to the project in many different areas. She would like to have a project manager from the City and a day to day contact person for the project. She added that while doing the data collection sheets and community outreach she envisions the City staff being involved. She added that the City staff can be involved as much or as little as they would like.

Mrs. Newcomer asked Ms. Pfeil to describe the most recent, and relevant experience with similar planning projects. Ms. Pfeil stated that the Town of Georgetown is probably the most comparable comprehensive plan that she has completed recently.

Ms. Pfeil was asked to describe her firm's computer design capabilities and specialized design and planning software that will be utilized for this project. Ms. Pfeil stated that KCI has their own marketing team and all of the documents that they complete for the project will be owned by the City of Seaford. Ms. Davis added that KCI has most software, however, if there is a program that the City would like to use they can purchase that to accommodate the need.

Ms. Pfeil stated that none of the work for this project will be subcontracted out; everything will be done in house.

Mr. Bailey asked if there were any problems that she felt exist that may need to be addressed for the successful completion of this project. Ms. Pfeil stated that if there are any issues with any state agencies, in the past they have brought a lawyer in at times to get the issues resolved. Mr. Anderson asked if she felt that a schedule can be created to have the new comprehensive plan adopted prior to January 2020. Ms. Pfeil stated that she believes so; she added that work will need to start soon. She also stated that it depends on how long the scoping takes.

Mrs. Newcomer asked Ms. Pfeil to describe her past experience with addressing public questions during a public hearing and obtaining useful public input. Ms. Pfeil stated that she likes to get input up front and be aware of it prior. She also likes to do proper public outreach and identify key stakeholders in the City to see what they would like to see or get their interests.

It was asked if KCI Technologies has direct experience meeting with Delaware Office of State Planning requirements for compressive plan certifications. Ms. Pfeil stated that they do; they have worked with the Town of Dagsboro, Town of Georgetown and City of Harrington to complete their plans.

Ms. Pfeil asked if the City has thought about how the process will be structured. Mr. Anderson stated that it has not been decided yet, that is in the scoping process.

Mr. Kyle Gulbranson, who will be the project point of contact from AECOM then came forward to discuss their firm's RFQ response. Mr. Gulbranson introduced Mr. Ryan Mawhinney and Ms. Savannah Edwards who were both present from AECOM as well. Mr. Gulbranson gave a brief introduction of AECOM. He stated that they have a skilled planning team with advanced degrees and certifications. They are also familiar with a range of clients across Delaware and at different levels. They provide engineering, planning, surveying, design, environmental and program management services.

Mr. Gulbranson then discussed some project experience of the firm. They provided services for Little Creek, DE with a comprehensive plan and providing a sea level rise and redevelopment plan. Mr. Mawhinney discussed how they lost their commercial district due to flooding issues. They looked at those issues and developed a sea level rise plan for their town. For the Town of Frederica, they provided plans for a town center redevelopment. It was added that they do modeling for the DDD plans for many comprehensive plans that they do.

Mr. Gulbranson discussed the firm's general approach when doing a comprehensive plan. They first look at the existing conditions and complete an analysis. They then vision and identify some goals for the project and get feedback from the municipality and residents. They work with the municipality to understand the primary issues. Then, they evaluate strategies for the plan and lastly, do a plan development and adoption.

Ms. Edwards spoke about public participation and how to get them involved to gain feedback. She pointed out that there are many new tools that can be used that can be tailored to the community. Some of the "high touch" methods include public hearings, workshops and forums including task forces and committee meetings and charrettes. Some of the "high tech" options include data analysis, electronic surveying and GIS-based crowdsourcing.

Mr. Bailey asked how they would see key City staff contributing to this project and its successful completion. Mr. Gulbranson stated that AECOM is made up of municipal engineers and planners. He added that 99% of the employees have done municipal government work. He would like to see City employees work closely with the firm and assist with their knowledge for the project.

Mrs. Newcomer asked if they could briefly describe the most recent and relevant experience with a similar planning project. Mr. Gulbranson stated that they have worked with the Town of Millsboro and The City of New Castle on their comprehensive plans. They did up front data collection and worked closely with both Towns. They wrote a draft plan and presented it to the staff and then to the public.

Mrs. Newcomer asked about the experience of the firm's computer design capabilities and specialized design and planning software that would be utilized for the project. Mr. Mawhinney stated that they have many different programs that they use. He also showed a sample of some maps that they did of the City of Seaford using the GIS system.

It was stated that all of the work will be done in house by AECOM; nothing will be subcontracted.

Mr. Bailey asked about any problems that may exist and may need to be addressed for the successful completion of this project. Mr. Gulbranson stated that there are some housing issues, well head protection and sea level rise that will need to be addressed during the project. He also asked if any future growth is being considered. Mr. Anderson stated that the City is currently in the process of working with the Towns of Bridgeville and Greenwood to treat their waste water flows. The plan is to expand water and sewer services to areas on Route 13 and Middleford Road in order to get more properties annexed into the City.

Mr. Anderson pointed out that the current City Comprehensive Plan sunsets in January of 2020. He asked if it was thought that there would be enough time to get the new plan in place prior to the sunset of the old one. Mr. Gulbranson stated that he felt so; he feels that it would take about 14 months to accomplish the project. He added that public participation can add or shorten the time of the project.

Mrs. Newcomer asked what structure would get the most out of public participation. Mr. Gulbranson stated that it depends on the residents and he feels that the staff would know their residents the best. He asked if Public Workshops have worked in the past. Mr. Anderson stated that they have sometimes, however a combination of things may be best. Ms. Edwards pointed out reaching out to non-profit organizations and stakeholders is key to a successful project. Also, attending events such as Riverfest, Live for Chocolate and working with the Library and fire department help get useful information.

It was asked if their staff has direct experience meeting Delaware Office of State Planning requirements for comprehensive plan certification. Mr. Gulbranson stated that they do and all of their plans have gone through their process. He added that the City of Seaford went through the Pre PLUS process which is a benefit for the project.

Councilman Mulvaney asked if there was any questions for staff. Mr. Gulbranson asked how much the City staff will be involved during the project. Mr. Anderson stated that he is not completely sure of that at this time. He added that the Mayor, City Council and Planning Commission will be engaged in the process. Mr. Gulbranson asked if state agencies would be involved in the process and at the table during discussions. Mr. Anderson stated that the City always likes to have them involved as they provide valuable information for the project. Mr. Gulbranson asked if the City was involved in Salisbury MPO? Mr. Anderson stated that he currently services as the Vice Chair and there is also another staff member that is on the TAC.

The City staff then discussed the two firms in order to prepare a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council. Councilman Mulvaney pointed out that AECOM has not done a comprehensive plan since September of 2008 which concerns him. He also stated that most of the ones that they have completed

have been smaller towns and were located in Kent County. Mrs. Newcomer stated that she liked the fact that KCI goes out of the box with their outreach. For example, while working with the Town of Georgetown, they went out to the Hispanic and Creole communities to get their input and they even purchased software for a project that they did not have. Mrs. Newcomer also liked that KCI stated they would look for possible funding for the City of Seaford while doing the project.

Mr. Anderson stated that he reached out to Dorothy Morris from the Office of State Planning to asking about the two proposals that were received. She stated that both had experience and we could not go wrong with either one.

After a discussion, the working group agreed to recommend the firm of KCI Technologies to the City Council for award of the project. Mr. Anderson stated that the will do a letter of recommendation with all of the group members names for Council's review. It was also discussed about having KCI come to the Mayor and City Council meeting to do a brief presentation on June 26, 2018.

With no other questions or comments, Councilman Mulvaney asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Newcomer so moved and Mr. Bailey seconded the motion. Councilman Mulvaney adjourned the meeting at 3:42 p.m.

Charles Anderson
City Manager