MINUTES

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ERIE COUNTY, PA

3-10-23 BOE MEETING MINUTES

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Chair, Charlie Bayle.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair, Charlie Bayle, Vice Chair Jim Winarski (Zoom), and Andre Horton
Others Present: Julie Slomski, Megan Moore, Solicitor Tom Talarico, Deputy Solicitor Jay Stranahan, Tonia Fernandez, and Chuck Crane

Hearing of the Public

No members of the public chose to speak.

Possible Board Action

Award Ballot Printing Agreement

Chuck Crane, Director of Procurement: Mr. Crane described the process for choosing the winning RFP, Request for Proposal.
He stated that the RFP had more criteria than a bid and was about more than just low cost. He explained the RFP was sent to interested vendors, and a committee then evaluated submitted RFPs through a score sheet for listed criteria in the RFP. He noted that it was a fair and independent process , and was impressed with the level of independence that the committee members had in their scoring.

Tonia Fernandez, Director of Elections: Ms. Fernandez listed the scoring criteria for the RFP; mail transport, price, ballot tracking, certification by Dominion, paper supply, and references (most notable from other election offices).

Ms. Slomski summarized the committee's review of the seven submitted RFP and announced that RFP #5 was the high score for each committee member. She described the attributes of the proposal that garnered the high score. She noted especially their low and consistent pricing, partnership with the nation's largest pre-sort company, and their tracking process with a high-powered project management tool. She also reported on their impressive list of references throughout the United States, but most importantly, close to Erie County.

Questions and Comments from the Board

Mr. Horton stated that he was happy this process was done in a comprehensive format with a rubric to make decisions, and that there is an option for a three-year agreement. He stated that he had tried to stay removed from the administrative process during his tenure in office to ensure the integrity of the Elections office. He believed that the Board of Elections' involvement in contracts should be just as it was today, information is given to them and they vote on it. He stated it was a job well done and thanked everyone.

Vice Chair Winarski stated that it appeared due diligence had been done and thanked everyone. He noted this was much more efficient and organized than the previous year.

Chair Bayle stated that this was a much smoother process than previously. He noted that this effort had begun prior to his start as Chair, and he was just following through. He questioned several aspects to reassure that he had the correct information: 1) did the vendors have the criteria they would be scored on? 2) was it a 1 year contract with the possibility of 2 additional years? 3) was the price locked in for all three years? 4) was the scoring consistent throughout the committee? Mr. Crane responded in the affirmative to all questions and noted the scoring was impressive because although graded independently, the committee members had basically the same outcome. Mr. Bayle thanked all those involved, and stated he wanted to give the people of Erie County the best product for the best price and had accomplished that with this process.

Mr. Horton made a motion to accept the proposal of Bid #5, with language provided by the Solicitor in the contract.
Mr. Winarski seconded the motion.

Solicitor Talarico stated this was not a contract but the selection and approval of the contractor, subject to approval of a contract to be entered into between the board and the contractor.
Mr. Bayle questioned if they should read the resolution.
Mr. Talarico stated it was not necessary as long as everyone understood what he had just said, it was the same thing as the resolution.
Mr. Horton and Mr. Bayle both voiced they were approving the vendor, and Mr. Bayle stated Tom could work out an agreement with the chosen vendor.
The motion was approved 3-0.
Ms. Slomski announced that Bidder #5 was Elections IQ LLC.
Mr. Bayle and Mr. Horton both noted that this was their first time to hear the winner as well.
Mr. Crane stated that the RFP process was not public knowledge until it was awarded, and a Right to Know is usually requested for release of information.
Mr. Horton said they would not do anything until they had language back from their attorney.
Mr. Bayle stated then they could vote on it.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Horton at 2:18pm.