



Memo

To: Mayor and Council
From: Laura Reams, Director of Communications & Legislative Services
CC: Tracey Douglas, City Administrator
Ron Brooks, City Treasurer
Sean Corcoran, Deputy City Clerk
Board of Supervisors of Elections
Date: January 11, 2021
Re: Award of Contract for Mail Vendor – Election 2021

Background:

The City of Hyattsville has completed the first steps, with legislation pending, to allow the 2021 Mayoral and Council election to be conducted primarily by mail-in ballot. The departure from a traditional, familiar, process has presented a more detailed approach which involves partnering with multiple vendors to employ support for logistics planning, implementation resources, and measures to ensure the election be conducted safely and accurately.

The printing and mailing of ballot packets to all registered voters is integral to a successful 2021 Vote-by-Mail election. The City Clerk's Office solicited bids from mail vendors in late 2020. The scope of the request for proposal is listed below.

- Printing of approximately 12,000 bilingual ballot packets consisting of the following components:
 - o Outer Envelope
 - o Return Envelope
 - o Outgoing and Return Intelligent Bar Code Tracking
 - o Oath/Signature Envelope for Ballot
 - o 8.5x11 Ballot

- Instructions
- Voter Assistance Form
- Inclusion of an I Voted Sticker
- Direct Mail drop of first-class mail to the closest Maryland postal sorting facility
- Printing of ballots for Election Day Polling Center compatible with ES&S election ballot scanners
- Printing of test ballots for ballot scanner accuracy
- Printing of additional on-hand ballot packets for the City to mail to individuals who register to vote after March 19.

The City received bids from three vendors:

1. Seachange: \$33,033
2. Fort Orange Press: \$31,000
3. Midwest Direct: \$21,915

Of the three vendors, Fort Orange Press and Seachange were able to accommodate the request for a direct mail drop to a Maryland postal facility. This requirement is considered crucial to ensure mail is accurately routed and ballot packets are received in a timely manner with minimal routing stops. After review and consideration of the two remaining quotes, the Board of Supervisors of Elections and staff recommends that the City enter into a financial agreement for printing and mailing services with Fort Orange Press at a cost not to exceed \$31,000. The cost proposal is detailed below.

Fort Orange Press was selected for recommendation due to a lower printing costs per ballot packet and inclusion of color printing services for outgoing and return envelopes. Utilizing color printing on outgoing and return ballot envelopes has been identified by the Center for Civic Design as a best practice for Vote-by-Mail elections. The use of color helps to ensure the envelopes are distinctive from other mail and assists election workers with the ballot intake process by allowing easy identification and sorting of the ward specific return envelopes. Additionally, Fort Orange Press recently provided ballot printing and mailing services for the City of Takoma Park’s municipal election and received a favorable recommendation from the City.

Fort Orange Press			
Item	Unit Cost	Total	Notes
Ballot Packet	1.25	\$15,000.00	12,000 ballot packets
Outgoing Postage	0.65	\$ 7,800.00	
Election Day Ballots & Test Ballots	n/a	\$ 425.00	Qty 1000
Color Printing	n/a	\$ 3,975.00	
Inclusion of I Voted Sticker	n/a	\$ 3,480.00	
Additional On Hand Ballot Packets	n/a	\$ 175.00	
Total		\$30,855.00	

Approval of this contract will also require a budget amendment. The existing budget line item for election equipment is funded for \$30,500. In November 2020, the City Council authorized a contract with Election Software and Services for Election Center Polling Equipment (poll books, voting booths, ballot scanners)

for \$13,000. Due to the nature of an all Vote-by-Mail election the City has had to procure additional vendors that, combined with this mail vendor, will increase the amount necessary for equipment procurement. A corresponding budget amendment will be included on the Council agenda with this recommendation to award a contract to Fort Orange Press for printing and mailing services.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Board of Supervisors of Elections recommends that the Mayor and Council authorize the City Administrator to enter into an agreement with Fort Orange Press for the printing and mailing of ballot packets and ballots for the May 2021 City Election at a cost not to exceed \$31,000. The agreement will be effective upon the review and approval by the City Attorney.