

REQUEST FOR ACTION
BY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approval of Engagement of Yardi Systems, Inc. to Provide Software for RentReliefRI

1. Summary of Request

This Request for Action (“RFA”) is for approval to engage Yardi Systems, Inc.(d/b/a Yardi) (“Yardi”) to provide software and related services in support of RentReliefRI, an emergency rental assistance program funded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury (“Treasury”). The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) has been designated by the State of Rhode Island (the “State”) to administer approximately \$200 million in federal emergency housing assistance under this program to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. A previous Request for Action was presented to the Board in February 2021 to engage Allita 360 for these services. Allita 360 was the top scoring respondent pursuant to a Request for Proposals. That engagement, however, has been unsuccessful and staff now recommends proceeding with the second highest scoring respondent.

2. Discussion

As the Board is aware, RentReliefRI will assist families who need temporary help paying rent, rent arrearages, utility arrearages, utility payments, and other expenses related to housing. To operate effectively and in compliance with Treasury requirements, RIHousing requires a comprehensive software package to facilitate all aspects of program administration. The software must be tailored specifically for this purpose. Program success depends in significant part to the software system’s efficiency, accuracy, and capacity to support compliance with Treasury requirements.

RIHousing issued a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) in February 2021, which was posted on RIHousing’s website and the website maintained by the Rhode Island Department of Administration’s Division of Purchases. Eight firms submitted proposals in response to the RFP. A selection committee composed of senior staff and representatives from various business lines reviewed the proposals and evaluated them in accordance with the RFP criteria. The selection committee applied a weighted average scoring model that took into account: capacity and experience, timeline, fee structure, automation, customization, prior experience with RIHousing and similar organizations and other pertinent information submitted. The maximum allowable score under the employed model was 10 points. Attachment B sets forth an evaluation summary of the proposals.

Scores ranged from a low 7.07 to 8.98 with Allita 360 scoring the highest. The Board approved the engagement of Allita 360 in February 2021. Since then, the engagement with Allita 360 has been unsuccessful. Staff has experienced significant and continuous obstacles with the technology platform, and concluded that the program will not meet the level of the agency’s need. Staff has determined that to continue with Allita would be infeasible and could jeopardize the success of the RentReliefRI program. Staff has communicated to Allita 360 their intent to terminate the engagement and will provide the advance written notice required under the existing agreement.

Staff now seeks approval for to engage Yardi, the second highest scoring respondent in the original RFP process, to provide software and related services in support of RentReliefRI.

Yardi provides full turnkey solutions to the non-profit sector with a focus on housing, development, and grant management. Yardi's software and services have been previously utilized by RIHousing to support the Centralized Wait List and HCVP program. Yardi is currently providing services for rental assistance programs in Connecticut, Idaho, and large counties in California, Pennsylvania, Texas, and others. RIHousing staff has spoken with Connecticut staff members about the functionality of the Yardi system for ERA purposes, and is satisfied that it can meet the needs of the program. Staff believes that the firm has the experience and capacity to undertake this assignment and their fee proposal was reasonable. Yardi has provided an estimated time to launch of 14 days from the day of contract entry.

The proposed initial cost of their engagement is \$20,000 for setup, hosting, maintenance, configuration and licensing. In addition, Yardi would charge \$10.00 per application and \$10.00 per payment as applications are processed, approved, and paid. The pricing from the other proposals varied greatly in structure including a proposal of \$360,000 per year to a percentage of the grant which would come to \$1.8 million based on a \$200 million award. Yardi was on the low-mid price range of proposals. The final cost will be determined based on the number of applications processed and paid and the mix of services needed to administer the program, but is estimated to be in the range of \$500,000 to \$700,000.

3. Recommendation

The attached resolution adopting the recommendations of the selection committee regarding the engagement of Yardi is recommended for approval.

4. Attachments

- A. Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of RIHousing
- B. Scoring Matrix

Attachment A

Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation

WHEREAS: the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) enabling act provides it with all of the power to make and execute contracts for the exercise of the powers and functions provided to it under the act (R.I. Gen. Laws §42-55-5(6)); and

WHEREAS: RIHousing has been selected by the State of Rhode Island to administer approximately \$200 million in federal grant funds under the Emergency Rental Assistance (“ERA”) program of the U.S. Department of Treasury; and

WHEREAS: in service of this role, RIHousing has established RentReliefRI to deliver ERA housing assistance to applicants statewide; and

WHEREAS: RIHousing requires a comprehensive software package in order to operate RentReliefRI in a manner consistent with the ERA program and all applicable U.S. Department of the Treasury requirements; and

WHEREAS: in February 2021, RIHousing solicited proposals from vendors to provide a software package that is able to meet the requirements associated with this role; and

WHEREAS: a selection committee comprised of RIHousing staff reviewed the proposals and evaluated them in accordance with the solicitation; and

WHEREAS: Yardi Systems, Inc. (d/b/a Yardi) (“Yardi”) submitted a proposal to RIHousing in response to this solicitation.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:

RESOLVED: that RIHousing be, and hereby is, authorized to engage Yardi to provide software, hosting, maintenance, related set-up, and technical support services over a multi-year period to enable RIHousing to undertake its responsibilities to manage the RentReliefRI Program; and

RESOLVED: that the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, and the Director of Leased Housing and Rental Services, each acting singly be, and hereby is, authorized and empowered to take any and all actions necessary or desirable to carry out the foregoing resolutions, including without limitation the authority to determine final module and service selection and otherwise negotiate such terms of the engagement as he or she may determine are in the best interests of

RIHousing, and to execute any and all agreements or documents as he or she deems necessary to carry out the foregoing.