

Request for Action
By
Board of Commissioners

Selection of Law Firms for Supplemental Closing Services

A. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

This Request for Action (“RFA”) seeks authorization for Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) to engage the firms of Marinosci Law Group and Warr & Warr, P.C. (the “Vendors”) to provide supplemental closing attorney services to expand RIHousing’s ability to offer home loans to culturally and linguistically diverse customer base.

B. DISCUSSION

RIHousing’s customers come from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In order to better serve community needs, staff decided to seek providers of settlement services, who are able to communicate effectively with customers whose primary languages are other than English. Non-English languages prevalent among RIHousing’s likely customer base include Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese), and Haitian, among others.

A Request for Proposals was posted by RIHousing on September 18, 2023, inviting all interested and qualified firms to submit proposals to provide RIHousing with supplemental real estate closing legal services in Rhode Island for a one-year period ending on or about November 30, 2024. A total of six firms responded to the Request for Proposals and a selection committee comprised of three RIHousing staff members evaluated each firm based on a number of criteria including, but not limited to, their foreign language capabilities, professional capacity and experience, and proposed fee structure and willingness to work with RIHousing to minimize costs. Each firm was rated from 1-10, with 10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest. Each rating produced a weighted score based on the percentage weight of each selection criteria.

RIHousing believes that Marinosci Law Group and Warr & Warr, P.C. are duly qualified to provide the requested supplemental closing services and have demonstrated their ability to provide RIHousing with a variety of linguistic capabilities. Employing team members and/or retaining interpreters, the Vendors can provide necessary translation services for a diverse customer base who are fluent in Spanish, Portuguese, Creole and American Sign Language. Additionally, the selection committee of RIHousing finds Vendors’ rates of compensation to be acceptable and do not unduly exceed the rates of compensation of other firms offering the same services.

C. RECOMMENDATION

The attached resolution authorizing RIHousing to engage Marinosci Law Group and Warr & Warr, P.C. is recommended for approval.

D. ATTACHMENTS

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

Attachment A

Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of RIHousing and Mortgage Finance Corporation

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

Whereas: Staff of RIHousing has identified a need for supplemental closing attorney services to expand RIHousing’s ability to offer home loans to culturally and linguistically diverse customer base; and

Whereas: RIHousing has solicited proposals pursuant to an open competitive process for vendors to provide supplemental closing attorney services with demonstrated foreign language capabilities and who are able to substantially meet the requirements associated with this set of functions; and

Whereas: A selection committee comprised of RIHousing staff reviewed the proposals for these services, evaluated them pursuant to the criteria set forth in the Request for Proposals and determined that Marinosci Law Group and Warr & Warr, P.C. (the “Vendors”) have submitted the highest-scoring proposals to RIHousing.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:

Resolved: that RIHousing be, and hereby is, authorized to enter into a contract with Vendors to provide supplemental closing attorney services as set forth in the Request for Proposals;

Resolved: that such engagement shall be for a one-year term for an acceptable rate of compensation as outlined in Vendors’ responses to the Request for Proposals;

Resolved: that the Executive Director and the General Counsel, 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 negotiate the terms and fees 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 and to take such further actions as he or she deems necessary to carry out the foregoing resolutions.

Supplemental Closing Attorney Evaluation Score Card

*Please insert rating scores 1-10 for each criterion below, with 10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest score.

Evaluation & Selection Criteria	Weight	Brennan Law Associates		Iacoi Law		Liberty Title & Escrow		Marinosci Law Group		Law Office of Stephen Patti		Warr & Warr P.C.	
		Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
Firm's Responsiveness to the RFP	10%	9.00	0.90	9.67	0.97	6.00	0.60	8.67	0.87	6.67	0.67	9.67	0.97
Professional capacity and experience to undertake the Scope of Work	20%	8.33	1.67	9.00	1.80	9.67	1.93	9.33	1.87	8.67	1.73	8.33	1.67
Foreign language capabilities of firm	15%	5.00	0.75	6.33	0.95	5.33	0.80	7.67	1.15	5.00	0.75	8.00	1.20
Proposed fee structure and willingness to work with RIHousing to minimize costs	20%	7.67	1.53	8.67	1.73	9.67	1.93	7.33	1.47	9.00	1.80	8.33	1.67
Previous work experience and performance with RIHousing and/or similar organizations	10%	5.67	0.57	6.67	0.67	8.67	0.87	7.67	0.77	7.67	0.77	9.00	0.90
Firm's technological capabilities; information security and privacy practices	5%	5.00	0.25	8.33	0.42	9.33	0.47	9.00	0.45	7.67	0.38	8.33	0.42
Diversity (e.g. firm's minority, MBE or WBE status) and commitment to equal opportunity programs and activities	5%	2.00	0.10	1.33	0.07	4.33	0.22	2.67	0.13	0.33	0.02	6.33	0.32
Approach to conflicts or potential conflicts	10%	8.67	0.87	8.67	0.87	6.67	0.67	9.67	0.97	7.67	0.77	8.33	0.83
Other pertinent information submitted	5%	5.33	0.27	1.67	0.08	0.33	0.02	0.33	0.02	0.33	0.02	2.00	0.10
Total Score (max raw score 90 points/ weighted score 10 points)	100%	56.67	6.90	60.33	7.55	60.00	7.50	62.33	7.68	53.00	6.90	68.33	8.07
Ranking (1-6)		5		3		4		2		6		1	
Selected (Y/N)		N		N		N		Y		N		Y	