



TOWN OF HAMILTON, MASSACHUSETTS

and

TOWN OF WENHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

Request for Proposals

**Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District
Operational Audit**

July 12, 2010

SECTION 1. Introduction and Background

The Towns of Hamilton and Wenham, Massachusetts, acting through their Boards of Selectmen, seek detailed proposals for an Operational Audit of the Hamilton – Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD).

At the Hamilton Annual Town Meeting on May 8, 2010, and the Wenham Annual Town Meeting, May 1, 2010, a citizen's initiative (Exhibit A) was presented and duly adopted petitioning this effort. Pursuant to an Inter-municipal Agreement with the Town of Wenham, the Town of Hamilton will serve as lead municipality for the project and will coordinate all aspects of the work.

While the Town seeks to encourage competition and evaluate firms on a uniform basis, this solicitation is not governed by Massachusetts General Law. C. 30B. As a result, the Town retains complete discretion as to the manner by which proposals shall be evaluated and services awarded and reserves the right not to make any award under this process.

The fee for services will be negotiated and shall not exceed a total cost of \$90,000.

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District serves the two North Shore Massachusetts Communities of Hamilton and Wenham, located approximately 25 miles north of Boston and having a combined population of approximately 13,000 residents.

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District is an independent legal entity from the towns of Hamilton and Wenham, providing educational services to the two towns' school age children, comprising approximately 2066 students. The enrollment includes approximately 102 school choice students. The schools include Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School (9-12), Miles River Middle School (6-8), Buker Elementary (K-5), Cutler Elementary (K-5), and Winthrop Elementary (PK-5), and Center School which is the location of the District's Administrative Offices.

The firm selected to perform the operational audit shall be familiar with the following documents and will utilize data and other information in their field work; the intent is not to replicate work that has already been or is in the process of being completed, but rather compliment or be in addition to such work:

- (1) Blue Ribbon Committee Report (Exhibit B)
- (2) Request for Design Services – Comprehensive Facilities Assessment (Exhibit C)
- (3) Space Needs Study dated October 23, 2008 (Exhibit D)
- (3) Warrant Article as Amended (Exhibit E)

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District has agreed to cooperate with the towns and provide whatever assistance is necessary to the Contractor to complete the operational audit.

Section 2. Scope of Services

The purpose of the operational audit is to conduct an external review of the efficiency of various departments and operations within the HWRSD and to present a final report of the findings, commendations, recommendations and projected costs and or cost savings associated with the recommendations.

The first goal of the review is to ensure that non-instructional functions are operating efficiently and to identify short- and long- term savings that can be gained through the implementation of best practices including potential collaboration, regionalization and cost-sharing. It is not intended that the review shall include an analysis of energy efficiencies or use.

A second goal of the review is to examine the efficiency of instructional services. The instructional efficiency review results should provide guidance to the HWRSD in determining whether educational dollars are being utilized to the fullest extent possible; and where indicated, identify recommendations to reduce costs while maintaining or improving the quality of education.

The operational audit shall be performed in the following areas and disciplines within the Hamilton - Wenham Regional School District. Respondents shall identify in their proposal the estimated amount of time and costs associated with completing the following tasks.

1. Personnel policies and procedures including compensation, benefits, and performance evaluation process for all staff.
2. Union contracts negotiations, procedures and management.
3. School District Administration staffing (including professional and clerical staffing) policies and procedures.
4. Instructional Staffing,. Include an evaluation of the number, allocation, and composition of all instructional-related staffing, including but not limited to student-staffing ratio analysis.
5. Accounting system - policies, practices and procedures including payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable and the overall budget process and associated budget controls.
6. Time keeping policy, procedures, practices and controls.
7. Purchasing policy, procedures, practices and controls.
8. Inventory control procedures and practices including store minimum/maximum items and capital expense items.
9. Curriculum policies, procedures, management and controls Pre. K - 12.
10. SPED (Special Ed.) policies, procedures, management and controls Pre. K - 12.

11. Traffic policies, procedures and management including buses, cars and communications.
12. Cafeteria staffing policies, procedures, management and controls.
13. Building maintenance staffing, policies, procedures and management including Heating, AC, Electrical, Plumbing, routine maintenance, etc. The review should evaluate the efficacy of consolidating functions with either or both of the two Towns.
14. Information Technology (IT) systems, staffing, procedures and controls.
15. Medical / Nurse staffing policies and controls.
16. Athletic Programs - staffing, management, controls and financial reporting.
17. Misc. extracurricular programs non-athletic staffing, management, controls and financial reporting.
18. HWRSD Liaison - Costs associated with interaction between HWRSD, State Departments, Associations, and other Towns. Travel costs and expenses.
19. School Committee – Administrative costs, expenses and financial reporting.
20. Elementary level grade/class configuration analysis to include space/facility utilization options.
21. Evaluation of the Center School as a site for Administrative Services.

Section 3. Minimum Qualifications

Interviews will be conducted by an Operational Audit Review Committee with final selection determined by the Joint Boards of Selectmen of the two Towns. **The respondent must certify in its cover letter that it meets the following minimum requirements.** Failure to include such certification in the cover letter demonstrating that these criteria have been met will result in your proposal being rejected without further consideration.

1. The firm must be well versed with at least seven (7) years experience performing similar such audits and also having direct experience conducting such audits in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
2. The firm must have knowledge of and experience in evaluating educational program requirements.

Section 4. Rule for Award

Applications will be assessed with regard to the following factors:

1. Relevant experience of the firm and proposed project staff;
2. Staffing plan and methodology;
3. Proposer's demonstrated ability to complete projects on a timely basis;
4. Clarity and comprehensiveness of proposed plan;
5. If submitted, evaluation of written product.

The Towns will determine whether to award the contract to a responsive bidder pursuant to this Request for Proposal on or before September 7, 2010 or to choose a provider through another process.

The Towns reserve the right to as set forth in Section 1 to make no award at all or choose a service provider through any other method permitted by law.

A poor reference may be a basis for a determination that the respondent is not a responsible bidder.

Section 5. Meetings and Communication

It is expected that the selected firm will maintain a high level of communication with the Towns' representative during the study. The selected firm is expected to attend work and review meetings as necessary with the Hamilton Town Manager and Wenham Town Administrator and the Operational Audit Review Committee to provide progress updates.

Section 6. Final Report and Presentations

The selected firm shall prepare and present a final written report documenting the findings, commendations, and recommendations and projected costs or cost savings associated with the recommendations. A minimum of two presentations shall be provided within 15 days of completion of the operational audit; one to the Boards of Selectmen of Hamilton and Wenham, and one to the HWRSD Administration and School Committee,. It should be understood that questions from the general public will be entertained at each public meeting.

All work must be completed and the Final Report must be submitted to the Towns' representative no later than January 3, 2011.

Provide twelve (12) black and white copies of the final report and an electronic copy.

The RFP will be appended to and become part of a Contract for Services. At the time of contract execution, the successful respondent will be required to provide a certificate of professional liability insurance indicating minimum coverage of \$1,000,000. A draft Contract for Services is provided as Exhibit F.

Section 8. Proposal Requirements

1. Please provide the name and location of your firm.

2. Please provide a summary of the ownership and organizational structure of your firm.
3. Provide a summary of the expertise, capacity and resources of your firm. Identify all of your municipal government/regional school district clients for which you have provided services of similar scope and size to those contemplated by this Request for Proposal. Include a contact name and telephone number for each such client.
4. Provide a business information report or business profile from a credit reporting agency dated no earlier than 60 days prior to the bid submission date.
5. Discuss any potential conflicts of interests the firm or any individual within the firm might have representing the Town of Hamilton, the Town of Wenham, or the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District.
6. Include the basis by which the fee for services shall be assessed, whether by an hourly rate with an amount not to exceed, a flat fee, or some other fee structure.
7. Include an executed Certificate of Non-Collusion.
8. Applications (two (2) originals and five (5) copies) must be received on or before 2:00 PM, on Thursday, August 5, 2010, at which time all applications will be opened and reviewed by the Operational Audit Review Committee.

Responses should be printed double-sided and bound in such a manner that the pages lie and remain flat when opened.

9. Applications must be accompanied by a concise cover letter that is a maximum of two pages in length that describes why the applicant is the best candidate to complete the operational audit in a timely manner.
10. Proposals and written questions and clarifications shall be addressed to:

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