

May 14, 2007

Mr. Trevor Rhone
Sparkle Cleaning Services
Post Office Box 2124
Framingham, Massachusetts 01703-2124

RE: Supplier Disagreement Resolution Case No. OM07SR-07
Solicitation Number 2WJANI-07-A-0002

Dear Mr. Rhone:

Your letter of February 8 presented a disagreement as defined in 39 CFR Part 601 with respect to solicitation number 2WJANI-07-A-0002. You contend that the process regarding the ranking and award of the contract resulting from that solicitation was flawed. You further contend that you were prevented from entering a lower bid on one of the lots due to technical difficulties by the auction processor.

I have examined the disagreement lodged with me as well as the contracting officer's statement and administrative file. As a result of that review, your disagreement is denied. On October 18, 2006, the Chicago Office of the Western Services Category Management Center (CMC) issued a single, multi-site/multi-state solicitation for contract cleaning services within the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The contracting officer determined that fourteen responses, including that of Sparkle Cleaning Services (Sparkle), contained the required elements of a minimally acceptable, un-priced technical proposal. Those fourteen suppliers were invited to participate in an online reverse auction to submit pricing proposals. Suppliers then were evaluated based on technical points and price scores. As part of the technical evaluation process, the contracting officer sorted the fourteen suppliers based on the total points awarded by each evaluator, and created four individual ranked lists with the highest point total being ranked 1st, and the supplier with the lowest point being ranked 14th. Those numeric values were then averaged, and the results were sorted again. The evaluator's technical evaluations were then analyzed as a group. Total points awarded to each supplier by the evaluators were summed. During the scoring of the technical evaluations, the eventual contract awardee, Support Services of America (SSA), was the highest rated supplier based on overall technical value.

As part of the evaluation process, the suppliers were also asked to submit their pricing during the scheduled online auction event. The online auction event was held on November 29, 2006 and fourteen suppliers participated. Three lots were offered: Lot 1 – Boston District; Lot 2 – Massachusetts District and Lot 3 – Southeast New England District. The results of the individual lots were combined to provide an overall ranking for each supplier based on their pricing. Because the final best value award decision was required to be based equally on the suppliers' price and technical

proposals, the final rankings of each supplier represented the average of the supplier's rankings for the evaluations of their technical and price proposals. On January 17, 2007, separate contracts for Lots 1, 2 and 3 were awarded to SSA, as the highest ranked supplier for each lot. On that same day, Sparkle lodged a disagreement with the contracting officer requesting a debriefing and questioning the award decision.

Based on the information submitted by you and the contracting officer, I have concluded that the award of to SSA was proper and represented the best value to the Postal Service. According to the final ranking worksheet contained in the administrative file, SSA was ranked 1st, while Sparkle was ranked 2nd. Upon examining the scores for the technical evaluations and the prices submitted during the online reverse auction, I conclude that the combined results represent an impartial and accurate assessment of the comparative value of each supplier's total proposal package.

Although the contracting officer only performed an evaluation (price and technical) in which all three lots were combined in arriving at his award decision, the solicitation allowed for multiple awards (see Provision 4-1, subparagraph h, Multiple Awards). Nonetheless, I have re-evaluated the scoring for each separate lot, using the judgments of the evaluation team. That re-evaluation reveals that SSA remains ranked 1st for Lots #1 and #3, while SSA and Sparkle were tied for Lot #2. As such, award of all three lots to SSA continues to represent the best value for the Postal Service when considering the administrative efficiencies inherent in dealing with a single supplier for all three lots.

Your disagreement also asserts that you were prevented from entering a lower bid on one of the lots due to technical difficulties by the auction processor. Review of all the information submitted in support of your disagreement and in the remainder of the file provided by the contracting officer fails to demonstrate that technical difficulties occurred during the online auction event.

Accordingly, your disagreement is denied and the award of solicitation number 2WJANI-07-A-0002 stands.

This is the Postal Service's final decision on this disagreement regarding solicitation number 2WJANI-07-A-0002 under 39 CFR 601.108(h).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pete Dolder', written over a horizontal line.

Pete Dolder, C.P.M.
USPS Supplier Ombudsman

cc: Steven J. Fazekas