



Agenda Report

18-894

Agenda Date: 6/26/2018

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Consideration to Approve an Agreement (Call No. 18-1) with Essense Partners, Inc. to Provide Electric Utility Advertising, Marketing, Printing and Communication Services for Silicon Valley Power

BACKGROUND

Independent survey results indicate that customers rank the City's Electric Utility, doing business as Silicon Valley Power (SVP), at or near the top of all California utilities. Satisfaction surveys also show that customers are looking for SVP to increase and enhance communication and information via methods accessible on mobile devices.

Maintaining high customer satisfaction, trust and value requires constant effort to provide information and to create regular opportunities for customer engagement. The challenge of meeting our increasingly difficult energy efficiency goals requires competing for customers' attention to raise awareness. To address our communication needs in a changing marketplace, SVP requires specific marketing support that will emphasize new communication approaches in social media and digital messaging, produce crisp and tailored messaging, and deliver a focused sustained effort that proactively leverages available media outlets.

In October 2016, SVP issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Marketing & Communications Services focused on the electric industry including the assignment of full responsibility for 3rd party printing costs. Essense Partners Inc. (Essense) was selected in this RFP process for its creative design and its extensive work researching utility trends and expertise in developing outreach materials and news articles. On May 9, 2017, the City Council approved a three year Call Agreement and Call No. 17-1. Under Call No. 17-1, Essense Partners, Inc. undertook a utility centric brand audit and developed a new style guide and updated brand strategy for SVP, as well as began development of new program materials.

At the June 12, 2018 City Council Meeting, the Council continued the approval of the subject agreement to June 26.

DISCUSSION

Under this Call No. 18-1 (Attachment 1), with Essense Partners, Inc. will be updating its FY18/19 design work to be consistent with the City's brand in creating utility program brochures, bill inserts, customer newsletters, and other program outreach materials to engage customers and increase program participation. They will also provide assistance in research and writing of articles for the utility's blog and newsletters in order to educate customers about utility projects, increase transparency, and continue to reinforce our position with our customers as their "trusted energy advisor". In coordination with City staff including the City's Public Information Officer, Essense will also prepare press releases related to the electric utility and distribute them to appropriate media

outlets.

The scope of work of the proposed Call 18-1 includes the following key elements.

- Development of utility bill inserts, ads, quarterly Outlet newsletter, residential & commercial program brochures \$138,600
- Printing costs \$80,000
- Project Management \$57,000
- Writing utility press releases, news articles, blog posts, and other copy \$27,000
- Website content update \$19,800
- Customer Communications as trusted energy advisor and internal communications \$34,800.
- SVP Fiber Program materials \$9,800
- Additional Service contingency \$18,000

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This action being considered does not constitute a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has not potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

FISCAL IMPACT

Call No. 18-1 is not to exceed \$305,000. Sufficient funds are available in Electric Department Contractual Services Not Classified will be appropriately split between Electric Operating Grant Trust Fund (Public Benefits Charges), (\$76,250), Fiber Enterprise, (\$76,250), Key Accounts, (\$76,250), and Capital Project 2111 - Implementation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), (\$76,250).

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the Finance Department and City Attorney’s Office.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City’s official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City’s website and in the City Clerk’s Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>> or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve Call No. 18-1 with Essense Partners Inc. for Professional Services to Support Marketing, Outreach, Printing and Public Relation Services in an amount not-to-exceed \$305,000.

Reviewed by: John C. Roukema, Chief Electric Utility Officer

Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Essense Call No. 18-1