



CITY OF FORT BRAGG

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COUNCIL COMMITTEE ITEM SUMMARY REPORT

MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 19, 2019
TO: VISIT FORT BRAGG COMMITTEE
FROM: TABATHA MILLER, CITY MANAGER
AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Proposed Contract with The Idea Cooperative for Marketing Strategy Development and Execution

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW:

The contract with Cubic Inc., expired on June 30, 2019. The City owns the website and other creative content and marketing materials they produced under the contract. The website is being maintained by City staff and the social media is contracted to the Mendocino Coast Chamber of Commerce on a month-to-month basis. Visit Fort Bragg's plan was to continue to use the creative content Cubic generated, including the website, but hire a firm that would be willing to leverage the already owned creative with new fresh content going forward.

At the September 17, 2019, Visit Fort Bragg (VFB) Committee meeting, the Committee directed staff to review the Proposals for marketing services received in August of 2018 and contact potential marketing firms to evaluate the City's current marketing materials, most of which were created by Cubic Inc., and provide a plan to incorporate those materials into a new campaign. Staff reached out to three of the original Responders to discuss the work.

At a meeting of the VFB Marketing/Advertising Subcommittee on October 2, 2019, the subcommittee recommended moving forward with either of the two firms staff recommended. The Subcommittee stressed the need to move quickly. Staff requested action and cost proposals from both firms. The Abbi Agency, located in Reno, NV, was the runner up in the 2018 selection process and staff had promising phone conversations with the firm regarding the possibility of working together. However, staff received an initial proposal that was incomplete and did not contain the full scope of activities expected. Staff reached out to discuss the incomplete proposal, and the agency agreed to take another look and provide something more substantial. After almost two weeks (and nearly a month since the negotiations began), the City received a 4-page proposal that was still not as comprehensive as anticipated or requested. The proposal contained some great ideas but staff was concerned with the lack of future steps and their ability to

move forward quickly. Without future steps clearly defined in the proposal, the City's future cost and path forward were difficult to chart.

Concurrently, staff was working with The Idea Cooperative, located in Petaluma, for a separate proposal for marketing services. The Idea Cooperative provided staff with an updated Proposal within three days of the conference call with their team. That proposal fit with what staff believed the VFB Committee envisioned as next steps. The firm has been and continues to be timely and responsive.

In an effort to keep the marketing program moving forward and respond to concerns from subcommittee and committee members about the lack of progress, approval of a proposed contract with The Idea Cooperative was scheduled for the November 12, 2019 City Council meeting. City Council considered the contract but directed staff to remand the contract to the Visit Fort Bragg Committee for further review and recommendation, and to develop more measurable milestones and deliverables in the Scope of Work.

Councilmembers raised concerns about the status of The Idea Cooperative's business Facebook page and Instagram account, because postings were limited. In a conversation with Tom Kavanaugh, The Idea Cooperative's President, he explained that social media is not a tool they use to advertise their own business but do have active campaigns for their clients. He provided several examples of current social media campaigns they manage for clients. Links to those campaigns are set forth below:

OutThereSR – City of Santa Rosa

- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [OutThereSR.com](#)

Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company

- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)

Faribault Woolen Mill

- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)

The Idea Cooperative's website also provides some additional examples of the firm's work product - www.theideacooperative.com.

The Idea Cooperative has indicated that they will be in Fort Bragg on November 19, 2019 to attend the Visit Fort Bragg Committee meeting and should be available for additional questions. The firm had already planned on visiting Fort Bragg during that time period as a way to connect with stakeholders and get a better feel for the vibe and character of our town.

The total budget available for Visit Fort Bragg for the fiscal year 2019-20 is \$216,500. The chart below defines the funds that would be available for marketing efforts. The proposed contract with The Idea Cooperative is for \$99,000.

VFB Expenditure	Budget Amount	Available for Marketing
Website	\$ 5,500	\$ -
Interactive and Social Media Marketing	36,000	18,000
Content (word/photo/video)	18,500	13,500
Advertising	50,000	50,000
Public Relations and Media Outreach	5,000	5,000
Project, Contract and VFB Management	25,000	25,000
Collateral Materials, Banners, Signage	15,000	-
Special Events, Tours and Attractions	45,000	-
Dues & Memberships	10,000	-
Miscellaneous	6,500	6,500
	<u>\$ 216,500</u>	<u>\$ 118,000</u>

REQUESTED ACTION FROM CITY COUNCIL:

City Council remanded the proposed contract to the Visit Fort Bragg Committee for further review and recommendation, and to develop more measurable milestones and deliverables in the Scope of Work. Based on that direction, staff recommends:

1. The VFB Committee review the contract, scope of work and consider the consultant’s materials in making a recommendation to City Council on whether to recommend approval of the Contract with The Idea Cooperative.
2. If recommendation by the VFB Committee is for approval of The Idea Cooperative’s contract, provide additional input on measurable milestones and deliverables to incorporate into the scope of work and a means for validating that those milestones and deliverables are met. The milestones and deliverables would need to be accepted by The Idea Cooperative prior to Council approval. Assuming that The Idea Cooperative is present, this could be an interactive process during the meeting.
3. If the VFB Committee does not recommend that the City Council approve the contract, provide recommendations on next steps for staff and the City Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

Draft Proposed Contract with The Idea Cooperative