

Committee of the Whole Agenda Cover Memorandum

Meeting Date: January 23, 2012

Item Title: Vendor for Fire Lieutenant and Battalion Chief Promotions Testing

Action Requested:

- Approval
- For discussion
- Feedback requested
- For your information

Staff Contact: Michael A. Zywnski, Fire Chief

Phone Number: 847-318-5259

Email Address: mzywansk@parkridgefd.org

Background:

The current promotions eligibility lists for the ranks of Fire Lieutenant and Battalion Chief expire on May 8, 2012 and April 17, 2012. The Illinois Fire Department Promotions Act stipulates that Fire Departments shall have current eligibility lists for the tested ranks within the Fire Department, further stipulates that the promotions eligibility lists shall be posted for a period not to exceed two years. The testing process and components are outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and include a written exam and an assessment center utilizing third party neutral assessors, all conducted by a testing company selected by the City. Therefore, Fire Department staff solicited quotes for the testing process from four vendors in the Chicago Metropolitan Area. The vendors providing the proposals are:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| RMA | \$12,534.00 |
| I/O Solutions | \$26,170.00 |
| IPSP | \$18,650.00 |
| Selection Works | \$26,870.00 |

The promotional testing process is governed under the authority of the Board of Police and Fire Commissioners.

Recommendation:

Move to approve the low price quote for promotions testing from Resource Management Associates (RMA) in the amount of \$12,534.00

Budget Implications:

Does Action Require an Expenditure of Funds: Yes No

If Yes, Total Cost: \$12,534.00
If Yes, is this a Budgeted Item:

X Yes

No

Account Number: 100-1024-943100

Attachments:

Proposal from RMA Associates



January 4, 2012

Ms. Jennifer Steurer
Administrative Assistant
Park Ridge Fire Department
901 W. Devon
Park Ridge, IL 60068

Dear Ms. Steurer:

Thank you for contacting me regarding our interest in assisting you in designing and administering a content-valid written examination and assessment center for candidates for the positions of Lieutenant and Battalion Chief. Based on previous testing for these positions, it is my understanding that there will be approximately twelve candidates for the Lieutenant's position and six candidates for the position of Battalion Chief.

Resource Management Associates has been involved in providing entry-level and promotional examination services to communities throughout the United States for more than 30 years and we welcome the opportunity to submit this proposal for your consideration.

In the design and administration of promotional examinations, we consider the following to be of paramount importance.

1. The examination should be valid and relevant. That is, it should be based upon a thorough understanding of the position for which candidates are being considered and should accurately measure a candidate's potential for successfully performing the duties of the position.
2. The process should be designed in such a way as to provide every eligible applicant a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate his or her ability to perform the duties of the position and there should be absolutely no hint of bias, favoritism or personal influence in any part of the examination process.
3. The process should be legally defensible and free from any actual or implied adverse impact against any person or group on the basis of age, gender, race, color, or creed.
4. The process should be cost-effective. While quality should not be sacrificed to cut costs, the costs of the service provided should be justified on the basis of the quality of the final work product.

5. The integrity and credibility of the testing firm, as well as that of the City, should not be questioned as a result of the testing process.

These are the principles that have guided us over the years in our design and administration of public safety promotional examinations. We hope that you will agree that these principles are important in evaluating our approach to this undertaking.

Scope of Services

Based upon my understanding of your requirements, we are prepared to do the following:

Written Examination (*both positions*)

1. We will consult with the PRFD command staff to discuss the nature and contents of the written examination for these positions and to identify the source materials that will be used in constructing the examinations.
2. We will provide a Reading List (*see enclosed*) for each position which identify source materials from which all examination items will be drawn. Based on the Illinois Firefighters Promotion Act, we recommend that a minimum of 90 days be allowed between receipt and posting of the Reading List and the examination date. This is sufficient time, in our experience, to allow candidates to obtain and study the source materials.
3. If desired or necessary, we will prepare questions from the PRFD policies and procedures. There is a one-time charge for this service since these questions cannot be used in examinations for other agencies.
4. We will develop a customized written examination for each position consisting of approximately 100 multiple-choice questions covering appropriate technical material germane to the duties and responsibilities of the positions.
5. We will administer the examinations at a location provide by the City and on a date and time mutually agreed upon.
6. We will make arrangements to score the examinations on-site using computerized scoring methods and providing for an immediate written report to the candidate containing their score as well as a list of the items they answered incorrectly.
7. We will conduct a review and appeal session in which candidates will be allowed to review their examination papers and to appeal any questions that they may believe are vague, ambiguous, or improperly keyed. All appeals will be reduced to writing using a standard format designed for this purpose.

8. All appeals will be reviewed by our staff and a decision reached within two business days after receipt. We will inform you of our decision on any challenges and will recalculate the scores as may be necessary.
9. Immediately following our response to the appeals, we will prepare a written report including the preliminary (*pre-appeal*) and final (*post-appeal*) written examination scores, along with a description of all appeals received and the decisions reached regarding them.

Assessment Center (both positions)

1. We will meet with designated PRFD command staff to review the department organization as well as the duties of the position of Fire Lieutenant as well as Battalion Chief and to discuss the scenarios to be included in the assessment center processes. Based upon the information generated as a result of this meeting, we will design exercise materials that will fairly and accurately test the candidates' ability to perform the duties of these positions in a successful manner.
2. We will prepare draft exercise materials and submit them to you for review. Following this review, we will make any adjustments in these materials necessary to ensure their relevancy to the position and to the operating procedures of the Park Ridge Fire Department.
3. We will administer an assessment center for each position to consist of three exercises designed to reflect the organization, operations and policies of the Park Ridge Fire Department and the duties and responsibilities of the positions.
4. We propose that all parts of the assessment center, including the candidate evaluation and scoring, be video recorded to document the consistency in the process and fairness to all candidates. The video recordings can also be used to review the performance of the candidates in the exercises.
5. Prior to the assessment centers, we will conduct an orientation session for the candidates to acquaint them with the nature of the process, the exercises in which they will participate, and the manner in which their performance will be evaluated.
6. Subject to your approval, we will select three qualified persons to serve as assessors. These will be persons who have no connection with the department or any of the candidates and who will have no problem in objectively evaluating their performance.
7. We will conduct a training session for the assessors to acquaint them with the nature of the assessment center exercises and the procedures to be employed in evaluating and scoring the candidates. Assessors will also be provided with

background information concerning the organization, staffing and operations of the Park Ridge Fire Department.

8. Upon concluding the assessment centers, we will tabulate the final scores and submit the results to the Fire and Police Commission once we receive this request from the Commission. Scores shall be based on a maximum 100 percent.
9. Following the assessment center, we will conduct individual feedback sessions with the candidates to review with them their performance in the assessment center and to point out to them areas in need of improvement.

Project Administration

It has been our experience that proper project management is the key to the success of any consulting work. In addition, the persons assigned to the project must have extensive experience in performing similar work as well as complimentary skills. The project would be conducted under the supervision of **Mr. Charles D. Hale**, who is the President of **Resource Management Associates**, and who has served in that capacity since 1981.

Mr. Hale has written and lectured extensively on the subject of public safety organization, management and operations and is the author of three books on police administration, including *Police Patrol*, a Prentice-Hall textbook currently in its 3rd edition. He is also the author of the book, The Assessment Center Handbook for Police and Fire Personnel, published by Charles C. Thomas. He has designed and administered both police and fire department promotional examinations in the states of Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia and Wisconsin.

Mr. Hale would participate in all phases of the project, to include the development of the written examination and the design and administration of the assessment center or oral interviews. He holds a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice from California State University at Long Beach.

Mr. Hale will be assisted in various parts of the work outlined above by Mr. Steven W. Hale, Vice-President. Mr. Steven Hale has been a member of the firm since 1988 and has actively participated in the design and administration of written and oral examinations as well as assessment centers over that time.

Organizational Qualifications

Resource Management Associates is an independent consulting organization that is devoted exclusively to providing technical assistance and consultant services to local government. Our staff is comprised of individuals with extensive experience in a number of governmental fields including law enforcement; fire administration; organization and management; and finance and personnel administration.

Since 1981, we have established a reputation for professional work and client satisfaction. Each year we design and administer more than twenty-five assessment centers and promotional examinations of the kind described here.

References

We consider the recommendations of our clients to be the best testimony of the quality of our work, and we urge you to contact any of the persons listed below to obtain their assessment of our work.

Chief Daniel Russell
North Palos Fire District
Palos Hills, IL
(708) 974-4474

Chief Fred Friedl
Gurnee Fire Department
Gurnee, IL
(847) 244-8631

Chief Sean Maloy
Bedford Park Fire Department
Bedford Park, IL
(708) 563-4513

Ms. Debra Bush
Human Resources Coordinator
Peoria, IL
(309) 494-8578

Project Costs

Written Examination

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Base Fee for customized examinations | \$ 900.00 |
| Test Booklets and Scoring (18 @ \$13.00/each) | \$ 234.00 |
| Development of Local Questions @ \$15.00/each (<i>if necessary</i>) | |
| Test Administration ¹ | \$ 500.00 |
| On-site Scoring w/Review and Appeal Session | \$ <u>300.00</u> |
| Sub-Total | \$ 1,934.00 |

¹Per test administration. It may be feasible to test both of these positions at the same time.

Ms. Jennifer Steurer
January 4, 2012 - page 6

Assessment Center

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Exercise Design | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Exercise Administration ² | \$ 4,000.00 |
| Assessor Fees | \$ <u>3,600.00</u> |
| Sub-Total | \$ 8,600.00 |
| Total | \$10,534.00 |

These costs do not include staff or assessor travel, meals and lodging (*if necessary*) and assume that the City will provide suitable facilities in which to conduct the various testing components.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal. We would consider it a pleasure to assist you in these important endeavors. If you have any questions about anything contained in this proposal, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Steven W. Hale
Vice-President

Enclosures: Revised Reading Lists

²Includes candidate orientation, assessor orientation, and candidate feedback.

CITY OF PARK RIDGE

Fire Lieutenant Examination

Reading List¹

The written examination for this position will consist of approximately 100 multiple-choice questions taken from the following sources:

1. Fire Officer's Handbook of Tactics, John Norman, 3rd edition, PenWell Publishing Company - Fire Engineering Books and Videos, 2005 (*Approximately 25 questions*)
2. Fire and Emergency Services Company Officer, International Fire Service Training Association, 4th edition (*Approximately 25 questions*)
3. Building Construction - Related to the Fire Service, International Fire Service Training Association, 2nd edition, 1999 (*Approximately 20 questions*)
4. City of Park Ridge Proposed Annual Budget Fiscal Year ending April 30, 2010
5. City of Park Ridge Street/Grid Map
6. City of Park Ridge Municipal Code, Article 7 Fire Regulations
7. Park Ridge Fire Department Standards of Response Coverage - 2006
8. Labor Agreement between the City of Park Ridge and Local 2697, May 1, 2006 through April 30, 2010
9. Park Ridge Fire Department Strategic Plan 2006-2010
10. Region X Multiple Patient Management Plan (2-sided document)

Note: The above texts are available from **Firefighters Bookstore**, 18281 Gothard Street #105, Huntington Beach, California 92648. (800) 727-3327. Telephone orders are accepted. Orders are also accepted online at www.firebooks.com. Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Discover are honored.

¹Sources 4-10 will account for approximately 30 questions.

CITY OF PARK RIDGE

Battalion Chief Examination

Reading List²

The written examination for this position will consist of approximately 100 multiple-choice questions taken from the following sources:

1. Fire Officer's Handbook of Tactics, John Norman, 3rd edition, PenWell Publishing Company - Fire Engineering Books and Videos, 2005 (*Approximately 25 questions*)
2. Chief Officer, 2nd edition, International Fire Service Training Association (*Approximately 25 questions*)
3. Building Construction - Related to the Fire Service, International Fire Service Training Association, 2nd edition, 1999 (*Approximately 20 questions*)
4. City of Park Ridge Proposed Annual Budget Fiscal Year ending April 30, 2010
5. City of Park Ridge Street/Grid Map
6. City of Park Ridge Municipal Code, Article 7 Fire Regulations
7. Park Ridge Fire Department Standards of Response Coverage - 2006
8. Labor Agreement between the City of Park Ridge and Local 2697, May 1, 2006 through April 30, 2010
9. Park Ridge Fire Department Strategic Plan 2006-2010.
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