
Sponsor: Finance

Meeting Date: 7/9/2024

Title: Amendment to the Joint Powers Agreement for the Central Certification Program

File Number: 2024-178

Background and Rationale:

Ramsey County is a member of the Central Certification (CERT) Program, in partnership with Hennepin County and the cities of Saint Paul and Minneapolis (collectively, the Collaborative).

In 2023, the Collaborative decided to transfer administration of the CERT program to a third-party vendor. The Ramsey County Finance Department led the solicitation and executed a contract with Strong and Starlike Consulting, LLC, 8500 Normandale Lake Blvd, Suite 350, Bloomington, MN 55437, to administer the CERT program on behalf of the Collaborative. Finance staff recommend that the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approve an amendment to the JPA that would identify Ramsey County as the fiscal agent of the Collaborative for the purpose of administering the contract with Strong and Starlike Consulting. The amendment is also being submitted for approval by the governing bodies of the other Collaborative members. The amendment includes revisions to the Lead Agency clause, the Fiscal Agent clause, the Responsibilities of Lead Agency clause, and inclusion of a Responsibilities of Fiscal Agent clause. The change in lead agencies reflects the move to a third-party vendor and Ramsey County's ability to manage the contract. Each Collaborative member will pay Ramsey County their share of the cost of the program.

In 1999, Hennepin County, Ramsey County, cities of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, and Independent School District 625, began to offer a centralized program for certification of small business enterprises, and/or minority-women owned business enterprises. The certification program became known as the Central Certification Program and was managed by an outside consultant from 1999 through 2003 when the Saint Paul Public Schools- Independent School District 625 withdrew from the program due to program funding cuts.

In 2004, a Joint Powers Agreement was created and submitted by the Collaborative Executive Committee for approval by the governing bodies of the Collaborative members. Since 2004, the city of Saint Paul has served as the lead agency. In 2011, the city of Minneapolis left the collaborative but decided to rejoin in 2017. Since that time, the city of Saint Paul has served as the lead agency for the Collaborative and the JPA has been brought to the Ramsey County Board twice - in 2018 and 2021 to make agreed upon revisions.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve the amendment to the Joint Powers Agreement for the Central Certification Program from the date of execution for one year with annual automatic renewals, unless a majority of the Central Certification Program members withdraw, or the program is dissolved.
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the amendment.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Xiong, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Frethem, Martinson, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By: 

Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board