
Sponsor: Information and Public Records Administration

Meeting Date: 10/17/2023

Title: Single Source Agreement with KNOWiNK, LLC for Election Poll Pad System and Professional Support Services

File Number: 2023-173

Background and Rationale:

Voters, elections judges and administrators have come to rely on electronic rosters, known as poll pads, electronic poll books (EPB), or electronic poll pads. In 2013, the Minnesota legislature convened an Electronic Roster Task Force (ERTF). The focus was on different EPBs and their functionality, security, certification, and compatibility with the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS). ERTF worked in collaboration with MN IT, the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office and county participants (including Ramsey County). After a successful test in the 2014 election, the legislature authorized counties, cities, and municipalities in the 2014 omnibus elections bill to use EPB's in any election.

The KNOWiNK Poll Pad System includes equipment (hardware and computer peripheral) and licensed software. KNOWiNK offers professional support services before, during and after elections. The software is capable of verifying that voters are in the correct precinct, informing voters of the correct precinct if they are in the wrong precinct, and will not allow the voter to vote in an incorrect precinct. If there is a challenge to a voter record, there are step by step instructions on how to handle the challenge and if a voter is registering for the first time on election day, the voter registration application is divided into sections to clearly allow election judges and the voters to complete the required sections.

KNOWiNK meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes 201.225 subdivision. 2, for EPB providers. KNOWiNK is the only pollbook vendor used in Minnesota. A statewide user group is set-up to support election administrators who use the KNOWiNK solution. KNOWiNK has partnered with Ramsey County elections since 2013. Ramsey County has fully implemented KNOWiNK pollpads to all 165 precincts in Ramsey County.

Ramsey County evaluated and assessed three vendors, ES&S, Hart and KNOWiNK during the 2013 discovery process. KNOWiNK is the only competitive vendor that was able to meet the security and technical requirements of Minnesota Statutes 201.225 subdivision 2.

Ramsey County Elections Services collaborated with Information Services Security and Infrastructure, and completed a physical and cyber review with the Department of Homeland Security. Additionally, Elections worked closely with Information Services Security to evaluate any risks and worked to identify and resolve any potential gaps. The voters of the county have come to expect the efficiencies, security, and ease of checking in electronically to vote. The EPBs create confidence with voters, a positive public perception, and provide efficiencies that the Elections office has come to rely on. State law requires administrators to post voting history and complete the data entry of voter registration applications within six weeks from election day. With KNOWiNK's Poll Pad System, the county completes this work within two weeks.

The current hardware is now aged and unsupported and cannot be upgraded. New devices with the latest operating system will be required. Previously, through the state of Minnesota cooperative

contract the approximate cost of services for software maintenance is \$65,000 annually. With the new agreement, Elections will have the option to lease EPB's with the latest operating systems for maximum efficiency. This upgrade will significantly increase the annual costs due to implementation of the newly leased and/or purchased devices.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve the selection of and single source agreement with KNOWiNK, LLC, 460 N. Lindbergh Boulevard, Saint Louis, MO, 63141 for an electronic poll pad system and professional support services for the period October 17, 2023 through October 18, 2026 and may be renewed for up to two additional three-year periods, for the not to exceed amount of \$1,141,052.
2. Authorize the Chair and the Chief Clerk to execute the agreement.
3. Authorize the County Manager to approve amendments to agreements in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures, provided the amounts are within the limits of available funding.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Moran, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Motion passed.

Aye: - 6: Frethem, Martinson, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

Absent: - 1: McGuire

By: 
Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board