

Request for Board Action Details

File #: 2024-178

Type: Administrative Item **Status:** Passed

In control: Board of Commissioners

On agenda: 7/9/2024 **Final action:** 7/9/2024

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

Sponsors: Finance

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. Joint Powers Agreement Among the City of Saint Paul, Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of Minneapolis, 2. Amendment 1 to the Joint Powers Agreement Among the City of Saint Paul, Hennepin County, Ramsey County and City of Minneapolis (“The Collaborative”), 3. Resolution

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
7/9/2024	1	Board of Commissioners	approved	Pass

Sponsor: Finance

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

Recommendation

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.

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.

County Goals (Check those advanced by Action)

- Well-being Prosperity Opportunity Accountability

Racial Equity Impact

Ramsey County is committed to increasing contract opportunities for the purchases of goods and services from vendors, including non-profits and community-based organizations, that reflect the diversity of our community. Participation in CERT allows Ramsey County the opportunity to identify and contract with small, minority, women, and minority-women owned and emerging small business enterprises.

Ramsey County reports all actual spending on the Ramsey County open data portal, please see Small Business Spending <<<https://opendata.ramseycounty.us/stories/s/Small-Business-Spending/4hb6-hrjt>>>. The graphs on the portal show total procurement spending and disaggregates the data by non-profit, government agencies, small minority-owned, small women-owned, and small minority and women owned businesses and breaks down the small business enterprises by ethnicity.

In 2023, Ramsey County spent over \$30 million on small businesses. Approximately 59% of Ramsey County's small business spending went to minority-owned businesses in 2023. Of this total, approximately:

- \$4.2 million went towards African American-owned businesses,
- \$3.8 million went towards Asian American-owned businesses,
- \$2.8 million went towards Hispanic American-owned businesses, and
- \$6.5 million went towards Native American-owned businesses.

The report is updated every two weeks based on actual expenditures. The county continues to create new and expanded opportunities to grow and sustain small and diverse businesses.

Community Participation Level and Impact

CERT provides outreach opportunities. For example, CERT holds monthly workshops at the Rondo Community Library with the aim of introducing local government contracting programs and assisting the business owners with applying for CERT Certifications. Workshops include procurement representatives from the Collaborative, St. Paul SCORE Program (business mentorship), LegalCORPS, and US Small Business Administration's 8(A) Program to provide additional resources and answer questions. During these workshops, Ramsey County provides DemandStar registration assistance to participants. Information about CERT can be located here: <

<<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/human-rights-equal-economic-opportunity/contract-compliance-business-development-1>>>

Ramsey County Procurement and Contracting Action Teams are also using CERT to connect with certified businesses in an effort to increase and diversify the county's CERT portfolio. More information about CERT Connect can be located here: <

<<https://ramseynet.us/county-governance/county-committees/action-teams/cert-connect>>>

- Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower

Fiscal Impact

Ramsey County pays \$34,270 annually in membership dues to the CERT Collaborative. The annual rate has

remained the same since 2018. Funding for this program is included in the 2024 Finance budget. Each Collaborative member will pay the same amount to Ramsey County to pay for the cost of the annual contract.

Last Previous Action

On October 19, 2021, the Ramsey County Board approved the revised Joint Powers Agreement for the Central Certification Program (Resolution B2021-226).

Attachments

1. Amendment 1 to the Joint Powers Agreement Among the City of Saint Paul, Hennepin County, Ramsey County and City of Minneapolis ("The Collaborative")
2. Joint Powers Agreement Among the City of Saint Paul, Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of Minneapolis