

Agenda Action Form
City of Manassas Park Governing Body

ITEM

9A

Meeting Date: May 15, 2012

Short Title: Appoint Assessor/City Assessing Services

Ordinance Resolution Motion Workshop Briefing

Staff Work By: Fields/Sanderson

Presentation By: Zumwalt/Fields

Background Information:

Chapter 2, Article XII of the Code of the City of Manassas Park requires the Governing Body to appoint a City Assessor and provides that the Assessor:

- Develop and prepare assessment and sales ratio studies for properties located in the City of Manassas Park;
- Collect, verify, and analyze appropriate real estate market data that will provide for the valuation of taxable property for annual real property assessments as of July 1 for each year of the contract, in the City of Manassas Park; and
- Collect, verify, and analyze appropriate changes to property characteristics (new construction, additions, rezoning, etc.) that will provide for the valuation of taxable property for annual real property assessments in the City of Manassas Park.

Additionally,

- We have been very successful with the work of current City Assessor, Richard Sanderson. He has significantly improved the processes and customer service of the Office of the City Assessor (a "one-man shop"). In June, Richard is relocating to Italy and leaving us in a much better position than when he started, but with big shoes to fill.
- We relied heavily on Richard's expertise and advice as we have searched for a replacement. We originally advertised for the position of City Assessor as a traditional employee (in February/March 2012). We received a total of 8 applications.
- Upon further consideration, we decided to send out an RFP for contractual assessing services to widen the pool of talent we might select from.
- It was through a similar route that we were fortunate enough to acquire the services of our current assessor in 2007 before he took the role as an employee in January 2008.
- We only received 2 proposals but one of those stands out as very highly qualified with significant amount of local government experience, running the assessing offices for 23 years and 20 years respectively, for the City of Alexandria and Arlington County.
- Richard has reviewed all the applications and proposals received. His recommendation, which we highly value, is attached.

- It is extremely difficult for a smaller city like Manassas Park to compete salary-wise for an employee/consultant of this caliber.
- The recommended contractor, East River LLC, has agreed to annual compensation of \$130,000 to provide for the City's assessing services.

Based on their significant experience and expertise in the assessing field, and our current City Assessor's recommendation,

- Contractor will begin working May 21, 2012 with the current City Assessor to allow for a smooth transition.
- The agreement will include a provision for an equivalent increase in the contract rate for FY2014, FY2015, and extension years, for any general cost of living increase approved for general (non public safety) employees.
- The term of the agreement will include the last month of FY 2012 and the 3 subsequent fiscal years (FY2013, 2014 and 2015). There will be a provision for four additional annual extensions.
- The agreement may be terminated by either party at the end of each fiscal year period with 90 days notification by either party.
- The contract form will be subject to final review by the City Attorney.

Goal: Economic Development Financial Improvement Infrastructure & Transportation
 Safe City Citizen Service & Communications

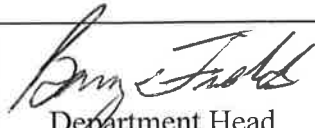
Funds Available:

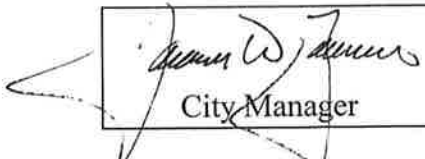
The FY2013 proposed budget currently provides for \$123,500 salary/benefits for the City Assessor. However, the recommended contractor is providing in the scope of their agreement 50 hours of additional consulting time for the new CAMA system. (See "Note" below).

Note: The CAMA (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal) system purchased as part of the Tyler Technologies, Inc. tax software package will require additional time from the Assessor for implementation/set-up. This additional time has not been provided for in this agreement other than the initial 50 hours in FY2013 as noted above.

Staff Recommendation:

Authorize the City Manager to enter into a consulting services agreement with East River LLC for the services outlined under "Scope of Services" in that agreement at an annual rate of \$130,000, to be paid monthly, except for the first month of the contract which will be paid half on June 1, 2012; and appoint Charles M. Page, with East River LLC, as Manassas Park City Assessor.


 Department Head



 City Manager

City of Manassas Park, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 8, 2012

TO: GARY FIELDS, FINANCE DIRECTOR

FROM: RICHARD SANDERSON, CITY ASSESSOR 

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDED PROVIDER OF REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT
CONSULTING SERVICES

I have reviewed the two responses that we received on May 4 in response to our request for proposals for real estate assessments consulting services that was posted April 18. I have also reviewed eight applications that we received for the City Assessor position that was advertised in March.

After a thorough review of the submissions and applications I recommend the selection of East River LLC to provide real estate assessment consulting services. While there are many reasons for selecting this firm, the key points include:

- Submission demonstrated a clearer understanding of the work to be performed;
- The team chosen by East River LLC to perform the services represents a variety of administrative and technical experience and skills with demonstrated experience in real estate assessment administration;
- The key principals of East River LLC have the greatest potential of continuing and improving upon the assessment policies and practices that I have implemented since 2007;
- Submission describes a demonstrated knowledge of Virginia tax laws related to real property assessment that includes expert testimony in assessment appeals to circuit court and monitoring legislative proposals in Richmond each year;
- Submission spells out how that they will have a physical presence at City Hall in Manassas Park similar to what I have had during my tenure here, and that pays close attention to the specific needs of Manassas Park property owners; and
- Submission states that East River LLC is available to begin providing on-site services no later than May 21, 2012.

East River LLC

2905 Old Dominion Boulevard
Alexandria, VA 22305-1627
Phone: 703.549.0870
E-Mail: csmithpage@gmail.com
E-Mail: cmppage@gmail.com

April 27, 2012

City of Manassas Park
Department of Finance
1 Park Center Court
Manassas Park, Virginia 20111-2395

Re: Request for Proposal for Real Property Assessment Consulting Services

Dear Mr. Fields:

We are pleased to submit the attached proposal in response to the Request for Proposal for Real Property Assessment Consulting Services for the City of Manassas Park. The Summary of Qualifications and Understanding of Work to be Performed as well as references for East River LLC, principles and employees are attached.

East River LLC is comprised of two principles, which have sixty- five years (combined) of real property assessment experience in Northern Virginia. We believe we have the knowledge and abilities that will meet the needs of the City of Manassas Park and look forward to your review and consideration of our proposal.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Cindy Smith-Page, ASA
President
East River, LLC

Attachments

East River LLC

2905 Old Dominion Boulevard
Alexandria, VA 22305-1627
Phone: 703.549.0870
E-Mail: csmithpage@gmail.com
E-Mail: cmppage@gmail.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS & UNDERSTANDING OF WORK TO BE PERFORMED

East River LLC is a real property valuation consulting company started in August 2010 to assist local governments with issues relating to real property assessments to include; assessment valuation expertise, assistance in preparation of reviews and appeals of assessments, and litigation assistance in Circuit Courts. Other areas of expertise include knowledge of Virginia tax laws, and computer assisted mass appraisal systems.

The company has two partners who have worked in real property assessments in Virginia for more than thirty years each. Mrs. Smith-Page was the Director and Deputy Director of an assessment office for more than 23 years and Mr. Page was the Assistant Director of an assessment office for 20 years. Both have the education, training and experience to be certified by the Virginia Department of Taxation to assess properties under Virginia Code Section 58.1-3258.

Mr. Page managed the day-to-day operations of the Arlington County, VA Assessment Department supervising 21 staff appraisers who were responsible for the annual assessments of over 65,000 parcels and a tax base of approximately \$61 billion. The department relied on a computer assisted mass appraisal system to manage the assessment data for the staff. As the supervisor of the staff, Mr. Page was knowledgeable in the laws of Virginia that mandate assessment methodology. Mr. Page was the department liaison to the Board of Equalization and presented cases before the Board with assistance from staff appraisers. Mr. Page's background is detailed in the attached Curriculum Vitae.

Mrs. Smith-Page, as the Deputy Director and Director of the Assessment Department for the City of Alexandria, VA, managed a total staff of 17 and a tax base of approximately \$35 billion. Mrs. Smith-Page also monitored legislation before the Virginia General Assembly and provided comments to City officials. Mrs. Smith-Page has testified as an expert in the Circuit Court of Alexandria. Mrs. Smith-Page was the Director during the selection and implementation of a new computer assisted mass appraisal system for the City of Alexandria. Mrs. Smith-Page's background is detailed in the attached Curriculum Vitae.

Mrs. Radford has worked as a Management Analyst and office manager supervising the administrative staff, the Records Manager, Title Clerk, and acted as the Information Technology representative. Mrs. Radford was responsible for the day-to-day management of interactions and correspondence with the public. Mrs. Radford gained knowledge and expertise with her hands-on experience during the implementation of a new computer assisted mass appraisal system. Mrs. Radford has knowledge of the requirements of the Code of Virginia regarding notices of assessment, preparation of the land book and valuation changes and tracking. Mrs. Radford's resume details her experience and knowledge.

The team chosen by East River LLC will continue the public relations program of the current assessment department for the City of Manassas Park. It is agreed that they will do all data collection and valuation for assessment purposes. The typical schedule will provide a team member be in the office in City Hall two days per week on a routine basis, and more frequently during times of deadlines, or times important for public access directly to the assessment officials.

East River LLC agrees to provide on-site services beginning no later than May 21, 2012.

CURRICULUM VITAE

CYNTHIA A. SMITH-PAGE, ASA
2905 OLD DOMINION BOULEVARD
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22305-1627

EMPLOYMENT

Present East River LLC Consulting
Previous Director, Department of Real Estate Assessments City of Alexandria,
 VA 2002 – 2010
 Deputy Director, Department of Real Estate Assessments City of
 Alexandria, VA 1988 – 2001
 Staff Appraiser, Department of Real Estate Assessments City of
 Alexandria, VA 1975 – 1987
 Fee Appraiser, Part-time 1975 – 1982

EDUCATION

B. A. Degree – Bridgewater College, 1975

REAL ESTATE EDUCATION

Appraisal Institute

Real Estate Appraisal Principles
Capitalization Techniques and Theories
Urban Properties
Litigation Valuation
Single Family Residential
Narrative Report Writing
Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice

International Association of Assessing Officers

Fundamentals of Real Property Appraisal
Mass Appraisal of Residential Property
Mass Appraisal of Income Producing Property
Assessment Administration
Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice
Seminar on Condominium Valuation

CURRICULUM VITAE

CHARLES M. PAGE, ASA
2905 OLD DOMINION BOULEVARD
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22305-1627

EMPLOYMENT

Present East River LLC Consulting
Previous Assistant Director, Department of Real Estate Assessments, Arlington
County, VA 1991 – 2012
Real Estate Appraiser, Marvin F. Poer & Co, Property Tax Consultants,
1982 – 1991
Real Estate Appraiser, Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing
Authority, 1980 – 1982
Real Estate Appraiser, Robert H. Jones & Associates, Inc, 1979 -1980
Senior Appraiser, Department of Real Estate Assessments, City of
Alexandria, VA 1974 – 1979
Fee Appraiser, Part-time 1974 – 1982
Photo Interpreter, Defense Intelligence Agency, 1973 -1974
1Lt, Military Intelligence, US Army, 1968 - 1972

EDUCATION

B. S. Degree – North Carolina State University, 1968

REAL ESTATE EDUCATION

Appraisal Institute

Real Estate Appraisal Principles
Capitalization Techniques and Theories
Urban Properties
Litigation Valuation
Single Family Residential
Investment Analysis
Narrative Report Writing
Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice

Ann M. Radford
404 Whitecliff Drive
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22407

Email – annmradford@gmail.com
540-710-1883 home
540-809-2590 cell

RESUME

EDUCATION: Crossland High School, Camp Springs, Maryland – 1970
Florida Junior College, Clearwater, Florida – Math and accounting courses
University of South Florida – Basic language programming courses
IBM Corporation, Jacksonville, Florida – RPGII programming syllabus; related
System 34 and 36 installation and operations.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

City of Alexandria, Virginia, Management Analyst, Department of Real Estate Assessments -
September 2002 to

October 2011. Managed changes, oversaw corrections and balanced the City's Land Book utilizing various software programs. Prepared various reports and statistics for the department, other City agencies and the State. Supervised administrative and Records staff. Managed administrative functions of Real Estate Assessment Department (DREA) to include payroll, departmental budget, and incoming and outgoing correspondence. Provided primary staff support for the nine-member Board of Equalization and Assessment Review (BOE). Staffing included assignment of appeals to appraisal staff, scheduling appellant hearings, preparation and distribution of BOE dockets, attending BOE meetings (approx 50-60 meetings per year), preparation of hearing results and related statistics. Coordinated and managed the annual Assessment Notice mailing to property owners. Coordinated and managed the annual mailing of Income and Expense forms to income producing property owners. Served as DREA Webmaster, IT Coordinator, Human Resources liaison, Financial Management liaison, FOIA coordinator, City Manager's office liaison and City Attorney's office liaison.

Metro Tile Inc., Office Manager - May 2001 – September 2002. Managed administrative and accounting functions for a busy ceramic tile installation contractor. Trained and supervised payroll and clerical personnel. Managed complete conversion to third party payroll processor (ADP). Administered 401k, health and dental insurance. Designed and wrote office procedures manual. Developed access database to track job backlog. Worked with third party programmer in the development of a fleet maintenance database.

City of Alexandria, Virginia, Senior Personnel Analyst - March 1999 – April 2001. Provided extensive employee relations counseling to management and staff. Made policy recommendations to management on disciplinary actions and grievance issues. Served as liaison with City Attorney's office, City Manager's Office, Commonwealth Attorney's Office and American Arbitration Association for employee relations, grievances, EEOC, ADA and FMLA cases. Designed, developed and maintained various databases to track employee disciplinary actions and grievances. Analyzed disciplinary data for advising senior management on the need for citywide staff training. Designed, developed and conducted interactive training classes for citywide staff in the Discipline and Grievance Process, Administrative Regulations, Employee Counseling, Sexual Harassment Prevention and Diversity utilizing PowerPoint and Presentations software.

References:

Karen Snow, Esq., Assistant City Attorney 703-746-3750
City of Alexandria, City Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 178
Alexandria, Virginia 22313

Kathleen C. Ognibene, Deputy Director 703-746-3767
City of Alexandria, Human Resources Department
P. O. Box 178
Alexandria, Virginia 22313

Computer skills: Access, Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Microsoft Publisher, WordPerfect, and Presentations.

Member – Virginia Association of Assessing Officers(VAAO)
International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO)
IAAO Course 101 - Fundamentals of Real Property Appraisal, June 2004
IAAO Course 400 - Assessment Administration, June 2005

East River LLC

2905 Old Dominion Boulevard
Alexandria, VA 22305-1627
Phone: 703.549.0870
E-Mail: csmithpage@gmail.com
E-Mail: cmppage@gmail.com

REFERENCES

Randall T. Greehan, Esquire
Greehan, Taves, Pankak & Stoner
14520 Avion Parkway
Suite 210
Chantilly, VA 20151
703.378.5770
Rgreehan@gtpsllaw.com

Mr. Mark Jinks
Deputy City Manager
City of Alexandria, VA
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703.746.4300
Mark.Jinks@alexandriava.gov

Mr. Thomas Rice
Director, Real Estate Assessments
Arlington County, VA
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Suite 611
Arlington, VA 22201
703.228.3916
Trice@arlingtonva.us