

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC PURCHASING OFFICIALS (MAPPO)

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Olde Colonial Café, Norwood, MA

Officers Present

Mary Delaney, President
Tom Watkins, Vice President
David Gelineau & Sarah Stanton, Co-Treasurers
Whitney Haskell & Sandra Marquis, Co-Secretaries

New Members Attending

Bonnie Haymen, Outreach Coordinator for OSD

Guests Attending

Andrea Ristine, Administrative Assistant, Acton, MA

Welcome

Cathy Carney, Contract Administrator, Town of Norwood

Cathy Carney welcomed the membership to the Town of Norwood. Cathy gave a short talk about the town hall and its recent physical improvements. During her welcome she also noted that the Olde Colonial Café was originally a fire station and is still a town owned building.

Cathy invited everyone to enjoy the buffet lunch.

At 12:30 p.m., Angela Allen (Somerville), Chair of the Speaker Committee, introduced the speaker Gary Lambert, Assistant Secretary for Operational Service Division.

Speaker

Gary gave a short history of Comm-Pass the first¹ web-based tool to be used for state purchasing. The system came into existence in 1997 and was upgraded in 2004. In 2011, it was decided that the system did not meet modern day requirements. In August 2012, the state sent out a solicitation for a new web-based product. The responses were evaluated in November 2012. In January 2013, the state began negotiating with the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. After eight weeks of it was determined that the vendor could not meet the accessibility standards. On May 31, 2013, the state signed with the second lowest responsive and responsible bidder. On July 1, 2013, negotiations began. Gary stated that CommBuys will be live on March 24, 2014.

The goal of CommBuys is not only to provide electronic procurement technology but to build a community around public purchasing. OSD wants to build the largest vendor database possible in order to increase option to compete and drive to a better value. This electronic procurement system will improve the business environment by not only showcasing vendors who have been awarded state contracts but, by allowing all vendors to post their products and services. To encourage new vendors to bid on not only

state contracts but, contracts put out by municipalities, non-profits, the courts, and any other purchasing consortium operating in the Commonwealth. In September CommBuys will be integrated with MMARS. In June 2015, CommBuys will be able to provide analytic data that will assist procurement officers with their purchasing decisions.

MAPPO and others in the procurement community will be able to post a bid, accept electronic responses, collaborate on bid evaluation, award the bid and issue a contract all through this one electronic solution. Once contracts are in place the procurement officer will be able to enter the receiving documentation, the vendor will be able to create and electronic invoice, and the buyer will be able to autopay..

Before CommBuys goes live in March, OSD will be migrating all the data currently stored in Comm-Pass, going back to inception.

Starting in December there will be Regional Town Halls for Local Government and Non-Profits to explain the new system and answer questions. There will also be a CommBuys Liaison Meetings for anyone interested in assisting OSD will connecting with vendors and the community at large. In February end user training will begin. For further updates and information please go to:

commbuys@state.ma.us
mass.gov/osd/commbuys
@COMMBUYS (Twitter)

Questions from MAPPO Members:

1. How will you build a vendor database?
 - a. Currently there are 6,000 registered vendors. New vendors can go on-line and add their information at no cost. There will be a webinars for the vendor community. Yesterday there was such a webinar and 250 vendors participated
2. Can CommBuys be used for discretionary purchasing?
 - a. Yes. Any vendor registered will be notified of a bid being done for their particular good or service. Bidding still needs to be competitive .
3. How secure is the bidding process?
 - a. The bidding information will be stored electronically, including emails. There will be security around what procurement information is visible privately and publicly.
4. How much information will the bidders have access to if the bids are done electronically.
 - a. The bids will go to a lock box which will be secure until after the close of the bids. Before the bid deadline vendors will have a unique username and password. If they need to update their information for any reason including answering an addendum they will be able to retrieve their documents and make the changes. No other bidders will be able to view their bid or know how many bidders have submitted. Once the bids have been closed the evaluation team will have access to the information.
5. What happens to bids that are placed electronically before CommBuys goes live in March.
 - a. OSD will set a date on which no other electronic bidding will be accepted by Comm-Pass while they are transitioning the data to CommBuys. The estimated time frame for the transitioning is February 2014.
6. How will procurement officers be able to find active contracts?
 - a. You will be able to use search criteria to find contracts. Search criteria will be similar to Google.
7. Will vendors identify whether or not they are SDO certified.
 - a. Yes, the information that is entered into the system by the vendor will be verified by the SDO office.
8. Will reverse auctions be possible on CommBuys?
 - a. Yes

9. The functions of matching PO's with receiving documents and invoices is it available outside the MMARS system?
 - a. Everyone will be able to matching PO's and receiving documents. Only agencies using MMARS will be able to generate invoices and payments.
10. Will CommBuys have an area where procurement officers will be able to evaluate vendors?
 - a. Currently there is little available to show other than whether or not the vendor met the terms and conditions of the contract. It is the hopes of OSD that they will be able to add key performance indicators in the future.
11. How does CommBuys tie to UNISYS.
 - a. Vendor contracts will be inputted with unit of measurement. The catalog will have cost per unit. The end user will be able to search and do side by side comparisons of products and prices. OSD will also work with municipalities to customize CommBuys to integrate with their financial software.
12. Explain more about the catalog.
 - a. The catalog will be submitted to OSD by the vendor. The contract manager will review the contract to make sure the information in the catalog matches the negotiated contract. The contract will then be published. OSD will insure that the catalogs are kept current by requiring vendors to submit updates (quarterly if that is the term negotiated) one month prior to the new pricing being effective.

Business Meeting

Mary Delaney, MAPPO President, opened the meeting at 1:30 p.m., following lunch and the speaker. Mary thank Gary Lambert for keeping the communication between MAPPO and CommBuys open.

Mary welcomed everyone and thanked Cathy Carney for hosting this meeting. It was noted that this is the largest ever MAPPO meeting with 84 people. Mary also stated that 14 people were not able to attend due to space limitations. The MAPPO membership is growing and many of the places have limitations on the number of seats available; therefor, Mary suggested that members register on or before the posted deadline.

New members and guests were introduced and welcomed.

Co-Secretaries Report

Sandra presented the meeting minutes from the October 16th meeting. Motion made and duly seconded to approve the minutes of October 16, 2013 as written. Motion passed.

Co-Treasurers Report

Sara and Dan reported that the month's beginning balance was \$41,165.02 and after additional dues and expenses the ending balance is \$42,147.37. There were no questions or comments on the treasurer's report. A motion was made to accept the report and duly seconded. Motion passed.

Web-site Committee Report

No report.

Legislative Affairs Committee Report

Dan Doucette gave an update on the progress being made on the Construction Laws by the Construction Law Working Group. He noted that until now there had not been any changes to micro-purchasing in several decades. Dan passed out the DCAMM Municipal Agenda

1. Proposal #4 The thresholds for 149 are being increased from \$100,000 to \$150,000. File Sub-bid thresholds to increase from \$20,000 to \$25,000. Sub-sub bid thresholds to increase from \$10,000 to \$25,000. The group is also arguing to apply these thresholds to 39M projects for consistency.

2. Proposal #5 They want to eliminate the requirement for newspaper advertising for construction and design (not 30B). Bids would still be required to be posted on the state procurement portal website and the central register.
3. Proposal #8 Amend horizontal procurement laws for smaller projects consistent with the progress under \$25,000 no matter what type of construction, \$0-\$9,999, 10,000 - \$24,999.
4. Proposal #12 Increase designer selection board procurement the thresholds of \$10,000-\$100,000 haven't been changed since 1982. The suggested new thresholds are \$25,000-\$250,000 for Architects, Engineers and Consultants.

Mary thanked Dan for all his hard work.

Speaker Committee Report

No Report

Working Group Committee

No Report

Good & Welfare Committee

No Report.

Seminar Committee

Cheryl Levinson state that the Spring Conference will be a two day conference scheduled for Thursday May 15th and Friday, May 16th. The event will be held in Rockport. The venue is easy to access by train. The committee is researching accommodations. The committee asked for speaker suggestions. Mary expressed thanks to Cheryl, Tanya, and XXXX for their hard work.

Announcements

The next meeting will be on December 18th at the Beverly Depot. There will be a Yankee Swap for anyone would like to participate, gift limit is \$15 – ugly holiday sweaters are optional. Beverly is looking to break the record for the largest MAPPO meeting. On January 15^h the meeting will be held in Brockton.

Recognitions

None.

New Business and Member's Agenda Items

The membership asked if they could have access to the members contact information. The purpose would be to be able to respond directly to questions asked on the website. Members are willing to share their information with each other privately but prefer not to have their documents publicized.

There was a short discussion about past problems with sharing the list. There were a couple of times when vendors got a hold of the list and began soliciting all the members.

It was decided that the members could have access to the list through the list serve on the website. The Board asked that the information not be shared with vendors.

Meeting Adjourned

President Mary Delaney closed the meeting at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra L. Marquis, MAPPO Secretary

