



GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE OF VERMONT
LEGISLATIVE JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEE

Monday, May 18, 2020

Minutes

Video Conference

Members present: Representatives Ancel, Fagan, Hooper, Lippert, and Toll and Senators Ashe, Cummings, Kitchel, Sears, and Westman.

Other attendees: Joint Fiscal Staff and various viewers on live stream.

Senator Cummings, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m., and Senator Kitchel moved to approve the minutes of May 11, 2020 meeting. Representative Fagan seconded the motion, and the Committee passed the motion and approved the minutes on a unanimous voice vote.

A. Review of the Administration's Fiscal Management Request from the COVID-19 Relief Fund

Brad Ferland, Deputy Secretary, Agency of Administration, presented the Administration's Fiscal Management Request of \$1 million from the COVID-19 Relief Fund, along with the related memorandum from Secretary Young on a [Proposed COVID-19 Relief Fund Spending Plan](#) and response for proposal (RFP) regarding [COVID-19 Response and Recovery Consultant Services](#). Secretary Young requested action on the proposal by midweek. Mr. Ferland pointed out that the RFP was issued a few weeks ago, and the contract would be more fine-tuned.

Mr. Ferland explained that the State had learned from its delayed implementation of accounting standards from the Tropical Storm Irene disaster and was attempting to respond quicker to implement a framework for accounting for the COVID-19 federal emergency funding. In addition, the State has been attempting to assist organizations such as hospitals and other organizations unfamiliar with FEMA standards, and the knowledge from a seasoned contractor would be helpful in addressing those questions.

The Committee requested the Administration include the State Auditor's Office in accounting decisions to ensure State auditing processes and standards are met. Mr. Ferland acknowledged that the Administration would include the Auditor in its communications with the Accounting Team. Mr. Ferland clarified that the intent of the RFP was to include all branches of government and was not meant to be exclusive to one branch. The RFP was meant to put the focus of the contract on the funding source rather than on a branch of government, but he confirmed that language to include all three branches would be included within the final contract.

Mr. Ferland informed the Committee that the Administration had two final candidates with whom it was negotiating last best offers and reviewing references for a contract with the State by May 27. The two final candidates come to the table with documentation, databases and web portal structures for

transparency. The Administration planned to ensure that the contract will allow the State to maintain a level of independence from the contractor but allow the use of those available tools.

The Committee showed concern for the short notice of the request from the Administration with the RFP started a month prior to submission to the Committee. When asked, Mr. Ferland confirmed he was not aware of any other new contracts up for review within State government but would notify the Committee if he became aware of them.

The Committee scheduled its next meeting on Wednesday, May 20, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. with the intention to act upon the Administration request as presented and asked the Administration return to share its thinking on how the Legislature, the Joint Fiscal Committee and Office, and the State Auditor could be included in the process. The Committee requested the Joint Fiscal Office prepare an e-mail to all members to receive questions and comments on the Administration's request that the Committee would include in its next meeting.

The Committee adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Theresa Utton-Jerman
Legislative Joint Fiscal Office