

**REPORT TO SEATERRA PROGRAM COMMISSION  
MEETING OF FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2014**

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**SUBJECT**     **AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTING PHASE II  
(RFP-P012)**

**ISSUE**

Approval to award a contract for the provision of Communications Consulting Services Phase II for the Seaterra Program.

**BACKGROUND**

On May 17, 2013 the Core Area Wastewater Treatment Program (now Seaterra Program) Commission approved Acumen Communications as the Communications Consultant to prepare a Strategic Program Communications Plan and to provide ongoing services. The recommendation for award was based on an evaluation of Requests for Proposals (RFP). The intent of the award was to approve an initial commitment until November, 2013, at which time the new Program Director would review the role and scope of services required. This review is now complete and a communications plan for the Seaterra Program is in place.

On November 22, 2013 the Seaterra Commission approved an extension to the Acumen Communications' contract to February 28, 2014.

The Seaterra Program requires Communications Consulting Services to implement the Strategic Program Communications Plan and other communications services.

Key roles of the Communications Consultant include:

- Implement the Seaterra Program Strategic Communications Plan;
- Produce communications materials for the Seaterra Program on an individual assignment basis as requested;
- Provide communications advisor services, including advice on issues management, on an ongoing basis;
- Provide an individual to be the Communications Manager for the Seaterra Program, including providing direction to the Seaterra Communications Coordinator, other staff and contractors in relation to communications;
- Develop the protocol for continued coordination of communications efforts between Seaterra and CRD Communications over the course of the Program.

A RFP was issued on December 12, 2013 for Communications Consulting Services Phase II to support the Seaterra Program to completion estimated in 2018. In compliance with Capital Regional District (CRD) procurement policies RFP P-012 was posted on the CRD Website and on the provincial BC Bid site. The RFP closed on January 21, 2014 and two proponents submitted proposals. A selection committee comprising staff from CRD Corporate Communications and the Seaterra Program completed the evaluation of the proposals.

The proposal from Acumen Communications received the higher evaluated overall score, and the estimated fees of \$1,500,000 are within the Seatererra approved budget. Reference checks were completed for Acumen Communications and all responses were excellent.

**ALTERNATIVES**

That the Seatererra Program Commission

1. Approve the award of a contract for Seatererra Program Communications Consulting Services Phase II to Acumen Communications with estimated fees of \$1,500,000; or
2. Provide direction to staff to initiate a new Request for Proposal.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The estimated fees of \$1,500,000 are within the Seatererra approved budget.

**CONCLUSION**

Communications consulting services are required to implement the approved Seatererra Strategic Program Communications Plan and to ensure timely communications to the Program stakeholders and the public. The RFP was issued and evaluated in accordance with the CRD policy. The recommended proponent met the RFP requirements and the cost of the services are within the approved budget.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Seatererra Commission approve the award of a contract for Seatererra Program Communications Consulting Services Phase II to Acumen Communications with estimated fees of \$1,500,000.

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Rob Hodder, B. Com, CMA  
Seatererra Financial Manager  
Seatererra Program

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Andy Orr, Senior Manager  
Corporate Communications  
Capital Regional District

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Albert Sweetnam, P.Eng  
Program Director  
Seatererra Program

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