



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 12, 2025

TO: Administration & Finance Committee

FROM: Kelly C. Ruffel, Assistant County Administrator

RE: **RFP-25-022 Public Relation Services**

Background and Scoring Criteria

On May 12, 2025, Kelly C. Ruffel, Lindsay Reed, and Marisel Sanchez (hereafter "Review Committee") met to review and score responses to RFP-25-022, Public Relation Services (hereafter "RFP") in conformance with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4.1. Pursuant to the RFP, the proposals were scored using the following weighted scoring criteria: (1) Management, 30/100; (2) Technical 45/100; and (3) Cost, 25/100.

Scoring of Respondents

Three (3) qualified firms responded to the RFP: (1) Gateway Media; (2) SCG Advertising & Public Relations; and (3) Niki Jones Agency. After reviewing the three (3) responses, the Review Committee scored the proposals as follows.

I. Gateway Media

- a. **Management**. The respondent set forth an experienced team with the skill, experience, and expertise required to support and aid the County in the development of earned news media services through strategic planning, key message development, and support for specific projects and overall County activities. **(27/30)**
- b. **Technical**. The respondent offered a narrative demonstrating an ability to meet the requirements of the RFP as set forth in the bid documents. **(40/45)**
- c. **Cost**. The fee schedule is competitive with industry rates and is the most cost-effective. **(23/25)**

TOTAL = 90/100

Niki Jones Agency

- a. **Management.** The respondent did not set forth management professionals necessary to support and aid the County in the development of earned news media services through strategic planning, key message development, and support for specific projects and overall County activities. They had a good understanding of regional marketing and public messaging however it was tailored to New York experience and expertise. Their plan also leaned more toward marketing and web services than a PR strategy. The experience provided did not highlight government experience or similar clients in the State, nor did they provide public relations as a primary service. **(15/30)**
- b. **Technical.** The respondent offered an adequate narrative that meet the requirements of the bid documents; however they did not demonstrate an ability to meet the requirements of the RFP. **(30/45)**
- c. **Cost.** The fee schedule is competitive with industry rates. **(22/25)**

TOTAL = 67/100

II. SCG Advertising & Public Relations ('Success Communications Group')

- a. **Management.** The respondent set forth an experienced team with the skill, experience, and expertise required to support and aid the County. **(27/30)**
- b. **Technical.** The respondent offered an adequate narrative that meets the requirements of the bid documents. They included some creative and strategic ideas, like using AI sentiment tools and responses. They understood public sector communications and how to tailor messaging across different audiences. While they offered a proactive overall marketing strategy, the County is looking for a more strategic response and plan to individual situations. **(38/45)**
- c. **Cost.** The fee schedule is competitive with industry rates. **(10/25)**

TOTAL = 75/100

Review Committee Recommendation

Based upon the scoring of the Review Committee, it is recommended a contract be awarded to Gateway Media for a three (3) year term for a total of two hundred fifty-nine thousand and two hundred dollars (\$259,200.00), and the other conditions as set forth in the bid documents.

cc: Matthew P. Jordan, Esq., County Administrator
Sherry Arvanitakis, QPA, Purchasing Agent