



Request for Proposal Audit Services

Posting Date:
Thursday, May 25, 2023

Proposals Due:
Thursday, June 15, 2023
No later than 11 a.m. CST
At the Administrative Offices of the
Zion-Benton Public Library District
2400 Gabriel Avenue, Zion, IL 60099

Zion-Benton Public Library District is accepting proposals from Certified Public Accounting firms to provide audit services for our Library. We invite your firm to submit a proposal to us by Thursday, June 15, 2023, by 11:00 a.m. CST for consideration. A description of our Library District, the services needed, and other pertinent information follows.

Description of the Zion-Benton Public Library District

Zion-Benton Public Library (“the Library”) had its first Board meeting in August 1935, and formally opened its doors in March of 1937. Referenda passed in 1975 and 1976 establishing the Library as a District that includes Beach Park, Winthrop Harbor, Zion, and unincorporated Benton Township. The District covers 23.85 square miles in the most Northeastern corner of Lake County, Illinois, serving a population of 42,836. The Library is governed by an elected board of seven trustees, all residents of the Library District and administered by a Library Director.

The Library provides general library services, as well as ancillary services such as meeting rooms, computers, photocopiers, notary services and voter registration. The Library contracts out for LAN management, janitorial services, legal services, human resource services, accounting services, as well as supplemental consulting and planning services.

At the close of the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the library maintained the following eight (8) funds:

1. Corporate Fund
2. Per Capita Fund
3. Building and Maintenance Fund
4. Special Reserve Fund
5. Insurance Fund
6. Audit Fund
7. OASDI Fund
8. Retirement (IMRF) Fund

The library participates in one pension plan, the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF), a multiple employer/agent plan.

Lauterbach & Amen, LLP is the Library’s accounting firm. The library budgets all funds on the modified cash basis of accounting as required by Illinois law. The Library maintains all its accounting records at the administrative office located at 2400 Gabriel Avenue, Zion, IL 60099. The governmental unit maintains its cash receipts, cash disbursements, general ledger, and accounts payable ledger on Accounting Creative Solutions managed by Lauterbach & Amen, LLP.

The primary source of funding for the Library is a property tax in perpetuity. The Library has a June 30 fiscal year end, with a requirement to file an Audit Report and Annual Financial Report with the Illinois State Comptroller and the Lake County Clerk within 180 days after the fiscal year end (75 ILCS16/30-45; 35 ILCS 200/30-30; and 50 ILCS 310/1). A copy of the Library’s most recent audited annual financial statement is available on our website at <https://zblibrary.info/audited-financial-statements/>

Service to Be Performed

Your proposal is expected to cover the completion of the audit of the Library’s annual financial statement in compliance with generally accepted auditing standards as established by the American

Institute of Certified Public Accountants as applicable to governmental units. The audit work includes electronic submission of the Audit Report and Annual Financial Report with the Comptroller and will include meetings with the Library's Administration team and/or Board of Trustees as necessary.

In addition to the above services, the proposal is expected to cover a management letter containing comments and recommendations with respect to accounting and administrative controls and efficiency. Also, the proposal should cover the firm's availability throughout the year to provide advice and guidance on financial accounting and reporting issues.

Deliverables

- A. Annual Financial Report (Independent Auditor's Report and Financial Statements) for three years; that is, the years ending 30 June 2023, 30 June 2024, and 30 June 2025.
- B. Annual Comptroller's Report for three years; that is, the years ending 30 June 2023, 30 June 2024, and 30 June 2025.
- C. Presentation of results to the Board of Library Trustees at its regular meeting on the last Tuesday in October, each year.

Terms of Engagement

A three-year contract beginning with fiscal year 2022-23 is requested. It is the intent of the Board of Library Trustees to continue its relationship with the auditor for no less than three years, subject to the annual review by the board, and annual availability of an appropriation.

The Library reserves the right to terminate the contract if the successful firm merges, consolidates, splits, or otherwise combines with any other firm, or if a significant change in the audit team is made that is unacceptable to the Library.

Key Personnel

Robin Smith, Director
Sara Torrez, Administrative Assistant

Key Board Members

Amy Onan, Board President
Takeisha Adams, Board Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair

Requests for additional information, review of prior financial statements, and/or appointments with library trustees and staff should be coordinated through the Director.

Please return the completed proposals to the following address:

Sara Torrez, Administrative Assistant
Zion-Benton Public Library District
2400 Gabriel Avenue
Zion, IL 60099

Relationship with Current Auditor

These services were provided by Eder, Casella & Co. for the past two fiscal years. After completion of the 2021-2022 Audit, Eder, Casella gave notice that they will no longer be providing audits for public libraries. In preparing for your proposal, be advised that management will give permission to contact the firm.

Other Information

The working papers shall be retained for at least 10 years. The papers will be available for examination by authorized representatives of the State of Illinois, and if required, the federal audit agency and the General Accounting Office.

Governments Accounting Standards Board

It is expected that your firm will have experienced and adequate staff available to meet the changes that have been brought forth by GASB 34, 68, 71, and subsequent statements. The Library expects that the successful proposer to review all supplemental schedules and to advise, as necessary, on related accounting and reporting concerns.

Submittal Requirements

Please submit your response to this request by Thursday, June 15, 2023 11:00 a.m. CST. We would also appreciate a response if you decline to submit a proposal.

In responding to this request, we request the following information:

A. Introduction: Provide an introduction describing the respondent, including the following information:

1. The name and address of the respondent submitting the proposal.
2. The date the respondent was established.
3. Detail your firm's size, structure, and experience in providing auditing services to public libraries, as well as other governmental agencies.
4. The name, address, and telephone number(s) of the person(s) who will serve as the respondent's principal contact person with the Library, and who will be authorized to make representations on behalf of the respondent.
5. The signature of the person(s) having proper authority to submit the proposal for the respondent.

B. Description of Services (Understanding of Project Scope and Work Plan):

State the knowledge and understanding of the needs of the Library. The work plan should contain, at a minimum, a breakdown into logical tasks, subtasks, and timeframes for all work to be performed.

Provide a timeline that addresses the following activities and any others that are appropriate.

1. Planning and interim testing
2. Meet with Administration team to discuss the audit plan
3. Receive a list of client-provided documents and requests
4. Begin fieldwork
5. Financial statement of draft for management review

6. Presentation of draft audit report and comments to the Library's Administration team and Board of Trustees
7. Issue the final audit report (8 bound copies and a PDF)

C. Key Personnel:

Provide a list of key personnel associated with the proposal. For each person included on the list, the following information should be provided:

1. The individual's relationship with the respondent, including current job title, employment with the respondent, and the relationship the individual will have with the proposed research study.
2. The individual's educational background and other relevant training and background experience, including the number of years of relevant experience and title or function (duties) while gaining the experience.
3. Indicate any complaints against these personnel that have been leveled by the state board of accounting or other regulatory authority, if any. Indicate any corrective actions that have been taken by the firm with respect to these people.

D. Fee Proposal:

The proposed fees shall be the maximum, not-to-exceed fee for each fiscal year shown.

E. References:

Provide the names, postal addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of five (5) references (clients), including at least two similarly-sized public library clients of the partner and manager that will be assigned to our organization.

F. Certification:

Certify that all components of the proposal will remain firm for a minimum period of ninety (90) days following the opening of the proposal.

G. Acceptance of Conditions:

Provide an acceptance-of-conditions statement that affirms the respondent's acceptance of all conditions and requirements contained in this RFP.

H. Execution: Sign the proposal in ink, and provide the postal address of the respondent.

I. Supplementary Information (Examples of Work):

Provide two or more sample reports and specify whether these need to be returned.

Project Approvals

1. The agreement will require the approval of the Board of Library Trustees in its sole and absolute discretion.
2. The Director and the Finance Manager will recommend a proposal to the Library's Finance Committee.
 - a. The Finance Committee will recommend approval of the proposal to the Board of Library Trustees at the June 2023 or July 2023 regular board meeting.

- b. As part of the approval process, the successful respondent may be required, at its sole expense, to prepare and provide documents or exhibits and make presentations associated with its services as may be required prior to the execution of the agreement.

Evaluation Criteria

Zion-Benton Public Library District will evaluate proposals on a qualitative basis based on responses to the aforementioned submittal requirements.

Proposals will be evaluated in part on the basis of the evaluation criteria set forth below. Evaluations will consider the materials submitted by respondents, including references, and may include formal presentations by respondents and/or interviews with a representative of the respondents.

- A. All proposals will be evaluated by the Library in accordance with the criteria and procedures identified herein.
- B. The Library reserves the right in its sole discretion to select a service-provider based directly on the proposals or to negotiate further with one or more of the respondents without limiting any of its rights described in any section of this RFP.
- C. The selected proposal will be chosen on the basis of its apparent ability to best meet the overall expectations of the Library.
- D. The Library will be the judge of which proposal offers the greatest benefit.
- E. The Library reserves the right to reject any and all proposals for any reason at any time, including but not limited to false or incomplete statements in connection with a proposal.
- F. The following criteria will assist in assessing the merits of each proposal:
 - 1. **Responsiveness to the RFP.**
 - 2. **Experience and Qualifications:**
 - a. Demonstrated knowledge of accounting and auditing services.
 - b. Relevant experience, qualifications, and responsibilities of the respondent.
 - c. Experience and reputation in the industry, particularly in respect to working with local governments (as opposed to not-for-profit organizations).
 - 3. **Technical Quality and Methodology:** Respondent’s approach to organizing and managing the project, and ability to document information and recommendations clearly in a written format.
 - 4. **Understanding** of project objectives and scope; completeness of the Proposal.
 - 5. **References:** Examples of completed projects. Satisfaction of current / former clients with competency of respondent and completed work.
 - 6. **Fee Structure:** Proposed fee structure relative to the services to be provided.
 - 7. **Overall Evaluation:** Overall evaluation of the respondent’s ability to accomplish a project of this nature within the proposed time schedule.

G. **Preference:** Primary preference will be given to the most qualified firm, regardless of whether that firm has an office in Lake County.

The Library reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted and to request additional information from all proposers. Any contract awarded will be made to the independent auditor who, based on evaluation of all responses, applying all criteria and oral interviews if necessary, is determined to be the best qualified to complete the audit.

Sincerely,
Robin Smith, Director, Zion-Benton Public Library District