

RICHARDSON'S BAY REGIONAL AGENCY

STAFF REPORT

For the meeting of June 8, 2023

To: Board of Directors
From: Brad Gross, Executive Director
Subject: Outreach and Education; Contract Amendment with Progress Public Affairs, LLC

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Receive report from staff and approve contract amendment #1 to the existing Progress Public Affairs, LLC contract, and Resolution 23-08, extending the term for one year and increasing the contract amount by \$90,000 for public outreach and education.

Motion: Approve Resolution 23-08 for a one-year contract extension for Progress Public Affairs, LLC as consultant to Richardson Bay Regional Agency for public outreach and education and authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract amendment with a termination date of June 30, 2024, and an additional \$90,000 for FY24, with all other terms and condition remaining unchanged.

SUMMARY:

At the meeting of February 10, 2022, this Board approved a contract with Lighthouse Public Affairs (LHPA) for public relations and communications. This contract was executed on February 17, 2022.

At the meeting of November 10, 2022, this Board was informed the two primary individuals from LHPA with whom staff had regular contact with and had developed an understanding of the issues and assisted communication of RBRA's perspective with the media, formed a new firm, Progress Public Affairs, LLC (PPA). Additionally, since the competitive bid process for outreach and education was completed by these two individuals who now formed PPA, and all communications from LHPA had ceased, this Board then approved the establishment of a new contract with PPA, with all the same terms and conditions.

The first contract with LHPA was executed, on February 17, 2022, and terminated on November 10, 2022. A new contract was executed with PPA on November 14, 2022, with a termination date of June 30, 2023.

The Contract executed on November 14, 2022, states, "This Contract may be amended or modified only by written Contract of all parties." And, "The maximum term of this

Contract is through June 30, 2023, unless otherwise extended. The maximum amount payable to Contractor under this Contract for this period shall not exceed One Hundred and Twenty Thousand dollars (\$120,000), plus reimbursable expenses unless contract term is otherwise extended.”

The public relations and communications provided by PPA has been efficient and effective. Since the execution of the contract, weekly plans have been submitted along with weekly video meetings with staff to discuss plans and expectations. Deliverables from PPA have been consistent and professional, and staff are available and responsive.

The need to continue this level of outreach must be maintained as RBRA continues to work on programs to protect eelgrass after developing an Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan (EPMP), an Eelgrass Protection Zone (EPZ), and will now develop an Eelgrass Adaptive Management Plan (EAMP) that will outline the process for restoration of damaged eelgrass areas.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently provided a grant to assist in the continued development of the EPMP, and the development of the EAMP.

The EPA grant, and a grant previously awarded by the Ocean Protective Council (OPC) have an ‘Outreach and Education’ line item. RBRA continues to rely on Coastal Policy Solutions for all technical components of the OPC grant performance and the Outreach and Education plan. These efforts will continue through FY24 with the assistance of PPA.

Finally, RBRA continues to work towards the goals of the BCDC Agreement and over the next few years, it is imperative that we continue to proactively communicate with all taxpayers and stake holders about these important programs while maintaining and improving the navigational waterways, open waters, and shoreline of Richardson Bay.

FISCAL IMPACT:

FY24 preliminary budget includes a line item for outreach and education for \$90,000.

As noted, the EPA and OPC grants have funds dedicated to reimbursing RBRA staff expenditures for outreach and education. The potential combined allocations for FY24 are \$114,000, and though we do not yet know how these allocations will be applied, this could significantly reduce the cost of this contract to RBRA.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1: RBRA/PPA Agreement
- Attachment 2: RBRA/PPA Contract Amendment
- Attachment 3: DRAFT Resolution 23-08