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Job Opportunity: Due Diligence Research and Property Management

Background

The Port of South Whidbey has received approval for grant funding to perform research and due diligence at the Island County Fairgrounds, to develop a Business and Marketing Plan, and to perform as the property manager for the fairgrounds from April 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016.

Position Description

This position is very unique in that it includes a wide scope of responsibilities at the Island County Fairgrounds. In general, we are looking for someone with strong marketing capabilities, strong organizational skills, a working knowledge of the unique rural character of South Whidbey Island, and an innate ability to listen to and communicate with the local residents. There are two main aspects of this position: Perform due diligence research on the fairgrounds, and manage the fairgrounds property in terms of renting the spaces available, serving as an events coordinator and providing general customer service to tenants.

Due Diligence and Research

Island County has requested that the Port of South Whidbey develop an economically feasible plan to operate and, over time, renovate the Island County Fairgrounds. The long range goal of the proposed plan is to enable the annual fair event to occur and, over time, to reduce or eliminate the need for financial support for the fairgrounds from Island County and increasing economic development infrastructure while respecting the unique rural character and environment of Whidbey Island.

The due diligence and research portion of this project will gather information from previous studies as well as from all current users of the fairgrounds and information from potential users and groups that do not currently utilize the facility. Particular attention will be given to the opportunities and challenges inherent to our island community.

The research will focus mainly on fairgrounds operations outside of the annual Whidbey Island Area Fair, but due to the integrated nature of the Fair and fairgrounds, an understanding of the fair event will also be required. The research shall include the following:

I. Past and current fairgrounds finances
- Understand and analyze revenues and expenditures associated with Fair and non-fair operations, with a focus on the non-fair finances.
- Understand how past capital projects have been funded
- Understand the rate structure for all aspects of revenue-generating activities and expenditures

II. Past and current operations and zoning
- Understand operations of the Fair and non-fair operations, with a focus on the non-fair operations
- Understand facility requirements for the fair event and past and current non-fair activities
- Understand activities required for ongoing maintenance of the fairgrounds

- Understand allowable activities at the fairgrounds according to City of Langley zoning, and understand any zoning changes required for potential future activities

III. Infrastructure
- Gain an understanding of current infrastructure
- Research past studies of infrastructure and understand the results of those studies
- Explore solutions to current infrastructure challenges, including parking

IV. Public research and meetings
- Coordinate, lead and mediate public meetings including general public meetings and public focus groups to discern what fairgrounds/business development ideas would work for the community and the property
- Explore ways to fulfill the needs of the local community

V. Help identify funding pools for future development
- Research funding options for all ideas generated from public outreach activities

Due Diligence Schedule
The activities described above should be accomplished by September 30, 2015

Due Diligence Deliverables
The deliverables for this scope of work will include but are not limited to:

I. Past and current fairgrounds finances
    a. Detailed financial reports, P&L charts, and summary analyses of fairgrounds finances
II. Past and current operations and zoning
    a. Documented information about allowable activities at the fairgrounds according to City of Langley zoning
III. Infrastructure
    a. Summary report of existing infrastructure of the property, studies performed in the past and their recommended infrastructure improvements, and potential solutions to current infrastructure challenges
IV. Public outreach/research
    a. Compiled and organized notes from each public outreach meeting, with a general summary of all meetings.
V. Compiled information on options for funding for ideas generated from the public outreach meetings

Property Management, Events Coordination and Customer Service

In addition to the due diligence piece of this fairgrounds effort, the Port needs someone to manage the tenants of the facility. Tenants may be long term or short term, and may include events. The property manager will need to:
- Coordinate and book events, maintain a calendar for all events and tenants
- Prepare and modify rental agreements as required
- Help to ensure events run smoothly
- Provide customer service to tenants
- Negotiate rental fees

- Accommodate venue visits
- Assist in marketing, advertising and publicizing events
- Ensure that event tenants arrive and vacate property as agreed
- Manage correspondence
- Assist in event logistics if required
- Keep track of/inventory property associated with events and tenants
- Assist with financial aspects of property rentals (e.g. collection of deposits, rental fees, etc., assisting with budgets associated with property rentals, etc.)

Skills required

This position requires a wide array of skills and abilities. A successful candidate must have excellent communication skills, including writing, speaking and proof reading skills. The person must have the ability to manage multiple projects and must have excellent interpersonal skills both in person and by phone. We expect a high level of professionalism with fantastic customer service ethic and high expectations for quality. The person must also be proficient using Microsoft Word, email and web searches.

We prefer someone with at least 3 years experience with office administrative management and at least 1 year experience coordinating special events.

Please submit a resume that reflects your relevant experience and a cover letter with comments on how you envision the due diligence and research project to be accomplished. This is a one-year contract position. Pay for this position will be $50,000 payable in equal monthly installments for the contract year plus reimbursable expenses such as materials and travel outside of normal operations at the fairgrounds. This position will be supported by a full-time maintenance person at the fairgrounds and other Port staff as needed.