

## **Background**

In December 2024, the prior Secretary-Executive Director of the Housing Authority announced his retirement. While Ken Barbeau was approved by the Board of Commissioners as Acting Secretary-Executive Director to begin January 2, 2025 and serve during an interim period, the Board of Commissioners announced at that time it would be doing a nationwide search for the new permanent Secretary-Executive Director.

## **Preparation of the Request for Proposal**

During January 2025, HACM's Procurement Department worked with the Human Resources department and the Chair of the HACM Board of Commissioners on the detailed scope of services for the executive search.

The Request for Proposal for the Executive Search Firm was issued on 1/22/2025 and proposals from interested Respondents were due on 2/28/2025. Ten questions regarding the RFP were received from various potential proposers and HACM drafted and posted responses to the questions.

Twelve (12) proposals were received by the closing date of the RFP from the following entities:

1. Adelphi Staffing, LLC, Kennesaw, GA
2. Berkeley Search Consultants, Walnut Creek, CA
3. CBIZ, multiple locations including Denver, CO
4. CPS HR Consulting,
5. David Gomez Partners, Oak Brook, IL
6. Ford Webb Associates,
7. Gans, Gans, and Associates, Plant City, FL
8. Hotep Consulting, Reston, VA
9. KEES Alford Executive Search,
10. The Organizational Leadership Edge,
11. Peter Gray Executive Search,
12. Sunshine Enterprise USA, Maitland, FL

## **Evaluation Process per Request for Proposal**

This section is based on Section III –Evaluation Process and Evaluation Factors---from the RFP.

The proposal evaluation process is designed to award the contract, not necessarily to the Respondent(s) of least cost, but rather to the Respondent(s) whose proposal represents the best overall value as determined by an evaluation of the best aptitude score (a combination of qualifications and experience) and price/costs.

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Evaluations are based upon the evaluation factors and weights specifically established within this RFP. Respondent(s) must provide all information outlined in the Evaluation Factors (as defined below) for the Respondent's proposal to be considered responsive. The quality of answers rather than length of responses to this RFP is important.

After evaluations, the Evaluation Committee will determine a competitive range. The competitive range includes the proposals that have a reasonable chance of being selected for award considering all aspects of the RFP. HACM will negotiate with the Respondent(s) who fall within the competitive range. If required, only those Respondents within the competitive range may be selected for an oral presentation and/or interview.

The presentation/interview process will be arranged to assist the evaluation committee in differentiating those Respondents within the competitive range. Points may be added or deducted from the Respondent's preliminary score as deemed necessary by the evaluation committee. H A C M reserves the right to negotiate the final scope of services, price, schedule and any and all aspects of this solicitation with all Respondents in the competitive range.

Once negotiations are complete, HACM may establish a date and time for the submission of best and final offers. If a Respondent does not submit a notice of withdrawal of its offer, or a best and final offer, the Respondent's immediate previous offer shall be construed as its best and final offer. The best and final offers shall be evaluated in essentially the same manner as the initial offers unless otherwise specified.

HACM may award Contract pursuant to the outcome of the application of the Evaluation Criteria contained in this RFP. Award shall be to Responsible and Responsive Respondent whose proposal is in the best interest of HACM.

Award shall be subject to the formal approval of HACM's Board of Commissioners. Award may also be subject to approval by HUD. No award may be made to a Respondent whose firm or principals appear on the list of businesses ineligible to receive awards from HACM, the City of Milwaukee or the U.S. Federal government.

HACM reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and reserves the right to secure services solicited by this RFP by means of a non-competitive procurement in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.320 (f)(4).

The maximum points that shall be awarded for each of the Evaluation Factors are detailed and described below. Proposals must include complete information on each of the following criteria in order to enable HACM to make accurate determinations regarding the qualifications of each firm. Each criterion will be weighted as indicated.

- Cost Proposal 40%
- Firm's Qualifications 30%
- Experience in Consulting 20%
- References 10%

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The establishment, application, interpretation and scoring of the above Evaluation Factors (Questions) shall be solely within the discretion of HACM. HACM reserves the right to determine the suitability of proposals on the basis of all of these factors.

**Evaluation of Proposals—Initial Scoring of Twelve Proposals Received by HACM**

HACM formed an evaluation committee that included some HACM staff, a Commissioner, and a HACM resident to incorporate a variety of perspectives.

The evaluation committee that reviewed the twelve original proposals included the five following members:

- Brad Leak, Chief Financial Officer, HACM
- Crystal Reed-Hardy, Chief Human Resources Officer, HACM
- Ken Barbeau, Acting Secretary-Executive Director, HACM
- Betty Newton, HACM Resident, Convent Hill Resident Organization Treasurer, and Resident Advisory Board (RAB) member
- Charlette Hayslett, Chairperson, HACM Board of Commissioners

A kickoff meeting for the committee was scheduled on March 24, 2025 to discuss the RFP, the evaluation criteria, and the outlined process. The evaluators spent the next couple weeks reading the proposals.

The RFP outlined the evaluation factor, which were allocated the following maximum points:

<b>Evaluation Factor</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Points</b>
A	Cost Proposal	40%
B	Firm’s Qualifications	30%
C	Experience in Consulting	20%
D	References	10%
	<b>Maximum Point Value</b>	<b>100%</b>

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The five members of the Evaluation Committee read and scored each of the twelve proposals in early to mid-April 2025.

The overall average total scores based on the five-member Evaluation Committee’s review of the twelve written proposals (based only on the proposals) were as follows:

	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Average total score</b>
1	The Organizational Leadership Edge	94.2
2	CPS HR Consulting	85.8
3	KEES Alford Executive Search	77.2
4	Peter Gray Executive Search	74.4
5	David Gomez Partners	74.2
6	Berkeley Search Consultants	68.4
7	Gans, Gans, and Associates	65.2
8	CBIZ	58.4
9	Adelphi Staffing, LLC	57.2
10	Sunshine Enterprise USA	52.8
11	Ford Webb Associates	51.0
12	Hotep Consulting	44.4

The purpose of the reviewers in the first scoring was to determine which proposals would advance to the interview stage. The reviewers discussed the proposals and decided that they would forward the four highest scoring proposals out of the twelve to the interview stage.

The four highest scoring proposers---The Organizational Leaders Edge, CPS HR Consulting, KEES Alford Executive Search, and Peter Gray Executive Search--were advanced to the interview stage.

A note on costs---Executive Search firms in their proposals typically determine their fee in one of two methods---either by using a percentage of the negotiated salary or salary range of the hired candidate or by providing services via a fixed fee. Some expenses, such as travel expenses for the Executive Search firms and/or for the Exec Director candidates to come in for interviews, are typically not included in the fee and are billed separately.

### **Evaluation of Proposers—Second Round of Top Four Candidates**

Potential dates were sent to find dates and times to schedule virtual interviews with the top four proposers. These interviews occurred from late April to mid-May 2025.

The interviews included standard questions developed by Chair Hayslett and the Committee members that covered a wide variety of topic areas, including: Approach & Customization; Stakeholder & Community Engagement; Candidate Equity & Inclusion; Experience & Performance; Candidate Screening & Retention; Communication & Project Management; and Complimentary Services and Value Enhancement.

Here are some details about each of the four finalists that were interviewed:

#### **CPS-HR Consulting**

- Located in Sacramento, CA
- 100 staff, network of 200 consultants
- Organization founded in 1985---includes last 20 years in search/placement services
- References include Housing Authority of the City of San Luis Obispo; Housing Authority of the County of Alameda; County of Fredrick, MD
- Niche appears to be in public sector, especially on West Coast (CA, WA) and includes some housing authorities.
- Primarily works with local government public agencies, including a few small to medium housing authorities, though most are primarily on the west coast (California, Washington state)

#### **Peter Gray Executive Search**

- Peter Gray has 20 years of experience in the field, and launched his separate firm in 2020
- Located in Madison, WI
- Niche is in nonprofit executive search
- References include Milwaukee Metropolitan Fair Housing Council; Dane County Housing Authority; Wisconsin Housing Preservation Corp.
- 25% EBE by bringing on board the partner, ROWJAC—a management consulting firm founded in 2013 by Wanda and Dr. Ruben Anthony. Dr. Anthony is the President and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Madison.
- 37 placements completed, including four in affordable housing organizations.

### **KEES Alford Executive Search**

- KEES is an outgrowth from an older firm, Alford Executive Search, which was founded in 2000. KEES was founded in 2015.
- Located in Illinois
- References include: Los Angeles County Affordable Housing Solutions; King County Housing Authority; Washington State Housing Finance Agency
- Niche is in nonprofit executive search
- Firm is a woman-owned business enterprise.
- KEES has worked with some housing-related nonprofits and has some PHA exec search experience; some committee members were impressed by the enthusiasm of the CEO and staff; they are semi-local (Illinois);
- KEES expressed their commitment to working on a longer term partnership/relationship, including coaching/consulting services and additional executive search.

### **The Organizational Leadership Edge**

- Located out of Valley, Nebraska (outside Omaha)
- Founder is Stan Quy, who has 54 years of experience in the affordable housing industry, including 36 years with HUD in Field Policy and management. After his retirement in 2007, he formed the consulting firm, The Organizational Leadership Edge.
- He would have a limited consultant on the engagement --Josph Galvan, a former HUD Regional Director in Region V (Chicago) but now working a consultant,
- References include Dupage/Kendal County Housing Authorities; Jacksonville Housing Authority; Bloomington Housing Authority; Berkeley Housing Authority; several additional reference letters were also included.
- The target market for this firm is public housing authorities (PHAs). Both the firm and the CEO appear to be extremely experienced in the PHA world, and he has worked with troubled and other PHAs that do executive search. During the past 5 years alone, he has assisted at least 47 PHAs (small to large) with executive search services.

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The scores of the top four Proposers were updated by the four remaining Committee members (Brad Leak, Betty Newton, Charlotte Hayslett, and Ken Barbeau) and were scored based on a combination of the proposals and interviews. The revised average scores for the final 4 firms from the four Committee members are as follows:

<b>Criteria for Evaluation— ROUND TWO</b>	<b>Maximum Points Available</b>	<b>CPS-HR Consulting</b>	<b>KEES Alford Exec Search</b>	<b>Peter Gray Exec Search</b>	<b>The Org. Leadership Edge (TOLE)</b>
Cost Proposal	40	31.75	31.25	30.25	37.50
Firms Qualifications	30	25.75	25.75	22.00	30.00
Experience in Consulting	20	16.25	17.50	15.00	20.00
References	10	8.00	7.75	6.25	10.00
Average total score	100.00	81.75	82.25	73.5	97.50

Overall, while there were aspects of each of the final four proposals that were liked by some or all of the committee members (such as the lower cost of the services; fresh approach; their ability to outreach to diverse and nontraditional candidates; their location; their experience in similar executive searches, fresh approach, etc.), all four members ranked The Organizational Leadership Edge (TOLE) as either the top-ranked firm or as tied for top-ranked, which led to their higher total average score.

Overall, members of the Evaluation Committee were impressed by TOLE’s proposal and by their knowledge of the public housing industry and their extensive networking that could assist in outreaching to experienced professionals in the industry.

**In the end and based on the evaluation process as outlined in the RFP, the Evaluation Committee is recommending the highest scoring proposal from The Organizational Leadership Edge (TOLE) for the award of contract for Executive Search Firm services.**