

Airport board considers its RFP options

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The Big Bear Airport District is thinking outside the RFP box. That's RFP as in request for proposal, a process that is typically required for large projects conducted by a government agency in the state of California.

During the March 13 board meeting in Big Bear City, airport general manager Jack Roberts explained the alternative available to build a new terminal building. SourceWell is a public agency that serves as a national municipal contracting agency with the authority to develop and offer procurement services. The concept is to save time and effort for municipal and public agencies who otherwise would have to send out RFPs for individual contracts. According to Roberts, this process is legal in the state of California.

Through SourceWell, BlueScope Construction would be assigned the Big Bear Airport District's pre-engineered building installation project. If approved by the board, BlueScope would team with Knight Building Systems Inc. to construct a pre-engineered 6,000-square foot terminal building for a cost of \$5.9 million. The cost would include architectural elements and details, plumbing, electrical and mechanical plans, and demolition of the old terminal building.

According to John Knight, owner of Knight Building Systems Inc., there would be no contingency costs for the district. If the project comes in under budget, the district would be reimbursed that amount.

Projects that Knight was involved in include the Bear Mountain Adventure Academy building, as well as two middle school gyms in Hawthorne, a building for Associated Ready Mixed Concrete at the Port of Sacramento, buildings for Disney Worldwide Services in Glendale, Valencia Golf Course, LA County Hart Park and Tech South in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Board president Steve Castillo was impressed with the designs and samples of Knight's work. "So far I like this plan," Castillo said. "I think the five of us need to have at least one more workshop. It's a big decision, an important one."

Joseph Kelly was absent with cause, according to board secretary Diane Cartwright. With his absence, Castillo said he would prefer to have the full board present before making a decision.

Board members Wes Krause and Markoy Lindstrom were also interested in exploring the option of a pre-engineered building to save costs. Board member Bill Goddard was not pleased. "We instructed staff to develop an RFP and you come back with this," Goddard said. "What happened to competitive bidding? This kind of bugs me a little bit."

Roberts told Goddard that going with the traditional RFP comes with risks. Those risks became evident when the original terminal project came back to the board in December costing much more than estimates.

Lindstrom said that there is no timeline with the proposal. "I would like to see the project done before my time ends here," she said.

Goddard said he was also concerned about costs. "How do you intend to pay for it?" Goddard asked Roberts. "We needed to do it in two phases to make it fit [our budget]."