

QUESTION PERIOD RESPONSES

DEI CONSULTING SERVICES RFP – TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT

Q1 : The RFP Contract Term states February 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. Would you clarify or confirm the term?

A1 : The term should actually state “February 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.”

Q2 : Based on the description of the short-term and long-term plans, is it anticipated the contract may include a period of up to 5-years to monitor for outcomes and measurement?

A2 : While the plans should include the methods of monitoring and how to evaluate, the Respondent will not be expected to do those. This would be handled by the Town, likely by the potential DEI staff member should one be identified as necessary during this project.

Q3 : Is there a sense of what the budget is for the RFP? Are there any budget expectations you can share?

A3 : This project has been budgeted for \$80,000.

Q4 : Considering the scope of work mentioned that greater than 75% of participation from town employees is desired for the data collection process, could you provide in detail the level of leadership buy-in there is for this work given the budget?

A4 : The Town of Swampscott is committed to improving its efforts in diversity, equity, and inclusivity. There is a resounding desire to bring this to reality and the effort has full support from the Select Board and Town Administrator.

Q5 : The background for this RFP mentions that there are 150 town employees, however, the first deliverable mentions that workgroup facilitation will be required for up to 400 employees, in addition to 50 elected and appointed officials. Can you clarify the number of employees that will be needed for the workgroup facilitation process?

A5 : The total will be about 150 Town employees plus the about 50 elected/appointed officials (board/committee members). The “400” reference was an error.

Q6 : Does this RFP require a particular licensure?

A6 : Other than a license to do business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as noted in Section “10. Qualifications,” there is no other licensing requirement. Respondents are encouraged to note any relevant licenses the staff holds.

Q7 : Is it possible to have insight into your EEO1 Data (for at least the past 2 years)?

A7 : Any such data, if available, will be provided to the selected Respondent to aid them in completing the consulting services work.

Q8 : Is there any chance you could provide a list of your job family?

A8 : The job class list is provided at the end of this document.

Q9 : Are any employees working remotely or in a hybrid role, and if so how many in each setting?

A9 : All employees now work on-site. There is limited allowance for remote work, based on need.

Q10 : Can you provide us with your most recent AAP?

A10 : The Town does not currently have an Affirmative Action Plan.

Q11 : We want to understand what past efforts have been undertaken in these areas and if the town has had a previous DEI plan or consulting group. Is this information available currently or will it be provided?

A11 : This RFP is the Town’s first big step at addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion. There is no existing or previous DEI plan, however, the Town did have a previous contract for DEI engagement with Tamy-Feé Meneide (noted in a following question below).

Q12 : How will this connect to/interact with the work of Swampscott’s DEI Critical Partner Tamy-Feé Meneide and the Unpacking Racism Forums and other work?

A12 : The selected consultant is encouraged to gather information from Ms. Meneide and can certainly include recommendations that build upon those previous forums.

Q13 : What if any resistance do you anticipate to the process and from where/who?

A13 : We do not anticipate any resistance as the community and leadership are fully in support of improving our DEI focus.

Q14 : What community groups have been involved in past DEI efforts and/or will likely play active roles in the strategic planning process?

A14 : Many of the faith-based organizations in town have participated in the past, and we certainly hope and encourage all to do so as part of this process. Additionally, the community group S.P.U.R. has taken part before and will undoubtedly be involved in this process.

Q15 : What constraints or non-town actors dictate employees' professional development activities? (e.g. licensing boards, union agreements, ...) Are those actors ready and willing to be part of the assessment, strategic planning, and education plan?

A15 : The Town has a number of collective bargaining agreements with staff groups (Fire, Police, Public Works, Administrative Assistants, and Library). While these agreements do provide for Town to guide professional development, the unions will have a voice and be encouraged to take part. The Town, however, cannot speak on their willingness at this point.

Q16 : Should the cost proposal include developing and implementing the employee trainings (details of which are TBD after the assessment process) or only mapping the plan for them?

A16 : The cost proposal should include those costs for developing/implementing the employee trainings. This includes mapping the "one year of education and trainings to provide employees and elected and appointed officials." As noted on page 5, "it is expected the consultant will provide and coordinate these trainings."

Q17 : The RFP notes a period for negotiation in Dec-January. What do you anticipate will be up for negotiation, other than budget? (For example, timeline/pace, scope, methods ...?)

A17 : That is correct – negotiations can include any element that’s outlined in the RFP response including but not limited to budget, timeline, scope, methodology.

Q18 : Who will be expected to implement the written DEI Training Plan/Manual? Is the idea to have a manual that a Town employee can implement for their coworkers? If so, are you open to considering other formats beyond a written manual, such as self-paced online training modules?

A18 : The implementation will likely be directed based on the work of the selected Respondent. For example, if the work does in fact recommend the creation of a DEI staff position (as noted in the Scope section of the RFP), then that staff person would likely be the one to implement the Plan/Manual. We would look to the selected Respondent to recommend a course of implementation for the Plan/Manual.

Q19 : What is the estimated number of respondents for the public surveys?

A19 : We would actually look to the respondents of this RFP to provide their anticipated response rate given their experience in administering surveys. Additionally, respondents are encouraged to identify the various means/methods they would employ in order to improve the response rates for surveys. The community has about 15,000 residents.

Q20 : Can you describe expectations for what the “interactive workgroups” should entail?

A20 : The expectation is that the selected Respondent will engage at some point in person with these workgroups. This in-person interaction should also provide for a means of the workgroup itself to interact together. We would look to the respondents to outline a recommendation on how best to engage with and elicit information from these workgroups in their response.

Q21 : What is your anticipated decision date?

A21 : As noted in the RFP, we anticipate making a decision (selecting a proposal) in early to mid-December. Once the respondent is selected, the Town would then going into negotiations to finalize the agreement and terms of service (which will take place late December into early January).

Q22 : What is the project timeline?

A22 : The Town is looking for respondents to outline their timeline in their proposal, noting the end of the contract would be June 30, 2025. The Town would look to the respondents to properly outline the most effective timing to carry out each element of their proposal such that they will then be able to achieve the key goals by the conclusion of the contract. This is noted in the “Plan of Service” element under “9. Minimum Submittal Requirements” > “b. Project Proposal (Technical)” of the RFP.

Q23 : Will elected officials be participating in this process at any point?

A23 : The selected Respondent is expected to include elected and appointed officials during the process.

Q24 : Have you had a firm perform a similar service prior to this request?

A24 : Please see the response for Q11.

Q25 : Is preference given to firms local to your state?

A25 : The criteria we’ll be using to evaluate and select a respondent is provided in Appendix A. There is a minimum qualification that the respondent be licensed to work in the Commonwealth. The respondent’s location, however, will not be used in the ranking. Respondents are encouraged to explain/demonstrate how they will support in-person development of the work if they are out of state.

Q26 : Would the town rather have in-person or virtual training and focus groups?

A26 : We would look to the respondent to identify the best method of focus groups/surveys based on your experience. The RFP contemplates “a variety of formats including, in person, small groups, lectures, webinars, etc.”

Q27 : For the training, does the Town envision that as a separate piece to come after the initial project.

A27 : The training should be included as part of the project. As noted on page 5, “It is expected that the consultant will provide or coordinate these trainings.” This should be carried out during the course of the contract.

Q28 : And if in person, will they have a space to conduct focus groups? Would it be able to be recorded, as well?

A28 : Yes, the Town has a number of spaces that can be secured for this that also offer the ability to record or even televise if needed.

Q29 : Can you share more about pulling out of the Civil Service process?

A29 : On October 18, 2021, Governor Charles D. Baker signed into law an act exempting all positions in the Police Department and Fire Department of the Town of Swampscott from the Civil Service law. This act had previously been passed by both houses of the state legislature and became effective retroactive to July 1, 2021.

This enactment marked the final step in a multi-year, contentious and acrimonious process. This very public process examined how Swampscott's hiring in our public safety departments was served by the Civil Service System. After extensively examining the effect of 100 years of hiring through Civil Service the determination was made that that system did not, in fact, provide an open and forward leaning selection process. Far too many potential public servants were left out of the process either in fact or in perception. Participation in Civil Service public safety entry exams by people of color and female candidates lagged far behind those groups' representation in the population.

With this determined and the endorsement of a Town Meeting Advisory committee, Selectboard-appointed study committee, Town Meeting, The Selectboard, and the Town Administrator, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed with the Firefighters Union and Police Union stating in part:

WHEREAS, the Town of Swampscott and the Swampscott Fire Fighters and Police Unions, jointly seek increase diversity and inclusivity within the Departments.

and WHEREAS, the parties agree that withdrawal from Civil Service will provide the Town with greater flexibility in the appointment process and strengthens the ability to increase Department diversity and inclusivity.

It is against that backdrop that The Swampscott Fire Department and Police Departments embarked on our first post-Civil Service recruitment and hiring campaign. Our first post-Civil Service outreach, recruitment and hiring campaign resulted in the greatest diversity in hiring in an eighteen-month period in the history of the Town. By that measure, we would have to consider the initiative to remove the Police and Fire Department from Civil Service to be a resounding success. However, we do need to examine what has worked well so far and where improvements need to be made to ensure we can see further improvements and enhancements.

Q30 : What are the critical shortcomings that you are facing?

A30 : One critical shortcoming is identifying and connecting with a more diverse applicant pool for open job opportunities.

Q31 : What do you explicitly mean by a “bank reference”? What do you expect to find in such a reference?

A31 : This reference should be from the business’s primary bank or audited financial statement. The intention is to verify the stability of the business so as to ensure that the business will be stable and able to complete the length of the contract term.

Q32 : \$2M in liability insurance for a consulting project is out of scope to similar work with other clients. We have \$1M, and it would cost us a significant amount of cash outlay to double. Would you reconsider this amount.

A32 : The insurance requirements are outlined in Section 11. If a Respondent needs to request a modification to those requirements, it should be noted in the submittal along with a reasoning for the adjustment.

Q33 : How many trainings would be involved?

A33 : The number of trainings should be determined as part of the work product when mapping out the one year of training. That number will likely be based on the employee / elected official count as well as the proposed methods.

Q34 : How much travel is expected?

A34 : This will entirely be dependent on the location of the respondent. There is an expectation that some work including focus groups, surveys, meetings, etc. will include in-person.

Q35 : Can you say more about what the public surveys are? Is the expectation that the consultant will survey the Swampscott community?

A35 : That's correct. We would like the selected Respondent to survey our community members as well. We would look to the Respondent to outline the type and number of surveys that would be best to use in a community of about 15,000 people.

Job	Description	Group/BU	Location
1EAT	EXEC ASSISTANT TO TA	1PER	122
1FAD	FACILITIES DIRECTOR	1CON	122
1PER	PERSONNEL MANAGER	1PER	122
1TM	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	1CON	122
1AAS	ASSESSING DIRECTOR	1PER	123
1ADP	ADMIN ASST PART TIME	1PT	123
1FAS	FINANCE ASSISTANT	1PT	123
1AAC	ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANT	1PER	135
1DAF	DIR OF ADMIN & FINANCE	1PER	135
1ATR	ASSISTANT TREASURER	1PER	145
1TC	TREASURER/COLLECTOR	1PER	145
1CLK	CLERICAL	1AFS	146
1HBA	HR/BENEFITS ADMIN	1PER	152
1HRD	DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES	1CON	152
1ACC	CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPERVISOR	1PER	161
1ACK	ASST. TOWN CLERK	1PER	161
1TCK	TOWN CLERK	1CON	161
1PLA	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	1PER	172
1PLS	COMMUNITY DEV PART TIME	1PT	172
1STP	SENIOR PLANNER	1PER	172
1MAT	MATRON	1PT	210
1MPM	MASTER PATROLMAN	1POL	210
1PCA	POLICE CAPTAIN	1POL	210
1PCH	POLICE CHIEF	1CON	210
1PLT	POLICE LIEUTENANT	1POL	210
1POC	POLICE SERGEANT/OIC	1POL	210
1PPM	POLICE PATROLMAN	1POL	210
1PPO	PT POLICE OFFICER	1PT	210
1PSG	POLICE SERGEANT	1POL	210
1PXG	POLICE X-GUARD	1POL	210
1RES	RESERVE POLICE OFFICER	1PT	210
1ADA	ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.	1PER	211
1ADF	ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.	1PER	220
1DCH	FIRE DEPUTY CHIEF	1FIR	220
1FCE	FIRE CAPTAIN/EMT	1FIR	220
1FCH	FIRE CHIEF	1CON	220
1FCM	FIRE MECH/CLK STIPEND	1FIR	220
1FCP	FIRE CAPTAIN	1FIR	220
1FED	EMERGENCY MGMT DIR	1CON	220
1FF	FIREFIGHTER	1FIR	220
1FFE	FIREFIGHTER/EMT	1FIR	220
1FLT	FIRE LIEUTENANT	1FIR	220
1FTE	FIRE LIEUTENANT/EMT	1FIR	220
1BLD	BLDG COMM/ASST FAC DIR	1PER	251
1BLI	LOCAL BUILDING INSPECTOR	1PER	251
1PGI	PLUMBING AND GAS INSPECTOR	1PT	251

1WIR	WIRING INSPECTOR	1PT	251
1HAR	HARBORMASTER	1PT	295
1BUS	DPW BUSINESS MANGER	1PER	450
1AEN	ASSISTANT ENGINEER	1PER	499
1CUS	CUSTODIAN	1PT	499
1DSU	DPW DIRECTOR/ASST TA	1PER	499
1MEH	MEO-H	1DPW	499
1MEO	MEO	1DPW	499
1MES	MEO-H&S	1DPW	499
1PWP	DPW PART TIME	1PT	499
1WKF	WORKING FOREMAN	1DPW	499
1ACO	AMINAL CONTROL OFFICER	1PT	510
1BOH	BOH SECRETARY	1AFS	510
1CTR	COVID TRACING	1PT	510
1FIN	FOOD INSPECTOR	1PT	510
1HEA	HEALTH DIRECTOR	1PER	510
1NUR	PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE	1PT	510
1CA2	COA 2	1PT	541
1CA3	COA 3	1PT	541
1CAC	COA ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR	1PT	541
1CAD	DIRECTOR OF AGING SRVCS	1PER	541
1CAW	COA OUTREACH WORKER	1PT	541
1COA	COA OFFICE ASSISTANT	1PT	541
1CPC	COA PROGRAM COORDINATOR	1PT	541
1CVA	COA VAN DRIVER	1PT	541
1PVM	PROGRAM VOLUNTEER MGR	1PER	541
1VET	VETERANS AGENT	1PT	543
1LA	LIBRARY ASSISTANT	1LIB	610
1LAA	LIB ADMIN ASSISTANT	1LIB	610
1LAD	LIBRARY AIDE	1LIB	610
1LAU	LIBRARY ASSISTANT (NONUNION)	1PT	610
1LBA	LIBRARY ASST. DIRECTOR	1PER	610
1LBD	LIBRARY DIRECTOR	1PER	610
1LDH	LIB DEPT HEADS	1LIB	610
1LIB	LIBRARIANS	1LIB	610
1LPT	LIBRARY PART TIME	1PT	610
1LRP	LIBRARIANS PART TIME	1PT	610
1LST	LSTA GRANT	1LIB	610
1LTA	LIBRARY TECH AIDE	1LIB	610
1REC	RECREATION DIRECTOR	1PER	630
1RPC	RECREATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR	1PER	630
1RTA	RETIREMENT ASSISTANT	1PER	910
1RTD	RETIREMENT DIRECTOR	1PER	910