

Business & Ag

City's RFP process questioned

BY GINA K. SWARTZ
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The City of Baker City recently sent out Requests for Proposal (RFP) to purchase three new vehicles. One of the RFP's that was sent out September 6, 2016 clearly outlined specifics required in the consideration of two of the three vehicles being sought, compact pick-ups.

The second RFP was for an SUV. The RFP's that were sent out stated that The City of Baker City would be accepting bids until 4 p.m. September 21, 2016.

The documents went on to list specifics such as minimum ground clearance, 4-wheel drive, 3.5-liter V-6 gas engine and concerning the pick-ups—one needed to be a double or crew cab and one needed to be an extended cab or "access cab."

It was noted that price would be a major determining factor in the selection however warranty, ease of operation, ease of maintenance and overall value would be considered.

Michelle Owen, Public Works Director for the City was responsible for the RFP and invited any questions be addressed directly to her. Additionally, the official RFP released stated, "Persons submitting proposals are encouraged to explain why their proposal would be in the best interests of the City."

That same day, September 6, 2016, owner of Baker Garage Randy Dougherty sent Owen an email that read as follows: "Michelle, The Chevrolet Colorado has two bed lengths. (61.7 inches or 7.0 inches) Does the City haul anything? We need clarification of this as well. Thanks, Randy."

Owen replied to Dougherty's email saying, "We are looking for the shorter bed length. Thus the request for a compact pick-up."

Then on September 19, 2016 Dougherty submitted his RFP to Owen on behalf of Baker Garage.

His proposal officially offered, "A 2017 Chevrolet Colorado extended cab 2.5 liter 4-cylinder in the amount of \$25,659 or

a 2017 Chevrolet Colorado extended cab with a 3.6 liter 6-cylinder in the amount of \$26,783. Also, accept this as our submit of a 2017 Chevrolet Colorado Crew Cab in the amount of \$27,881."

In a separate proposal for the SUV he offered a Chevrolet Traverse for \$26,571. After all proposals were received Owen and staff reviewed the submissions and a staff report was prepared for City Council to consider at the September 27, 2016 Meeting.

In the late afternoon on September 27, before the Council meeting Dougherty composed an email that was sent to all councilors with a copy sent also to City Manager Fred Warner. That email stated, "Mayor and Councilors, At tonight's council meeting you are going to be asked to support staff recommendation to purchase three (3) new vehicles. I have a real issue with the RFP process. City Staff and the RFP specifically requested compact pickups. When I spoke with Public Works Director Ms. Owen I was told by her the Public Works Pickups had to be compact size vehicles. When I mentioned full size she told me 'No' the City wants compact size vehicles, shortest beds possible. Now at the time to authorize the expenditure City staff is recommending purchase of a full-size pickup, which Baker Garage, Inc. was told not to provide a quote because the City wants compact pickups. How can that be fair? Also, I believe strongly in shopping local and supporting local events. It should be noted that all three of Baker Garage, Inc. quotes were under budget. Thank you for your consideration. Randy Dougherty President Baker Garage, Inc."

No mention of that email was made at the City Council meeting that evening.

As Owen addressed Council that evening, she noted that none of the proposals received met all of the specifications that had been outlined in the original RFP.

She disclosed that one or more of the submitters had contacted her for clarification

or with other questions.

Owen also disclosed that a representative from Tonkin Nissan had contacted her with information that they had a year-end 2016 model available they could offer at roughly \$500 less than the 2017 they had submitted a bid for.

This information was received verbally, after the close date for bids to be received.

Owen advised Council that she did not feel it fair to even consider this as a viable option since it was mentioned after the close date for official bids and had not been submitted in an official bid.

Council agreed with the exception of Councilor Lowe who felt the RFP process should be reopened allowing for this option to be considered.

By reopening the RFP bid, Dougherty and Baker Garage could have taken advantage of the opportunity to submit alternatives as other competitors had done.

Owen also addressed the Council's concern of staying local by advising that local was considered not just in town but within the State, by State purchasing rules.

She said, "You cannot buy local just to buy local within your community. Oregon is considered local. You can't just buy in town regardless, you have to have a reason like there are some cost savings, travel distance for warranty work (for example). Our purchasing rules say if you're not going to choose low cost you have to give reasons why."

Of the three vehicles suggested by staff, two were from in town dealers, a 2017 Ford F-150 extended cab for \$25,023.28 from Gentry Auto Group and a 2017 Chevrolet Traverse SUV from Baker Garage for \$26,571.

"Randy really sharpened the pencil and gave us a good deal on the Traverse and Ford gave a great deal on the F-150. I was very pleased that two of the three vehicles were able to come from town," said Owen.

The third, a 2017 Nissan Frontier at a cost of \$26,442 was from Tonkin

Nissan in the Portland area.

Owen said, "The crew cab is for use in the watershed so the most important things there were compact size because of the tight quarters up there but we still needed it to carry four people so that is why it needed to be a crew cab. But compact was the most important thing so we selected the Nissan, which was the low cost compact one and it also had the highest clearance of them all. Even though it didn't meet all the minimum requirements it had the highest clearance of the ones that were proposed. On the extended cab we talked with the employee that would be using it the most, it was determined that clearance and being compact wasn't as important for in town so we went with the low cost option which was the F-150. I felt like it really ended well. We had two local dealerships that gave us good deals and we got to use them because they were low. I am disappointed to hear that he (Dougherty) is upset because I feel that we went through the process just as we should. State purchasing rules say buying local is Oregon. Our direction from the Council has been clear—low cost is critical and that is also what City Manager Fred Warner said as well, we're focused on costs, so we picked the low cost."

It should be noted that all vehicles were allocated \$30,000 by the budget board and each vehicle was under budget.

According to Owen none of the bids received for the requested specifications.

Owen also stated, "It was a request for proposal, we gave a list of requirements but you can propose what you'd like."

In an email received by *The Baker County Press*, Dougherty stated, "What the City is doing is just wrong."

This leaves the questions: Should the City look at the RFP protocol? Are changes needed? If specifications as stated in an RFP are not met should the City consider what was supplied in a bid or reopen the RFP?

— WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, October 7, 2016 — Eastern Oregon
Prices trended generally steady compared to week ago prices. Most demand lays with the retail/stable hay. According to some producers, horse owners are starting to prefer lower sugar, higher protein hay.

Tons	Price Range	Wtd Avg
This week:		
Alfalfa — Large Square Supreme	60 140.00-140.00	140.00
Last week:		
Alfalfa — Small Square Good	250 100.00-100.00	100.00
Alfalfa/Triticale Mix— Small Square Fair	27 110.00-110.00	110.00

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

— CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, October 5, 2016
Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 1282

Steer Calves

300-400#	Bulk 138.00 - 154.00	Top 156.00
400-500#	Bulk 126.00 - 144.00	Top 146.50
500-600#	Bulk 116.00 - 125.75	Top 126.00

Heifer Calves

300-400#	Bulk 126.00 - 146.00	Top 148.00
400-500#	Bulk 115.00 - 135.00	Top 137.00
500-600#	Bulk 109.00 - 118.00	Top 119.00

Yearling Steers

600-700#	Bulk 109.00 - 121.00	Top 123.00
700-800#	Bulk 103.00 - 114.00	Top 116.00
800-900#	Bulk 99.00 - 110.00	Top 111.00
900-1,000#	Bulk 94.00 - 107.00	Top 108.00

Yearling Heifers

600-700#	Bulk 100.00 - 114.00	Top 116.00
700-800#	Bulk 97.00 - 109.00	Top 113.00
800-900#	Bulk 95.00 - 106.00	Top 108.00
900-1,000#	Bulk 94.00 - 106.50	Top 108.00

Thin Shelly Cows	41.00 - 54.00
Butcher Cows	58.00 - 69.00
Butcher Bulls	54.00 - 67.00
Pairs Young	1210.00 - 1425.00
Hfretts.	73.00 - 88.00
Stock Cows Young	975.00 - 1260.00

ProducersLivestock.com
541-473-3136

— LOG PRICE REPORT —

Price per 1,000 board feet: Northeast Oregon

Currently the local log market is flooded with fire salvage logs. The log buyer for Malheur Lumber Co. stated they have all the logs they need under contract and are not accepting any new purchases. BCC/LLC of La Grande has receive so many burned fire salvage logs they are no longer accepting logs at the La Grande log yard. Any additional pine logs have to be delivered to the Elgin Log yard cut in plywood lengths and to a 8 inch top. For these pine logs cut in plywood lengths, BCC is offering \$280.00/mbf. They are also paying \$420.00/mbf for Doug Fir & Western Larch. For White Fir they are offering \$325.00/mbf. At the Pilot Rock Saw Mill BCC is offering \$360.00/mbf for a 12 to 15 inch top, for 16 to 19 inch top \$400.00/mbf & offering \$425.00/mbf for 20 inch plus top

Courtesy of Arvid Andersen,
Andersen Forestry Consulting

— PRECIOUS METALS REPORT —

Price per ounce, USD	
Gold:	\$1,256.20
Silver:	\$17.56
Platinum:	\$943.43
Palladium:	\$649.05
Bloomberg.com	

— AG COMMODITIES —

Corn:	\$337.05/bu/USD
Wheat:	\$396.75/bu/USD
Soybeans:	\$945.50/bu/USD
Oats:	\$198.00 bu/USD
Rough Rice:	\$10.18/cwt/USD
Canola:	\$474.50 CAD/mwt
Live Cattle:	\$98.00/lb./USD
Feeder Cattle:	\$117.78/lb./USD
Lean Hogs:	\$44.05/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com

Sumpter has new interim mayor

BY MEGHAN ANDERSCH
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Sumpter City Council met on October 11th. Immediately after leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance, Cary Clarke handed out blank pieces of paper for a secret ballot. Clarke was elected interim mayor unanimously. Robert Armbruster and Greg Lucas each received two votes for Council President. After further discussion between the two, they agreed Lucas would become President.

Security cameras

While reviewing bills to be paid, Armbruster asked where the security cameras were going. They will be installed on each side of Volunteer Park.

Fire Department Report

Jim Sheller reported a fairly quiet month. They assisted the Powder River



Meghan Andersch / The Baker County Press

L-R: Samantha Rowan, Cary Clarke, Robert Armbruster, and Greg Lucas.

department in setting up a Life Flight. There was medical call out in Sumpter's area. Dispatch sent Powder River. Both units responded.

Sheller reminded everyone that Sumpter is under

ODF rules are far as burning. Only burn barrel and recreation fires are allowed until ODF gives the okay for ground burning.

The Department is still doing heavy training every first and third Tuesday.

If anyone wants to join, Sheller said they welcome hands at any time.

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