

Executive Summary

Town of Caroline Highway Facility Task Force

6 May, 2021

Project History & Assessment Of Current Facility

In April of 2016 then Code Officer, Kevin McMahon inspected the Highway Department main facility and issued a [letter](#) to the Town Board outlining its condition as well as safety concerns. This letter kick started discussions about the future of the facility, as well as its potential to be renovated or whether a new facility was needed. From these discussions, [LaBella Associates](#), a local engineering firm, was engaged to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the structure. Their [findings](#), issued in January of 2017, detailed numerous deficiencies with the structure and concluded that renovating it would be challenging and not fiscally prudent.

Initial Steps

Following the LaBella report, intermittent discussions were held about how to move forward and that fall acquiring the former Crispell garage property was briefly explored. Ultimately the facility was deemed to be unsuitable due to its large size and the fact that its location was just over the border in the Town of Dryden. Discussions continued ultimately leading to the creation of a Highway Facility Task Force.

Initial Work Of The Task Force & Development Of RFQ

The Task Force was charged with leading the process of assessing, planning, and implementing, if feasible, the construction of a new Highway facility. In May of 2020 then Code Officer, Brook Greenhouse, connected the task force with LaBerge Group who provided similar consulting services for the Town of Highland. They presented the task force with a [scope of services document](#) to conduct feasibility studies on 3 properties, the current Highway Department site, property owned by the Town on Perkins Road, and an available equestrian facility just down the road from the current Highway Department. The proposed amount of these services was: \$19,500.

At the request of the Caroline Town Board, the Highway Facility Task Force developed a [Request For Qualifications](#) (RFQ) document to solicit interest from a larger array of local and regional engineering firms. As the document was being developed, the equestrian facility was sold and no longer an option. The RFQ document was finalized in December 2021, shared with the Town Board for feedback, and in January of 2021 was e-mailed to [30 local and regional engineering firms](#). Of the 30 firms, responses were received from the following 6:

- [CPL](#)
- [Delta](#)
- [GPI](#)
- [Hunt](#)
- [Keystone](#)

- [LaBerge](#)

Review Of RFQ Submissions & Interviews

The task force reviewed the proposals with particular attention to experience with: similar projects, site evaluation and selection, site planning, design, funding sources, and project oversight. From these reviews 3 firms, **Hunt, Keystone, and LaBerge** were notified that they had been selected to interview and were informed that within a week after the interview they would need to submit a projected project timeline with quote.

Interviews commenced on Friday, April 23, 2021 and were conducted by Councilmember John Fracchia, Councilmember Cal Snow, and Highway Superintendent Bobby Spencer. Each firm had an hour were informed that the purpose of the interview was to:

- Get to know the proposed project leaders;
- Learn more about the firm's experience with this type of project;
- Obtain insight into how they might approach Caroline's project.

Additionally, each firm was offered 15 minutes at the beginning of the conversation to provide an overview of the firm.

The interviews were informative and the Task Force learned, independently from each firm, that the elements of the RFQ fell into two major stages: evaluation (phases 1-3) and implementation (phases 4-8). While it is possible to provide a quote for the first stage, quotes for the second stage were challenging due to the fact that they were dependent on the final scope of the project. To mitigate this unforeseen circumstance, each firm was asked to provide examples of what cost ranges for the second stage could reasonably be expected to be.

During the course of the interview the Task Force probed each firm's: a) understanding of the project, b) site evaluation experience, c) site selection experience, d) site planning experience, e) design experience, f) knowledge of environmental laws and regulations, g) knowledge of funding streams.

The Task Force discussed the interviews and while there was agreement that each of the firms had the requisite qualifications for the project, there was consensus that the ranking for the firms was:

1. LaBerge
2. Keystone
3. Hunt

LaBerge stood out for several reasons:

- Municipal building consulting is their specialty area
- They are the oldest of the 3 firms (established 1964)
- They demonstrated the clearest understanding of our project and our working on a similar project with the Town of Hector
- They have an in-house grant function, which since 2000 has secured \$245,000,000 in project funding.

The due date for the project quotes and timeline was Friday, May 1 at 5:00PM and submissions were received from all interviewing firms.

Receipt And Review Of Stage 1 (Phases 1-3) Quotes

The proposals for the stage 1 were in the following amounts:

1. [LaBerge](#) - \$18,900
2. [Keystone](#) - \$48,750
3. [Hunt](#) – No firm amount given

Recommendation

Based on the strength of their response to the RFQ, their interview, and a competitive price that represents a reduction in costs from what was offered in 2020, the Highway Facility Task Force unanimously agrees that LaBerge should be hired as consultant for this project. As such, the following resolution is offered:

Resolution To Engage LaBerge Group

Whereas, the current Highway Department facility is over 50 years old and through evaluations by both the Town of Caroline Code Officer as well as an independently contracted engineering firm has been assessed to be beyond its useful life as well as presenting structural concerns which cannot be easily or cost effectively remediated, AND

Whereas the facility is no longer able to accommodate the size of modern highway equipment, house the number of vehicles possessed by the town, leverage current environmental best practices including energy use, AND

Whereas it has been assessed that it would be a cost savings to the Town of Caroline taxpayers to construct a modern, sustainable facility, that can accommodate grown over the next several decades, BE IT RESOLVED

That the Town of Caroline Board authorizes the Town to enter into an agreement with LaBerge in the amount of \$18,900, for Stage 1 consulting services as outlined in the RFQ of December 2020 to begin the steps needed for the development of a new Highway Department facility.