



**City of Bristol CT**  
**Purchasing Committee for the Board of Finance**  
**Meeting Minutes – April 20, 2023**

A Meeting of the Purchasing Committee of the Board of Finance was held on April 20, 2023 at 5:15pm in the IT Meeting Room within City Hall West (131 North Main Street).

Present: David Maikowski, Ron Burns.

Also Present: Purchasing Agent Roger Rousseau.

Meeting was called to order at 5:15 pm.

**Public Participation.**

There was no public participation.

**Review of Purchase Card Policies and take any action as necessary**

Current guidelines allow for purchases up to \$3,000.00; this amount is based on a prior bid threshold of \$3K. The guidelines also later say that cardholders may not split purchases in order to keep each individual transaction under \$5,000 (our new bid threshold amount). The purchasing agent recommended that the guidelines be updated to allow for individual purchases up to \$5,000.00 for consistency.

Motion was made by David Maikowski and seconded by Ron Burns to approve the recommendation to increase the purchase card per transaction threshold of \$3,000.00 to \$5,000.00; motion unanimously approved.

**Review of Dining Services Contracts and take any action as necessary**

Last year the Board of Education had an audit finding relating to the purchase of more than \$250,000 of produce goods from TinaRose Produce. The Purchasing Department has twice gone out to bid for establishing a contract for produce, without success. The BOE has gone over the \$250K threshold for this year as well.

The BOE reached out to the auditors to tell them some produce is part of their annual buy, and some produce is via a grant called the “Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program” (FFVP). There is no distinction within their purchase order, and no distinction in funding source, although some of the 331 invoices posted against the PO do have “FFVP” marked within the body of the invoice. The auditors recommended that for this year, the City acknowledge the fact that it went out to bid and since there were no responses, request the BOF to approve use of TinaRose as a vendor. This is interpreted to mean the BOE should seek a bid waiver from the Board of Finance. This information was solely provided as backup when the anticipated bid waiver comes before the Board of Finance, and no action was taken.

**Discuss Solicitation Process for Architects and Construction Managers and take any action as necessary**

Discussion ensued whether there could be efficiencies gained by engaging a single architect for several projects. Due to varying design requirements and varying site conditions for each building, the amount of time and effort (and subsequent cost) is not likely to be reduced by having one design team work on two projects.

**To discuss policy related to purchase order changes and take any action as necessary.**

The Purchasing Department has seen a significant increase in the instances where a department requests an increase to a blanket purchase order; two examples from today are:  
PO 22300722 WB Mason was set up in the amount of \$25,000.00, and six changes later is now up to \$150,000.00 (last year's PO was \$125,000.00).  
PO 22301266 TinaRose was set up in the amount of \$125,000.00, and five changes later is now up to now up to \$375,000.00 (last year's PO was \$250,000.00).

It adds a fair amount of effort to the Purchasing Department as well as the ordering department; more importantly, it ends up bypassing the budget checks that having Munis, the department head, and comptroller normally see. Purchasing does about 125 PO changes per month; that number does not take into account minor dollar amount changes (adding freight or changes less than \$100).

Motion was made by David Maikowski and seconded by Ron Burns to adopt a guideline stating that a purchase order can't be changed by more than 50% of its original value, and can't be changed more than three times; motion unanimously approved.

There would be exceptions that such a simple guideline would have to factor into, such as construction projects that, for the City Hall and Memorial Boulevard projects as example, have had change orders every month and the more than three changes guideline isn't necessarily relevant in such conditions.

**To discuss utility costs and impacts to budget**

The Purchasing Department recently received outreach from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities ("CCM") regarding the possibility of municipal bidding for its members. The purchasing agent spoke to Titan Energy, the energy advisor to CCM, who felt that the market was not yet in position for pursuing natural gas via third parties. Information was also sought from other towns on their interest and no other towns appear to be pursuing the natural gas market at this time. No action is being taken at this time regarding natural gas.

The City's electricity contracts run through June 2024, and preparations are under way to develop a new contract. It is expected that market conditions for electricity will be considerably higher than the current rate of roughly 7 cents per kWh, for the fiscal year starting July 2024.

The City recently secured a contract for its heating fuel needs for the coming fiscal year at roughly \$2.71 per gallon; the economic forecast for the coming fiscal year anticipated \$3.10 per gallon.

**Adjournment.**

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 6:02 pm.