

Town of Westminster Purchasing Policy

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Article I. Purpose

The Town of Westminster's Purchasing Policy seeks to promote the best interests of the Town of Westminster through the open and efficient purchasing of supplies, equipment and services, to maximize value received for each tax dollar spent;

Article II. Purchase Type

There shall be three types of purchase methods: routine or daily, minor, and major.

Section 2.01 Routine or Daily Purchases

Those purchases calling for delivery of goods or services in the amount of less than \$500.00

Section 2.02 Minor Purchases

Those purchases calling for delivery of goods or services in the amount of \$500.00 to \$10,000;

Section 2.03 Major Purchases

Those purchases calling for delivery of goods or services in the amount equal to or in excess of \$10,000

Section 2.04 Exempt Purchases:

The following types of purchases shall be considered "Exempt Purchases" and shall have limited competitive procurement requirements as described more fully in Section 3.05:

(a) **Professional Services:**

Professional services including, but not limited to, legal counsel, insurance, engineering/architectural services, and some consulting services.

(b) **State or Federal Procurements:**

Procurement utilizing State of Vermont or federal government contracted products or vendors

(c) **Equipment repairs and parts**

(d) **Utilities**

(e) **Service contracts**

(f) **Used equipment**

Section 2.05 Emergency Purchases:

An emergency situation shall be defined as one which threatens safety or general welfare of the Town or its citizens and normal procurement procedures are impracticable.

Article III. Procurements Procedures

Section 3.01 Purchasing Agent:

The Town Manager and/or the Selectboard's designee shall serve as the purchasing agent, unless otherwise indicated.

Section 3.02 Routine or Daily purchases

Routine or Daily Purchases may be accomplished without prior Selectboard approval and without the solicitation of formal bids or quotations. However, if practicable, pre-purchase quotations are encouraged.

Section 3.03 Minor purchases

Minor purchases may be accomplished without prior Selectboard approval and without solicitation of formal bids. However, if practicable, minor purchases should be accomplished through competitive solicitation.

Minor purchases shall follow established procedures for invoices, verification, and payment or any other relevant procedure. Department heads shall accomplish minor purchases in consultation with the Purchasing Agent. Minor purchases may be made through formal bid, written, or oral quotations. Bids or quotations should be sought from at least three (3) vendors unless a sole source is approved as per Section IV, below.

Section 3.04 Major Purchases

Major Purchases shall require Selectboard approval and purchases in excess of \$10,000 shall require a formal bid process.

The Purchasing Agent shall prepare or cause to be prepared, specifications or a Request for Proposal (RFP) or Request for Qualification (RFQ) for the goods or services required, and shall advertise an Invitation to Bid, including publication at least once in the newspaper of general circulation in Windham County. The Invitation to Bid shall include State contract vendors. The Invitation to Bid shall include the following:

- a. The location, time and place for receiving and opening sealed bids;
- b. Information on how to obtain bid specifications and bid forms, or the request for proposal;
- c. A description of the goods or services for which bids are to be received;
- d. The right of the Town of Westminster to reject any or all bids if such action is deemed in the best interests of the municipality;
- e. An outline, where appropriate, of the insurance requirements of the municipality in order to limit the municipality's risk.

Such bids shall be read publicly at the time of the bid opening.

Section 3.05 Exempt Purchases

- (a) The Selectboard may waive the bid process or approve a sole source solicitation for major purchases when the Board determines, in its sole discretion, that waiver of bid or sole solicitation will be in the best interests of the municipality. The Town Manager may do likewise for minor purchases. Sole source solicitations should be reviewed to determine that the price offered is fair and reasonable or that there is only one manufacturer/supplier of the goods or services to be purchased.
- (b) Professional Services:
The purchase of professional services shall normally be exempt from the formal bid process. It is recognized that proposals for professional services (including, but not limited to, legal counsel, insurance, engineering/architectural services and some other consulting services) are difficult to compare and that weight must be given to many considerations other than price. In any case, the purchase of professional services whose cost is expected to exceed \$10,000.00 for a project shall require approval by the Selectboard.
- (c) State or Federal Procurements:
Procurement utilizing State of Vermont or federal government contracted products or vendors shall be exempt. Purchases utilizing this method should include a copy of relevant state or federal contract, bid, or related materials.
- (d) Equipment repairs and parts:
Equipment repairs and parts shall be exempt from both the bid and quotation process. There should be every effort made to find the best, lowest cost solutions to repair and parts needs.
- (e) Utilities
Utilities shall be exempt from both the bid and quotation process. Where practicable the Purchasing Agent should seek out competitive solutions to utility procurement.
- (f) Service contracts
Service contracts shall be exempt from both the bid and quotation process. Contracts in excess of \$10,000 shall require approval by the Selectboard.
- (g) Used equipment
Used equipment purchases are exempt from both the bid and quotation process. Minor and major purchases should be made in conjunction with the purchasing agent. However, major purchases still require approval of the Selectboard. All purchases of used equipment should demonstrate cost savings.

Section 3.06 Emergency Purchases:

The provisions of this policy may be waived in the event of an emergency. During emergency situations, when normal procurement procedures would be impracticable, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. The Town Manager shall approve all requests for emergency purchases. In the event that the Town Manager is unavailable, a member of the Selectboard may approve essential purchases.
2. The Selectboard shall be notified, within twenty-four (24) hours of the transaction, of any emergency purchase greater than \$10,000. The Town Manger shall be notified immediately of all emergency purchases made without his/her prior approval.

Article IV. Vendor Selection

Purchases should be awarded to the least costly, best qualified and most responsible vendor. Any or all bids, quotations or proposals may be rejected if such action is deemed to be in the best interests of the municipality. In determining the "least costly, best qualified and most responsible vendor," in addition to price, the following may be considered:

1. The substantial performance of the bidder in meeting the specifications and other terms and conditions of the solicitation;
2. The ability, capacity and skill of the vendor to perform the contract or provide the goods or services required, and to do so promptly or within the time specified;
3. The character, integrity, reputation, experience, financial resources and performance of the vendor under previous contracts with the municipality and elsewhere;
4. The quality, availability and adaptability of the service or goods being purchased, and the ability of the vendor to provide future maintenance if necessary.

Article V. Effect

This Purchasing Policy is hereby adopted by the Westminster Selectboard on August 14, 2012 and is effective as of this date until amended or repealed.

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