REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON   **REPORT**

MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA-CARLETON   **RAPPORT**

Our File/N/Réf.

Your File/V/Réf.

DATE   2 March 1998

TO/DEST.   Coordinator

                  Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee

FROM/EXP.   Finance Commissioner

SUBJECT/OBJET   **HRIS PROGRAMMING CONTRACT**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee and Council approve the pre-commitment of 1998 funds to extend the services of the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) programmer consultant from RHI Consulting to an upset limit of $110,000.

BACKGROUND

The HRIS application went into production in November 1996. At that time the primary objectives of the implementation were to convert payroll data from the mainframe, incorporate Police staff, and produce pay. Since that time staff have been working hard to address other key requirements of the application including reports, on line queries, Canada Savings Bond capabilities, back pays, application upgrades, and other activities normally associated with a production Human Resource Information System. Over the last several months the HRIS Project Team has lost two thirds of the original project staff. While these staff have since been replaced it has been a challenging period for the team. On average an experienced programmer new to the Region's HRIS environment will take 12-18 months to be comfortable and fully productive. In order to provide both support and "coaching" to internal programmers, along with providing technical stability for the support of the application, an external consultant was contracted from RHI Consulting to provide services. Looking ahead it is recommended that RMOC extend this contract to ensure that staff have a senior resource to assist them and to provide advanced programming expertise to the project.

DISCUSSION

Currently the HRIS technical team consists of three internal resources; one senior analyst and two programmers. Of the two programmers, one has just recently completed all of the required training, while the second completed training earlier in 1997. Both resources have less than 8 months of "on the job programming". In 1998 RMOC will be upgrading to a new release of Peoplesoft HRIS which will introduce a number of new changes in the technology. Given the current level of experience among staff and the anticipated workload in 1998, it is essential that RMOC have available an experienced senior technical programming resource to assist with maintenance, new requests, and to support the other staff. still in training.

Presently, there is significant competition in the external workplace for IT resources. It is expected that this trend will continue over the next two years as organizations look to package solution providers and consultants to implement Year 2000 solutions. This increase in competition and market pressures have led to firms giving preference to longer term contracts over month to month arrangements. This will provide the much needed stability and support for the application, departmental users, and IT staff connected to the project. Should circumstances change, the contract could be cancelled with 30 days written notice to the vendor.

EVALUATION

It is recommended that RMOC extend the existing contract with the current resource from RHI Consulting for the following reasons:
- familiarity with RMOC's implementation of Peoplesoft and Oracle products
- familiarity with custom in-house developed portions of the application
- understanding of RMOC business rules as they relate to HR and payroll
- demonstrated ability to provide back up and on call support as required
- demonstrated ability to teach and assist new team members

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public consultation is not required.

EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION

Given the turnover of IT staff generally and on the HRIS project in particular as well as the steep learning curve for new staff it is critical that RMOC have an experienced, senior programming resource that can assist other developers as well as provide the technical expertise and continuity needed to support a mission critical application such as HRIS and Payroll. Without this resource new requests and maintenance items could be significantly delayed and have a serious impact on departments and staff.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

A total amount of $220,000 for professional services has been requested in the 1998 draft estimates, 012-12182-2330, from which the HRIS consultant requirement would be the first priority.

Approved by
J.C. LeBelle

SUPPLY MANAGEMENT DIVISION COMMENT

I concur,

G. Ford
on behalf of the Finance Commissioner

FINANCE DEPARTMENT COMMENT

Funds are available as indicated.

Approved by T. Fedec
on behalf of the Finance Commissioner

c.c.   S. Lechner
        E. Panke