



TOWN OF NORTH CASTLE

Town Hall - 15 Bedford Road
Armonk, New York 10504

Established 1736

HOWARD B. ARDEN
Supervisor

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REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TOWN LABOR COUNSEL

General Information

The Town Board of the Town of North Castle, New York invites qualified firms or individuals to submit quotations for labor counsel services as described in the scope of services set forth in this request for quotations (RFQ).

The Town of North Castle is located in Westchester County. According to the U.S. Census, the Town had a population of 11,841 in 2010. Town Hall and government offices are located at 15 Bedford Road, Armonk, NY. A five member Town Board, made up of the Supervisor and four Councilmen elected at large, is the governing body of the Town. The Supervisor's term is two years; the Councilmen's terms are four years. The Supervisor is the Chief Executive Officer of the Town. The Town Board is the legislative body responsible for setting policy, adopting the annual budget, approving contracts and expenditures, and enacting the Town's laws and resolutions.

The Town Board selects the Town Attorney, Town Labor Counsel, Town Prosecutor, Town Engineer, and Town Wetland Consultant, all of whom report to the Town Board and Supervisor. Appointments are at will and are renewable for periods of one year, as determined by the Town Board. These appointments are as independent contractors. All persons employed by a firm in accordance with a contract resulting from this RFQ will be employees of the firm and not of the Town of North Castle.

The Town employs approximately 130 full time and 30 part time employees, most of whom are members of one of four union represented bargaining units: police, highway, library, and clerical. More information can be found on the Town's website: www.northcastleny.com

Scope of Services

The services required of the Town Labor Counsel include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. LABOR RELATIONS

- Upon request by the Town Supervisor, consultant will provide on-site and telephone consultation to assist the Town in managing its labor relations, including but not limited to interpretation and application of collective bargaining agreements.

- Upon request by the Town Supervisor, consultant will represent the town at grievance hearings pertaining to the collective bargaining agreement, including arbitration, and manage all related business involving the labor union.
 - Upon request by the Town Supervisor, consultant will represent the Town at conferences and hearings involving matters before the New York State Public Employment Relations Board including, but not limited to, improper practice charges and unit clarification petitions.
2. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the Town's current employment practices as they pertain to employees in the respective bargaining units. Particular attention will be given to but will not be limited to: compensation; medical insurance for employees and retirees; cost containment strategies directed at the "total compensation package".
 - Produce specific recommendations pertaining to: 1) important subjects that are not addressed in the current collective bargaining agreements that should be included; 2) ambiguous language that should be made clear; 3) language that unnecessarily restricts managements flexibility in meeting the operating needs of the Town; and 4) language that is not in compliance with state and federal employment and labor regulations.
 - In consultation with management, develop proposals for additions, deletions, and other modifications to the collective bargaining agreements.
 - Represent the Town in negotiations, including mediation, fact-finding, and interest arbitration and manage all related business involving the labor unions.
3. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND POLICIES
- Advise the Town Supervisor and the Town Board on adopting and *Employment Practices Compliance Manual*, which is applicable to all Town employees and elected officials, and a *Compensation and Benefits Manual*, which is applicable to non-union-represented employees and all elected officials.

Submitting a Quotation

The submitted quotation should address the scope of services described above. Proposals and cost schedule will become part of the contract that is negotiated with the Town. The submission should have consecutively numbered pages and contain the following information, organized in accordance with this list:

- A. **Contact information:** The firm's name, office address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address of the person or persons authorized to represent the proposer and to whom correspondence should be directed.
- B. **Fee schedule:** A proposal to provide the services as outlined under one of the following fee schedules:
 - a. All services will be provided under a monthly retainer fee.

- b. All services will be provided on a time billed basis without a retainer.
- c. Services will be provided through a combination of a monthly retainer fee and time billed services.

Please provide the following information:

- 1. If applicable, the amount of proposed retainer and description of matters included in the retainer.¹
- 2. If applicable, the hourly rate for all of the individuals who may be working with the Town of North Castle, and the description of matters that will be billed hourly.
- 3. Describe any services listed in this RFQ which you would not be able to provide and the arrangements you propose to provide such services.
- 4. Identify your billable in-house expense items and the amounts you propose to bill for them.

C. **Qualifications:** Please provide the following information:

- 1. Describe your firm's background and history; include number of years in business and describe your firm's training and experience in municipal services.
- 2. Name the individual(s) from your firm whom you propose will provide the outlined professional services to the Town. If you are a sole practitioner, please identify any other individual you would expect to use as backup or for specific areas of expertise. Provide the following for each:
 - a. Professional certification(s);
 - b. Description of education (including name of educational institutions, degrees conferred, and year of each degree);
 - c. Professional background and professional associations;
 - d. Particular areas of expertise and training.
- 3. Provide reference contact information for three clients for which services have been provided in the last three years, at least one of which should be a municipal client. Please include the contact person's name, office address, phone and fax numbers, and email address.
- 4. Describe how you will keep the Town Board and the Supervisor informed about the status of matters. Describe your procedures for assuring that Town representatives will be able to contact and consult with you, or another qualified professional in the same firm who is familiar with Town matters, on an as needed basis.
- 5. List all clients that could potentially pose a conflict of interest with your services to the Town of North Castle, e.g. persons or entities doing business with or having relationships with the Town of North Castle.

¹ The Town does not consider it appropriate to bill for research or other work billed to another client, for more than one individual for consultations among individuals in the same firm, for travel time between an individual's home or office and locations in Westchester County, or for other travel time not devoted to preparation for or other work on Town matters.

Describe your procedures for identifying and resolving conflicts of interest.

6. What is the amount of your professional liability insurance? Identify your professional liability insurer and its rating by Best Insurance Digest.

D. **Additional Information:** Any other information that you feel is applicable to the evaluation of the quotation or of your qualifications for providing the professional services specified. You may use this section to address those aspects of your services that distinguish your firm from other firms.

One original and five copies of the quote must be received no later than noon on Tuesday, January 31, 2012. Quotes are to be sent to:

Howard Arden, Town Supervisor
Town of North Castle
15 Bedford Road
Armonk, NY 10504

Quotes should be marked "Town of North Castle Labor Counsel RFQ." Facsimile proposals will not be accepted. Additionally, please email an electronic copy of your proposal in PDF format to Town Supervisor Howard Arden (harden@northcastleny.com). Submissions received after the deadline may be disqualified.

Evaluation and Selection Process

The following information will be taken into consideration during the evaluation process:

1. Cost of providing services.
2. Qualifications identified in the quotation.
3. Local availability, support staff, and range of services offered.
4. Workload capacity and level of experience commensurate with the level of service required by the Town.
5. Professional reputation for providing high-quality services and ability to work cooperatively with the Town Board, Town Supervisor, Town Clerk, and department heads.
6. Sound judgment, integrity, and reliability as determined by references provided.
7. Interview with the Town Board as required.

The Town may seek clarification of submitted quotations and additional evidence of abilities prior to selection. The Town may invite one or more applicants to be interviewed by the Town Board.

The Town Board will choose a finalist with whom to negotiate a contract. A contract between the Town of North Castle and the selected individual or firm will define the extent of services to be rendered and the method and amount of compensation. The contract will be executed upon Town Board approval.

The acquisition of professional services is exempt from a formal bidding process under New York State Law. The selection of the service provider will be at the sole discretion of the Supervisor and Town Board.

Additional Information

Questions regarding this RFQ should be directed to:

Howard Arden, Town Supervisor
(914) 273-3001
harden@northcastleny.com

The Town of North Castle is not liable for any costs you incur in the preparation and/or presentation of the proposal.

The following schedule for this RFQ is anticipated:

- I. RFQ Issued – Monday, January 23, 2012
- II. Deadline for quotations – Tuesday, January 31, 2012 by noon
- III. Interviews of potential candidates – Early February
- IV. Award and negotiation of contract – Late February