Telephone System RFQ (18-WIOA-05)

Bidder's Conference - Questions and Answers – posted 11/14/18

Meetings held on November 12, 2018 & November 14, 2018 @ 2pm
Clemson SC Works Center, Clemson, SC

1. Internet Service Provider
   a. Who is the ISP - Northland Cable
   b. What is the method of deliver? (Coax, Fiber, T1, etc?) – There is a fiber line that runs into the building for staff internet, however the current VOIP system is on a cable modem.
   c. How many Static IP Address do you have (I would need a public IP Address) see above
   d. Is there a backup ISP? Would you consider that as part of a failover strategy? Not currently
2. Current Infrastructure
   a. Firewall Brand and Model – ~~Motorola model~~ correction: there are 2 sonicwall firewalls
   b. Switches Brand and Model – HP ProCurve 3500-48-PoE Switch J9473
      i. Should we plan to replace switches? Don't think they would need to be replaced.
      ii. If not, are the switches POE? VLAN Capable? (We would prefer to install switches to handle POE and VLAN Configurations –but we can work with most installed switches. The current system is POE with Avaya phones.

      VLAN capable - Please state in your bid whether or not you need this feature to make the phone system you are proposing work for us and any technical specifications. We will handle all necessary upgrades to our IT system separately. Please be specific on the specifications.
      iii. If not POE, we will need to install power bricks for the phones.
   c. Is CAT5e / CAT6 Cabling already in place for all endpoints? There are cables run for 90% of the endpoints.
   d. Is all cabling centralized (meaning, there are not any workgroup switches throughout the facility) I believe so, we only have one data room.
   e. Is there power conditioning in place? Do not believe so.
3. FAXES
   a. Are FAXES a critical business need? If so, we may suggest using Analog Lines for faxing. I would need to understand the business use. There is currently one analog line in place for faxing. Faxing is not used often, but is a necessity for some people in the building.
   b. Would you prefer desktop FAXING (as opposed to a FAX Machine?) We already have an e-fax option.
4. Are you open to replacing your e-fax option with something more cost effective? Not necessarily included in this proposal. In the RFQ, the current system says it has 2 fax lines, one of which is analog. Can you clarify? Yes. One of them is a co-ax line and the other is run through a copier machine with a dedicated phone line. Who uses the e-fax line and what is its purpose? It was the cheapest option to fax to staff in our satellite offices. The Clemson Office is the only one with physical machines: one copier/fax, and one printer/fax. The printer/fax is on the co-ax line. You just want the two physical fax machines with the phone numbers to send/receive faxes? Yes. Do we want to keep the fax phone line? Yes.

5. IT Department / IT Support

    a. Do you have an on-site IT Department, or a 3rd Party IT Support Company? We have a knowledgeable member of staff that can assist with low-level issues; however, we use Technology Solutions as a 3rd Party IT Support Company. There is not a permanent manager of the phone systems.

    b. Will we have access to these folks during implementation? Our staff member can provide some assistance; and we will attempt to have our IT support company available during pre-arranged times to assist you.

6. What brand of phone system do you currently use? (EG: Avaya, Nortel, Nitsuku, NEC, etc)
Avaya predominantly (and NEC for 5 phones)

6. Do you prefer a traditional/legacy Digital phone solution using your existing telephone cabling, or a Voice over IP solution which uses data cabling?

We are open to either option as long as cost is reasonable and minimum features laid out in the RFP are included.

7. If you prefer a Voice over IP solution, please confirm:

- There is a data cable located by every current telephone (this could be a PC which utilizes a Cat 5 or similar "Ethernet" cable.
90% of lines have been run to the endpoint, but with the proposal we are looking to add a few lines.

8. What type of phone service do you currently subscribe to? (EG: Standard Business lines (AKA Copper lines, 1FB's), T-1 or PRI circuit)

PRI for the main line and EMTA (8 Port for the other)

9. How many lines do you have or how many channels if using a PRI or T-1. You may be able to get this information from your local phone bill, or worse case, you may need to contact your provider.

There are 2 current lines that we are proposing to be merged into the one with the specifics from the proposers. The EMTA has 8 lines, and the PRI has 24 DIDS.

Is this a standard 23 channel PRI with DIDs associated with it? Yes. We purchased 24 based on the quoted price vs. the next price point at 40. One for every line so 41.

Does the EMTA have partial analog on it? 8 analog lines on coax and a full PRI.

10.   a. Who is your current INTERNET provider? Northland Cable Communications

    b. How much bandwidth do you subscribe to. (This information will be on your Internet bill.) The PRI sits on a line that is 64k up and down, the EMTA is on a modem that is 256k up and down.

11. Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like from India or Canada)

The South Carolina Procurement Code does not prohibit awards to businesses located outside the US.

As stated in sec. 502 of WIOA, all funds authorized in title I of WIOA and the Wagner-Peyser Act must be expended in compliance with secs. 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301- 8305).

12. Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

The Bidder must come to the Mandatory walk-thru, all other meetings may be held remotely.

13. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like from India or Canada)

14. Can we submit the proposals via email?

Yes. You may submit proposals via email. Reference page 6 of the proposal, "Instructions for completing and submitting proposals."

15. What is the speed of the fiber line? The fiber line is 5.4 down, 5.2 up (5 x 5). The modem is 24 x 4.

16. Are the two sides of the building connected by data? Yes.

17. Are you open to hosting and/or hardware solutions? Yes, both. We are looking for someone to manage the phone system if possible. Funding is limited.

18. Is your current telephone service for PRI contract based or month-to-month? Month-to-month. Can we see what you pay per month?

For Avaya Phone System:

Business Phone

Business PRI - Unlimited	11/01..11/30	$575.00
DIDS w/ PRI	11/01..11/30	$13.00
Total Business Phone		**$588.00**

Equipment

Adtran 908	11/01..11/30	$39.99
Total Equipment		**$39.99**

Miscellaneous Charges & Credit

Phone PSTN Fee	11/01..11/30	$0.50
Total Miscellaneous Charges & Credit		**$0.50**

Taxes and Fees

Local Tax	$0.40
Regulatory Fee Recovery	$0.70
State Tax	$2.40
Total Taxes and Fees	**$3.50**

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE 11/05/18

$631.99

For NEC Phone System:

Business Phone

Business Unltd LD Phone 5-8 11/01..11/30	$287.92
Total Business Phone	**$287.92**

Equipment

Cable Modem Rental	11/01..11/30	$7.99
EMTA 8 Port	11/01..11/30	$19.99
Total Equipment		**$27.98**

Discounts

Business Internet Phone Disc11/01..11/30	$- 7.25
Business Internet w/ Contrac11/01..11/30	$- 10.00
Total Discounts	**$- 17.25**

Taxes and Fees

Local Tax	$0.28
Regulatory Fee Recovery	$15.43
State Tax	$15.50
Total Taxes and Fees	**$31.21**

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE 11/05/18

$489.85

Do you prefer hosted, cip trunks or premise based solutions? Are you looking for the bidders to give recommendations? We are looking for the best solution for the best price.

Can we place you with another ISP or does it have to remain with Northland? We are open to other ISP providers.

19. Do you have an ISP address block? We currently have a block of 5 to use and 2 ISP addresses are available.

20. Are you using all of your 24 DIDs? Yes. We need more.

21. What are the primary issues you are facing right now? 1st issue is lack of DIDs, 2nd is message system that can be easily activated and updated when we are out of the office. We experience dropped calls frequently.

22. Do you have a contract that you want us to use? We have a contract sample that we can provide or the bidder can provide a sample contract for us to review.

23. What are the terms of the contract? We can do 1 year contracts with extensions. Typically up to 3.

24. What is your outclause? Our standard contract has a 30 day out-clause with written notice.

25. Are you a 501C-3, tax-exempt? No. We are considered a government entity.

26. Are the wish list items in order of importance? No. We listed the items we would like to have in a random fashion. The items of absolute importance are listed in the must have column. Scaling of options and prices based on number of phones is requested in the RFQ.

27. Are taxes and fees included in the overall budget request? Yes. The RFQ clearly states in the budget section there should be no hidden or additional costs that are not included in the quoted price.

28. Should the bid include the price of cabling/IT upgrades to host the proposed system? No. WorkLink will handle the IT upgrading and cabling independently of this RFQ. Please include in your RFQ minimum recommended IT/cabling requirements needed to host the phone system in our building.

29. Is there a need for a cordless phone? No. Transfer of phone calls is all that is needed.

30. What type of NEC phones do you have? 8500 series, 16 button for 4 users, 32 button for 1 user. Only 5 NEC phones in the building.

31. Are outside hours available for installation? Yes. Staff will arrange to be onsite for off-hours installation. All work must be completed by February 28. An extension may be offered if technical difficulties are encountered until March 31. All funding expires on March 31.

32. Can you tell us where a phone will be located that there is not currently one available? Yes. I will provide a map showing where the 42 phones will be located, and will clearly mark the ones that will be new.

33. Will we be able to ask additional questions? Yes. Until 12:30pm on Thursday, November 15. I will post all questions and answers on our website by 5pm, November 15, 2018.

34. Can a bidder provide a demonstration of the telephone system for the review panel? Please include in your bids any links to videos that the selection panel may view that demonstrate or give an overview of your phone system. If an in-person demonstration is needed during the selection process, we will schedule those with each individual bidder.

35. In regards to NEC phones, do you dial 9 to get out? No.

36. Do your satellite sites need to be tied into the Clemson office? No. They are on Tri-County Technical College's system.

37. Are you looking to combine the phone systems? Yes. Are you looking to get rid of the analog lines? We want recommendations on what the best solution is for one phone system.

38. How many published numbers do you have? All phones have their own dedicated number on their business card. There are no 1-800 numbers.

39. Is VOIP run over the 5x5 line? No.

40. Could we get rid of the co-ax and upgrade your fiber line? Fiber line has not given us any trouble. You may quote upgrading speed for fiber line. We would be open to that solution. Do you know what speed you want? What we are paying now or less.

41. 90% of the locations have networks drops currently. What about the 10% that need to be identified? And what about switchports? We will post the map on our website. Right now we can't tether into our phones on the desks, which is an option for true VOIP vs. the Avaya phones. We tried to run enough drops for each computer and phone. In some instances, we have 3 people in an office. There are approximately 2 drops per desk, but there are a 2 to 3 offices that do not have necessary drops. For the three people in the office do they have drops for phones? Yes.

42. Conferencing? We would like the ability to host up to 10 to 25 individuals. Audio is needed, but would prefer video as well. Please price both.

43. Call transferring? Wish list is to transfer to cell phones or apps. This would be shown in the RFQ as an option. Show pricing differences. However, we prefer the staff to not have to give personal numbers out. The app option seems preferable. However, not every staff has a smart phone, and only a third have company issued phones.

44. Call history log? We just need the history log on the desk phone, we do not need a report or to view it through the computer. We want to be able to redial from the history log.

45. Voicemail to email? As a wish list item, we would like at least an audio file emailed, but would like pricing on voicemail text to email. Would like staff to be able to see notifications about voicemails when they are out of the office.

46. Privacy settings? Wish list items would be for out of office or away from desk message.

47. Are headsets needed? No.

48. Do all phones need to be the same? At least 2 reception phones, can quote up to 4.

49. Is a conference phone needed? Only 1 would be needed.

50. Do you want a general voicemail box? Or to cue up calls to a set person (or individuals)? Yes, to cue up calls to a certain number of people and then roll to a voicemail box. 4 is the most we would need for a call rolling feature.

51. Do you want automatic office hours so that it automatically goes to an auto attendant at 5pm? Yes, we would also like to be able to call in remotely and change the message in the case of bad weather or holidays.

52. Do you want music or a commercial message on the hold feature? We are open to either, please quote prices.

53. In regards to the hardware requirements, what is meant by the hardware cannot be available only from a single vendor? We want to be able to replace a phone if it breaks, and it does not need to be only available through one vendor.

54. How often do your calls drop? Frequently on the Avaya system, but not necessarily just limited to bad weather. Only occasionally on the NEC phones.

55. Do you have a virtual environment here? Please state in your bid whether or not you need this feature to make the phone system you are proposing work for us and any technical specifications. We will handle all necessary upgrades to our IT system separately. Please be specific on the specifications.

56. If power goes out, is it imperative that phone systems remain functioning? Not necessarily. We are dependent on internet to provide service to customers. If the power is out, we are limited already in what we can provide.

57. How many conference rooms are in the building? I am trying to determine how many conference room phones will be needed. We have 2 conference rooms. We only would need a maximum of 1 conference room phone.

58. How many workroom/breakroom phones are needed? None.

59. How many extensions require voicemail? 35 extensions need voicemail.

60. How many levels of auto attendant do you need? As an example, a call comes in to the auto attendant and gives the caller three options, the caller picks one of the three options and is then presented with another recording with another set of options. The second set of options is another auto attendant/another level.
      We would like three auto attendant options that a caller can select, and then up to 4 call rolling levels to staff on each office.

61. How extensive of a call history log are you looking for? Do you want to see more than inbound, outbound and missed calls (the basics)? The basics are fine.

62. Define large conference group calling. Are you looking for a conference bridge or something different? We would prices on conference bridging. We would like to host between 10-25 people on a conference call.

63. Is there a need for cordless phones? No.

64. Do you have any toll free numbers? No.

65. There is a total of 42 phones but I don't think every phone was for a person needing vmail. For example the 2 Conf Rm phones. So can SC Works indicate how many phones are for work areas (copy room), break room, convenience type phone of the 42? 35 extensions need voicemail. The remainder of the phones are in common work areas that do not need voicemail.