

**Request for Proposals for Professional Services for the
Administration of a 401a and 457b Plan
For the Lower Mount Bethel Township Pension System**

The above-named pension system and municipality is seeking proposals for the following professional services for the municipal pension plan:

1. Custodial services to provide secure possession, investment placement and reporting of pension assets.
2. Investment counseling services to provide sound strategies for the stability, preservation, and growth of pension assets.
3. Actuarial services to provide data and information relative to the funding adequacy of the municipal pension system(s) administered by the township pension system.
4. Administrative services to provide counseling, educational, and documentation services for the system(s) day to day pension operations.

The specifications for the requested services shall relate to applicants' qualifications, experience, expertise, and desired compensation with respect to the requested services; and such other specifications as may be required by state or federal law. Preference may be given to applicants who can provide multiple, or all, of the requested services.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be accepted by the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors until 2:00 p.m., on Friday, August 16, 2024, at the Township Municipal Building, 2004 Hutchison Ave, P.O. Box 257, Martins Creek, PA 18063.

Proposal forms, eligibility criteria and disclosures may be obtained at the Municipal Building at the above address Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., by email to manager@lowermtbethel.org or may be downloaded from the township website www.lowermtbethel.org.

Each proposal must be accompanied by all disclosures required by Pennsylvania Act 44 of 2009.

Jennifer W. Smethers
Township Manager

PENSION TRUST QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

Lower Mount Bethel Township pension system invites proposals for investment consulting, custodial, administrative, and actuarial services for a 401a and 457b Plans.

We are seeking a single service provider for the above-listed services, but will consider proposals which are limited to one or more of the listed services. We will employ the enclosed Evaluation Process and will require evidence that the responder has a history of providing a complete package of services and/or such elements of the total package as the responder proposes to provide.

In responding to this request, please:

1. Identify and describe the specific professional services with respect to which you are proposing.
2. Describe your history and experience in providing such services.
3. Identify the limits, if any, of services provided under your proposed fee, and your fee schedule for other services.
4. Describe with particularity the nature and frequency of consultative services you will provide.
5. State whether your services include the providing of IRS qualified documents for governmental plans; and any additional cost associated with such documents.
6. Set forth any facts or factors, not otherwise addressed in this RFP, which you feel are relevant to the Trustees' selection of professional service providers.

All interested respondents must complete each section of the enclosed application and disclosure forms and to forward six (6) copies of each to:

Jennifer W. Smethers, Township Manager
Lower Mount Bethel Township
2004 Hutchison Avenue
P.O. Box 257
Martins Creek, PA 18063

The postmark deadline for all proposals 2:00 p.m. Friday, August 16, 2024.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of responses to this RFP and final decision will be conducted by the Township Board of Supervisors. The Board may appoint a committee to conduct preliminary evaluations and to recommend one or more finalists for further review and investigation.

The relevant factors that bear upon the Board's decision will be summarized in a written statement to be included in the documents of award. Within ten (10) days after the award, the approved application, a summary of the basis for the award, and all required disclosure forms will be transmitted to all unsuccessful applicants and posted at least seven (7) days prior to the execution of the document.

The criteria to be used shall center upon the responder's qualifications, experience, expertise, proposed fee schedule, the Board's prior experience with and knowledge of the responder, and the Board's cumulative confidence in the successful responder. The evaluation process shall include, but not be limited to, consideration of the responder's:

- commitment to assisting the Township in providing service to it and its participating employees.
- ability to provide continuing educational services
- experience in managing municipal pension funds
- ability to act as a fiduciary to the Township's program
- knowledge of Act 205, Act 600, & Act 44
- ability to coordinate custodial services
- ability and commitment to provide administrative services
- ability to provide actuarial services
- ability to provide investment and other consultative services to the Township and participating employees
- the quoted fee and a description of rates and services which would fall outside of and be in addition to the quoted fee
- availability and willingness to attend meetings
- accurate and full disclosure of all items required by the letter and spirit of Act 44, including disclosure of all fund expense and revenue sharing arrangements associated with pension funds
- The Township's prior experience in dealings with the responder

APPLICATION FORM

A. Narrative Response to RFP

B. Responder's history, ownership and organization

1. List your organization's complete name, address, telephone and fax numbers. Briefly describe the organization, the year it was founded, location of its headquarters and other offices, its ownership structure and affiliation with other companies.

2. Provide a brief history of your organization and affiliated entities, if any.
 - a. What is the total asset base of the municipal pension funds on which you consult?

 - b. How many plans do you provide administrative services for? Consultative services? Custodial services?

- c. Describe your organization's level of experience and knowledge of the particular elements of the Township's pension program.
 - d. Describe your level of experience in advising townships on defined contribution and defined benefit programs.
- 3. Describe the range of activities of your organization and any affiliated entities.
 - 4. Within the last five (5) years has your organization or an officer or principal been involved in any business litigation or other legal proceedings relating to your professional activities? If so, provide an explanation and indicate the current status or disposition.
 - 5. Identify the consultants and other key staff who would be involved in serving our account. Provide resumes for these individuals.

C. Services.

- 1. Describe your proposal regarding custodial services
- 2. Describe your proposal regarding investment services
- 3. Describe your proposal regarding administrative and consultative services

D. Fees

1. Please provide a fee proposal for the services outlined in this request. Itemize separate charges for separate services where appropriate.

2. Provide an hourly fee schedule for any additional services not included in the basic scope of services.

I. Investment policy, research and reporting

1. Describe your approach to investment research.

2. How are investment managers evaluated?

3. Describe your asset allocation process for pension investments, if the plan's investments are directed by the governing authority. Be sure to address the development of investment policies, portfolio structure, and guidelines for investment managers.

4. What is your firm's process for establishing the client's investment objectives?

5. Describe the due diligence process utilized in the selection and monitoring of investment products.
 - a. Do you receive any direct or indirect compensation from investment product providers?

6. Comment on your philosophy regarding portfolio structure for municipal pension plans.

7. Describe the educational services to participants and the governing authority which you expect to provide or make available within the quoted fee.

8. Describe your reporting procedures.

9. What methods and sources of data do you use in calculating investment performance of a pension portfolio? How often are performance reports produced and delivered to participants and to the governing authority? Include a sample performance evaluation report.

10. Describe how participants, in a participant directed plan, can change investment allocations. Describe how the governing authority can change the plan's investment allocation in a plan that does not allow participant investment elections.

F. Scope of services: Please indicate whether your firm proposes to provide the following services within the quoted fee.

1. Attendance participant and Board meetings upon request.

2. All benefit calculations.

3. Annual benefit statements for all active participants.

4. Maintenance of relevant records for all active, retired and terminated vested members of each plan.

5. Timely updates on any changing legislation and regulations that are relevant to the administration of the pension plans.

6. Copies of all files, correspondence, and records, at no cost to the Township, within thirty (30) days upon termination of services.

7. Consultative and participant communication services as needed.
8. Plan documents (457, 401a, etc) as required along with restatements as required.

DISCLOSURE FORM

- 1) State the names and titles of each individual in your organization who will be providing professional services to the Township pension system including, if any, outside advisors or subcontractors; and describe the responsibilities of each named individual.
- 2) State whether any of the above named individuals, or your organization
 - Is a current or former official or employee of this municipality
 - Is or has been a registered federal or state lobbyist
 - What are the responsibilities of each individual named above with regard to the proposed contract.
- 3) If the answer in either case is 'yes', explain the circumstances, including dates of employment.
- 4) Confirm that resumes of any of the above named individuals will be provided upon request.
- 5) Confirm that any information provided in this form will be updated annually and if and when changes occur.
- 6) State whether your organization has provided employment or compensation to any third party intermediary, agent, or lobbyist to directly or indirectly communicate with any township pension system official or employee, or municipal official or employee in connection with any transaction or investment involving your firm and the municipal pension system.
- 7) State whether your organization, or any agent, officer, director, or employee of your organization has solicited or made a contribution to any municipal official or candidate for office in this municipality, or to the political party or political action committee of such an official or candidate.

- 8) State whether, following the advertisement of the Request for Proposal by this municipality, your firm has caused or knowingly allowed any third party to communicate with this municipality pension system about the award of a professional services contract, except for requests for technical clarification.

- 9) State whether your organization, or any affiliated entity, has made a contribution within the previous two years to any municipal official, or candidate office in this municipality. State the dates of any such contributions.

- 10) State whether your organization, or any affiliated entity, has any direct financial commercial or business relationship with any official of this municipal pension system or this municipality.

- 11) State whether your organization or any affiliated entity has offered or conferred a gift of more than nominal value to any official, employee, or fiduciary of this municipality pension system or this municipality.

- 12) State and disclose all contributions made by your organization or any affiliated entity which meet the following criteria:
 - i. The contribution was made within the last five years
 - ii. The contribution was made by an officer, director, executive-level employee or owner of at least 5% of your organization or affiliated entity
 - iii. The amount of the contribution was at least \$500 in a form of:
 - a) A single contribution by a person included in subparagraph ii.
 - b) The aggregate of all contributions by all persons in subparagraph ii.
 - iv. The contribution was made to:
 - a) a candidate for any public office in the Commonwealth or to an individual who holds that office.
 - b) a political committee of a candidate for public office in the Commonwealth or of an individual who holds that office.The information provided under this item shall be updated annually.

- 13) State the following information with respect to all persons identified as contributors in the preceding sub-paragraph:
- i. Name and address of the contributor
 - ii. The contributor's relationship to your organization
 - iii. The name and office or position of each person who received a contribution
 - iv. The amount of the contribution
 - v. The date of the contribution
- 14) State and disclose any gifts by your organization, or any affiliated entity, to an official, or employee of this municipal pension system or this municipality.
- 15) State whether your organization, or affiliated entity, employs or retains any third party intermediary agent or lobbyist; and that person's duties.
- 16) State whether there exists any financial relationship between your organization, or affiliated entity, or any affiliated entity, and any official of this municipal pension system or this municipality.