



BOARD (PUBLIC)
Report 24-094

24 June 2024

Approval for the Chair and Director to Approve Contracts for the Summer Period

Key Contact: Randy Gerrior, Associate Director, Business Operations (613) 596-8211 ext. 8810

PURPOSE:

1. To seek approval to provide authorization for the 2024 summer period, to the Chair and Director, to sign necessary approvals and contracts above the regular signing authority limits of \$500,000 for specific contracts: notwithstanding, the existing Signing Authority and Spending Controls policy.

SUPPORTING OUR STRATEGIC PLAN:

2. The temporary authority being requested will provide for appropriate review and approval processes while helping to facilitate the progress of projects which will contribute to our objective of providing safe and healthy learning and working environments for its students and staff. This proactive approach supports a culture of social responsibility and demonstrates leading practices in the area of governance.

CONTEXT:

3. Board policy, P.007.FIN, Signing Authority and Spending Controls, authorizes staff to sign contracts and commit the Board financially within the limits established in the Board's annual budget, and provided that tendering or other approved processes for acquiring goods and services have been followed.

In accordance with Board policies, P.057.FIN, Acquisition of Major Services, and P.069.FIN, Tendering, Purchasing and Acquisition of Supplies and Services, Board approval is required before staff can enter into a contract.

There are a number of Request for Proposals (RFPs) estimated in excess of \$500,000 (value over the life of the contract) expected to close just prior to or during the summer period and are planned for within the operations budget. Ordinarily, these contracts would come to the Board for approval due to the size of the financial commitment.

The RFPs which are in progress and at various stages of the procurement process mainly include facilities and school condition improvement projects previously approved as part of the FRP/SCI Report. There are various pre-approved projects for the Facilities department that are in the process of competitive bidding or are planned to be completed in the next several months. Due to global supply issues, ever increasing prices in building supplies and supplier price guarantees only available for a short period of time; it is imperative that staff be able to proceed with project awards as quickly as possible.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

4. The Policy requires Board approval of these major contracts, due to their size and duration, and to ensure that the appropriate procurement practices have been followed. To avoid the need for extraordinary meetings during the summer, and the associated challenges, staff is recommending that the Director (or designate) and the Chair (or designate) be authorized to execute contracts with values between \$500,000 and \$3,500,000 during the period of 1 July 2024 and 15 September 2024. The Associate Director, Business Operations or designate will certify that the procurement process was carried out in accordance with Board policy, and the amounts have been provided for in either the Board's operating budget or approved project budgets.

Our current policies have not been revised since 2012 for both values and process. When compared to other boards of similar size within Ontario we require an update which is on the policy update list for next year.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

5. The contracts will be awarded within the approved operating and capital budgets. This temporary change will facilitate the ability to expedite contracts and avoid cost increases by awarding the contracts in a timely manner. If we do not take these steps, we will fall significantly behind in the FRP/SCI plan approved by the board.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

6. If this recommendation is approved, staff will inform the Board in October of any contracts that were exceptional in nature and not part of the planned activities of the FRP/SCI or Minor Tangible Capital Activities plans.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT notwithstanding the provisions of P.007.FIN, Signing Authority and Spending Controls policy:

THAT the Chair (or designate) and Director (or designate) be given authority to award necessary contracts above the regular spending signing authority limits of \$500,000, up to a limit of \$3,500,000 per contract without prior Board approval, for the 1 July 2024 to 15 September 2024 period subject to the following conditions:

- I. The Associate Director, Business Operations or designate will certify that the appropriate procurement policies have been followed and the amounts have been approved in the budget; and
- II. That staff will inform the Board in October 2024 of any contracts awarded under this temporary authority that are exceptional in nature and not part of the planned activities of the FRP/SCI or Minor Tangible Capital Activities programs.

Randall Gerrior
Associate Director Business Operations

Pino Buffone
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board