



Legislation Text

File #: 120728., Version: 1

Contract for Telecommunications Consulting Services (NB)

Staff recommends executing a contract for telecommunications consulting services with Hike & Co., Inc.

GRU has been providing telecommunications services since 1995 under the brand name of "GRUCom." Services provided by GRUCom include interconnection and local access data transport circuits for use by private business enterprises, local, state and federal government agencies, Internet service provider companies (ISPs) and other telecommunications carrier companies. GRUCom personnel directly manage the business relationships with most locally-based private business and government agency customers. However, the primary company contacts and points-of-influence with ISPs and other telecommunication carrier companies are highly decentralized and most business interactions occur almost exclusively outside of the Gainesville area. The process of conducting business in this customer space requires broad experience with an industry-wide national perspective. GRUCom employs the use of specialized consultants in this area of its business dealings.

Hike & Co., Inc. has served as GRUCom's primary telecommunications consultant since 1995, assisting with almost all business development activities. The current contract will expire in January 2013. The consultant has assisted GRUCom through the start-up phase of its Competitive Access Provider and Internet Service Provider businesses and has been instrumental in developing and maintaining successful business relationships with ISPs and other telecommunication carrier companies and the down-line key customers with whom they have strategic business relationships. The interface the consultant provides between GRUCom and the various agents who represent these ISPs and carrier companies enables GRUCom to respond effectively to the complex and unique issues of the highly competitive telecommunications industry. These ongoing business relationships, and the consultant's historical, documented work output, have been invaluable to GRUCom and have aided in its expansion and sales growth over the years. The consultant's in-depth knowledge of the telecommunications industry coupled with working experience and understanding of GRUCom's operations, strategic plans, customer needs and other pertinent issues has significantly contributed to GRUCom's success.

Funds for these services are available in the approved GRUCom capital and operating budgets for FY 2013 and will be requested in subsequent fiscal years of the contract.

The City Commission authorize the General Manager or his designee to:1) execute a three year contract with Hike and Co., Inc. as a specified sole source, for telecommunications consulting services on an as needed basis, subject to the approval of the City Attorney as to form and legality; and 2) approve the issuance of purchase orders for these services in amounts not exceeding \$75,000 for each year of the contract, subject to final approval of funds.

**Prepared by Ted C. Kellermann, GRUCom Director
Submitted by Robert E. Hunzinger, General Manager**