To: Chairman Milde and the VRE Operations Board

From: Doug Allen

Date: September 19, 2014

Re: Authorization to Award a Contract for Marketing and Advertising Services

Recommendation:

The VRE Operations Board is being asked to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a contract with Pulsar Advertising of Washington, D.C. for marketing, advertising, public relations and web design services for a base period of three (3) years with two (2) option years to be exercised at the Chief Executive Officer's discretion, in an amount not to exceed $1,680,000 over the five (5) year term beginning October 1, 2014.

Background:

As VRE trains are at capacity and parking is at a premium at most VRE stations, VRE's requirements for an advertising agency differ from historical efforts such as encouraging new ridership. The scope of services for marketing efforts include branding VRE in an effort to improve recognition and support; developing and implementing marketing campaigns; producing marketing materials such as rider's guides, schedules, posters, etc.; media buying; re-designing our website and integrating improved social media linkages; and potentially developing smart phone applications. These integrated efforts will allow us to effectively communicate with riders, promote services to the public and influence opinion leaders in securing new sources of non-fare revenue.
The VRE Operations Board approved requests to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Website Design Services on September 20, 2013 and for Marketing and Advertising Services on April 18, 2014; but because marketing agencies' expertise now regularly includes website design, these procurements were combined to ensure cohesive branding.

Since there are different approaches to the scope of work, an evaluation of technical merit is required. Specifically, the requirements of the RFP are unique because it requires a firm with demonstrated creativity and experienced personnel, and we need to understand how the firm will approach, develop and process the work to achieve desired goals. Therefore, other factors must be evaluated in addition to price.

A mailing list of fifty-three (53) prospective offerors was established for the solicitation to ensure access to adequate sources of services. On June 23, 2014, an RFP was issued and Proposals were received on August 7, 2014. Ten (10) responses were received. Evaluation of the Proposals received was performed by the Technical Evaluation Team (TET), which consisted of three (3) VRE staff members.

The TET met to discuss and evaluate the Proposals using the following criteria:

A. Demonstrated understanding of the scope of services and RFP requirements and methodology for satisfying the requirements and goals of VRE.

B. Demonstrated plan to meet the scope of services requirements.

C. Demonstrated experience of the firm in transit or civil construction programs.

D. Demonstrated experience of key personnel relevant to project management on similar contracts of this type and magnitude.

E. Level of creativity, graphic quality, effective copy, originality as documented by creative materials and portfolio samples.

F. Price and value of cost proposal.

Interviews were conducted with the four (4) highest ranked offerors. Following the interview process, it was determined that the Proposal from Pulsar Advertising was technically compliant and unanimously selected to be the best value for the project.
### Final Ranking of Offerors

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<th>Offerors</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Pulsar Advertising, Washington, D.C.</td>
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<td>2. R&amp;R Partners, Washington, D.C.</td>
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<td>3. LMO Advertising, Arlington, VA</td>
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<td>4. Williams Whittle, Alexandria, VA</td>
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<td>5. Qorvis MSL Group, LLC of Washington, D.C.</td>
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<td>6. PadillaCRT of Richmond, VA</td>
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<td>7. Vintage Juice Brand Marketing of Alexandria, VA</td>
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<td>8. Blaize Events &amp; Media, Inc. of Virginia Beach, VA</td>
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<td>9. Fuseideas, LLC of Winchester, MA</td>
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<td>10. White of Herndon, VA</td>
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Sparky’s Garage previously performed services for VRE from July 1, 2011 to September 30, 2014 under a contract. Pulsar’s pricing is approximately 10 percent less than the contract cost estimate. The Contract will be for a base period of three (3) years with the option to extend for two (2) additional one-year periods with the CEO exercising the option years at his discretion. The contract term shall not exceed five (5) years.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The current budget for Marketing includes funding of $324,000 for the remainder of FY15. Funding for future years will be included in each proposed budget.
Virginia Railway Express
Operations Board

Resolution
9I-09-2014

Authorization to Award a Contract for
Marketing and Advertising Services

WHEREAS, on September 20, 2013 the VRE Operations Board authorized the Chief Executive Officer to issue an RFP for web design services; and,

WHEREAS, on April 18, 2014, the VRE Operations Board authorized the Chief Executive Officer to issue an RFP for marketing, advertising and public relations services; and,

WHEREAS, an RFP for the services referenced above was issued on June 23, 2014 and on August 7, 2014, ten proposals were received; and,

WHEREAS, VRE staff reviewed the proposals, interviewed the top four firms, and queried references; and,

WHEREAS, following this process, a recommendation for award is being made to Pulsar Advertising.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board does hereby authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a contract with Pulsar Advertising for marketing, advertising, public relations and web design services for a base period of three (3) years with two (2) option years to be exercised at the Chief Executive Officer’s discretion, in an amount not to exceed $1,680,000 over the five (5) year term beginning October 1, 2014.

Approved this 19th day of September, 2014

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Paul Milde
Chairman

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Gary Skinner
Secretary