SUMMARY STATEMENT

ITEM NO.       SUBJECT:       PATCO Transit Ambassadors

COMMITTEE:       PATCO Operations and Maintenance

COMMITTEE MEETING DATE:    July 18, 2007

PATCO BOARD ACTION DATE:    August 15, 2007

PROPOSAL:    That the Board authorizes staff to negotiate an Agreement with
Service Group Incorporated (SGI) whereby SGI will provide Transit
Ambassadors for the PATCO system.

Amount:       $560,209.00

Firm:        Service Group Incorporated
40 Lloyd Avenue, Suite 101
PO Box 70
Malvern, PA  19355

Other Proposers:  Quic, Inc. – not responsive
VKG Associates – not responsive

PURPOSE:       To retain uniformed Transit Ambassadors to provide a presence in
PATCO stations, parking lots, concourses, and on trains primarily in
the evening hours. The Ambassadors will assist customers and
enhance their travel experience on PATCO.

BACKGROUND: When the PATCO system was designed in the mid 1960’s, one of the
primary goals was that the system be a model of operational
efficiency. This goal was achieved through the use of automated
systems on the trains and in the stations. As a result, trains,
regardless of the number of cars, are operated by one train operator
in the lead car. Fare collection is accomplished through automated
ticket vending machines and gates that automatically deduct fares
from fare media. As such, station attendants are not required and are
normally only present in the New Jersey stations during the morning
peak periods when some manual ticket sales are provided. As a result
of this automation, PATCO’s ratio of fare collection to operating
expense has been among the highest in the industry.

Because PATCO is so automated, there are times of the day when
there is a very limited official PATCO presence throughout the
system. This is not particularly an issue during the morning and
afternoon commuting periods and during the normal business day because there is a fairly high level of activity throughout the system as a result of repair and maintenance activities, revenue collection operations, custodial effort, and Public Safety presence. Customers using the system feel safe because of the PATCO presence and because of the general high level of customer activity in the stations, parking lots, and on the trains. However, after the afternoon peak commuting period, most of PATCO’s maintenance activities are concentrated in the maintenance shop, along the right-of-way, and generally in non-public areas. As a result, customers using PATCO to return home from work and to attend dining, entertainment, sporting, and other leisure venues (a market PATCO is trying to develop) encounter a very limited PATCO presence throughout the system. If customers are going to use PATCO during these late evening and nighttime hours, they must feel comfortable in doing so; because of the limited official presence, this is not always the case.

Issues of customer comfort are not unique to PATCO and many transit agencies, downtown areas, and business districts have recognized that increasing an official presence is essential to their success. Locally, the City of Camden, the Center City District area in Philadelphia, the University area in Philadelphia, and Atlantic City have enhanced customers’ feeling of safety and security through the use of programs that provide service personnel to create an official presence, meet and greet customers, answer questions, and generally create a more customer friendly environment. In the City of Camden, the Greater Camden Partnership created a Special Services District (CSSD) that employs Clean and Safe Teams to improve the environment in the Central Business District.

DRPA/PATCO developed a Request for Proposals that included a staffing plan and a Scope of Work for a Transit Ambassador program for PATCO. This Request for Proposals was publicly advertised and three proposals were received. A proposal review team made up of personnel from PATCO, Public Safety, and DRPA Customer Service and Community Relations Department reviewed the proposals. Two proposals did not meet the requirements of the Request for Proposals and were not able to demonstrate significant experience or expertise in providing a Transit Ambassador program. The third proposal, which was submitted by Service Group Incorporated (SGI), was very responsive to the Request for Proposals and demonstrated significant experience in providing services similar to those requested by DRPA/PATCO. A price proposal was negotiated with SGI (who also provides services to the City of Camden Special Services District).
The rates were compared to those paid by Camden and also rates paid by the Philadelphia Center City District for similar services by another vendor and found to be fair and reasonable. The costs quoted include the cost of uniforms, equipment (with the exception of PATCO two-way radios), and training. The proposal, in the amount of $560,209 per year, includes one Supervisor, nine Transit Ambassadors at 40 hours per week, and nine part-time Transit Ambassadors at 20 hours per week.

It is recommended that the Board authorize staff to negotiate a contract with Service Group Incorporated in the amount of $560,209 to provide Transit Ambassador services to PATCO for a period of one year with an option to renew the contract for two, one-year terms at DRPA/PATCO’s discretion and subject to negotiating favorable terms for the option years. SGI has committed to a price in subsequent years that is limited to a three percent increase over the previous year. If the option years are exercised, NJ Economic Development funds will cover 2/3 of the cost in year two and 1/3 of the cost in year three. The remainder of the cost in the option years will be from the PATCO Operating Budget.

SUMMARY:  
Amount: $560,209 (Year 1)  
Source of Funding: NJ SWAP Fund (Year 1)  
Operating Budget: N/A  
Capital Project #: N/A  
Master Plan Status: N/A  
Other Fund Sources: N/A  
Duration of Contract: Up to 3 years  
Other Parties Involved: N/A
RESOLUTION

RESOLVED: That the Board authorizes the proper officers of the Authority to negotiate an Agreement with the Service Group Incorporated whereby the SGI will provide Transit Ambassadors for the PATCO system for one year in an amount not to exceed $560,209 the first year and for two, one-year options at DRPA/PATCO’s sole discretion at an amount not to exceed a 3% increase over the previous year, as per the attached Summary Statement; and be it further

RESOLVED: The Chair, Vice Chair and the President must approve and are hereby authorized to approve and execute all necessary agreements, contracts, or other documents on behalf of PATCO. If such agreements, contracts, or other documents have been approved by the Chair, Vice Chair and President and if thereafter, either the Chair or Vice Chair is absent or unavailable, the remaining Officer may execute the said document(s) on behalf of PATCO, along with the President. If both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent or unavailable, and if it is necessary to execute the said document(s), while they are absent or unavailable, then the President shall execute such document(s) on behalf of PATCO.

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