NOTICE TO VENDORS:

The following revisions, additions, and clarifications are hereby made part of the Contract Documents for the above-referenced project and shall be taken into account in the preparation of all proposals and the execution of all work. Responders shall acknowledge receipt of the Questions and Answers in their bid.

The following questions were submitted for Delinquent Tax Resolution & Collection Services, RFP #73-03/12/20:

Q1. Has the County used a Collection Agency previously?
A1. The County has not used a Collection Agency for this service.

Q2. Section I, Scope of Work states the approximate amount of accounts is 22,965 accounts for $29,735,489.83. Are these from accounts that were placed with another agency already or will these be primary (first) placements?
A2. These accounts will be first placements.

Q3. After referral of the County’s debt backlog, what is the expected placement intervals (i.e. will accounts be placed daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly)? How often will accounts be referred to the selected vendor?
A3. The first placement will consist of the entire delinquent file. Going forward, the County will provide new placements annually.

Q4. What is the expected placement volume at each interval?
A4. Please refer to Addendum #1 for the number of accounts delinquent accounts, to date. The County anticipates that the second placement will be approximately 3,000 accounts.

Q5. Can the County provide a breakdown of the number of accounts and dollar amounts by age (i.e.: number and dollar amount <1 year old, 1-2 years old, 2-3 years old, etc.)?
A5. Please see Addendum #1.
Q6. *Section II, Scope of Work, (D)* includes Billing. Does the County of Greenville require the awarded vendor to send taxpayer’s bills on a regular basis or does “billing” refer to collection agency letters? Does Billing Resolution extend beyond the scope of debt collections?

A6. *The billing requirement refers to correspondence from the awarded Collection Agency, and does not extend beyond the scope of debt collection services.*

Q7. For the format of our response, is Section VII – Statement of Qualifications the only areas required? If not, what additional information is required?

A7. *To ensure responsiveness, proposals shall address all items included in the Statement of Qualifications, as well as the Scope of Work and Evaluation Criteria.*

Q8. Can the County provide a breakdown by age, of the 22,965 Business Personal Property Accounts?

A8. *Please refer to Addendum #1.*

Q9. Going forward, what is the monthly volume of delinquent accounts (monthly volume and total dollar value of accounts) that the County anticipates referring for resolution and collection services?

A9. *The County anticipates approximately 3,000 additional accounts will become delinquent on an annual basis. The estimated dollar amount for the anticipate volume is $3,800,000.00.*

Q10. If the contract is awarded to a different vendor than currently contracted, will you be recalling the accounts previously listed to the current vendor and forward those accounts to the new vendor?

A10. *See #A1.*

Q11. What is the age of the oldest accounts you will refer for collections?

A11. *The oldest account has been in delinquent status since 2009.*

Q12. What is the average age of the delinquent accounts you will refer for collections?

A12. *The first placements have been delinquent from one year to eleven years.*

Q13. What is the overall historical liquidation rate/recovery rate achieved by your current collection agency?

A13. *Please refer to #A1.*

Q14. In the most recent fiscal year, what dollar amount did each of your current collection agencies retain in fees?

A14. *Please refer to #A1.*
Q15. What collection attempts does the County make prior to referring delinquent accounts for resolution and collection services?
A15. The County has issued Certified Mailings and Demand Notice Mailings in an attempt to resolve and collect.

Q16. Besides Business Personal Property Accounts, what (if any) other tax types does the County anticipate referring for resolutions and collection services going forward?
A16. The County does not have plans to refer any other attempts at this time. However, assistance may be needed in the future with delinquencies for boats, motors and mobile homes.

Q17. For what period of time will accounts be placed with the awarded collection agency? (i.e., how long does the collection agency have to resolve and collect the referred accounts?)
A17. The accounts will be placed with the awarded Collection Agency for a period not less than one year.

Q18. To how many collection agencies does the County plan to award a contract?
A18. One.

Q19. Will County require the agency to handle litigation of accounts?
A19. The County has not determined if litigation services will be needed.

Q20. What is the historical recovery rate of the County’s internal Collection Efforts?
A20. The County has not recovered any delinquent Personal Property Business Taxes, using internal processes.

Q21. How long do/will debts remain with the County after origination before referral to outside collections?
A21. Debt will remain with the County for one year after origination, before being referred to outside collections.

Q22. What is the County’s target or anticipated fee rates for this contract?
A22. The County will rely on responders to offer their best fee rate for this service.

Q23. How long will accounts referred by the County for collections be retained by winning bidder(s) prior to recall?
A23. Debt will remain with the collection agency for one year prior to being recalled.

Q24. What is the reconciliation process for this project?
A24. The Reconciliation Process for this project is yet to be determined.
Q25. Can the County clarify the distinction between “debt collection” and “billing resolution”, as outlined in the RFP?

A25. Resolution consists of helping taxpayers correct accounts with the appropriate state agency.

Q26. What expectations will the County have of the selected vendor(s) to “define and maintain accurate assessments”?

A26. The County will rely on sources to provide methods/processes to define and maintain accurate assessments.

Q27. Will the selected vendor have read/write access to the County’s system of record?

A27. No.

Q28. Will the County require the awarded vendor to perform outgoing mail services of documents beyond the collection vendor’s standard letter of service?

A28. No.

Q29. How are balances updated on the vendor’s system? For example, will the County provide a daily update of the entire inventory?

A29. The County has not determined the method or frequency for updating the vendor’s system, and will work with the awarded vendor to establish processes.

Q30. If payments can be processed internally by the collection agency, will a separate bank escrow account be required for deposit of County funds only?

A30. No.

Q31. Will recurring inventory reconciliation be required with the County on accounts placed with the collection agency?

A31. Yes.

Q32. What is intended by “provide services at no charge to the County”? Does this statement mean that the collection fee will be paid by the taxpayer through an add on/contingency fee?

A32. The County expects the Collection Fee(s) to be paid by the taxpayer.

Q33. Will the winning collection vendor(s) use its own collection platform, or will a preferred platform be required?

A33. The County expects the awarded vendor to use its platform, with County review.

Q34. What debtor information will be provided (e.g., SSN, telephone, address, amount owed)?

A34. The County will provide the awarded vendor with Taxpayer’s Name, Address and Amount Due.
Q35. Is there a testing plan in place for the collection process?
A35. *The Testing Plan for the Collection Process is to be determined.*

Q36. Is there a testing plan in place for account transmission?
A36. *The Testing Plan for the Account Transmissions are to be determined.*

Q37. Will payments that are taken and received be processed internally by the selected vendor(s)?
A37. *Yes. Payments will be processed internally by the awarded vendor, and then remitted to the County.*

Q38. What payment methods can be accepted by the selected collection vendor(s) (ACH, Pre-authorized check, Credit/Debit Card (MC/Visa), WEB, IVR, Mailed check, Money Order, Western Union)?
A38. *The County will rely on the vendor to determine acceptable payment methods; the County will accept a check from the vendor.*

Q39. Will payments that are returned to the vendor from our bank as an NSF, Acct Closed, Unable to Locate, Invalid Account, etc., be accepted? If not, can the awarded vendor hold Non-Certified payments for 10 days prior to remitting to the County?
A39. *No, the County will not accept payments returned to the vendor. The awarded vendor can hold Non-Certified Payments for ten (10) days prior to remitting to the County.*

Q40. Will Credit Card chargebacks be accepted by the County?
A40. *No.*

Q41. What balance buckets will be received when the accounts are placed (i.e., principal, etc.)?
A41. *No principal is involved with the County’s delinquent accounts.*

Q42. How will payments be applied (example pay principal first, interest, fees, etc.)?
A42. *No principal is involved with the County’s delinquent accounts.*

Q43. If there are multiple tax periods for one taxpayer, will the payment be applied based on the type of debt (individual income tax, sales tax, withholding tax, corporate tax, etc.,) or age of debt, etc.?
A43. *The County is pursuing debt collection services for County Business Personal Property Accounts only, at this time. Payments will be applied to County Business Personal Property Accounts.*
Q44. How should overpayments be handled? Do we remit to the County and they will refund the debtor?
A44. *The County does not expect any overpayments.*

Q45. Will the County confirm the due date
A45. *Per Addendum #1, the Opening Deadline has been extended to Monday, March 23, 2020.*

Q46. Why has this RFP being released, at this time?
A46. *The County desires to resolve and/or collect Delinquent Taxes for Business Personal Property Accounts.*

Q47. Are bidders permitted to deviate in any way from the any manner of quoting fees? Does the County have a preference for how bidders should quote fees or can bidders create their own pricing categories?
A47. *No.*

Q48. If this is a term contract subject to renewal, what is the term and the maximum number of option periods?
A48. *Please refer to Section I, Introduction, of the Request for Proposals.*

Q49. Has the current contract gone full-term?
A49. *Please refer to #A1.*

Q50. To what extent will the location of the bidder’s proposed location or headquarters have a bearing on any award?
A50. *The Request for Proposals will be evaluated based on the responsiveness to the Request for Proposals, Statement of Qualifications and Evaluation Criteria set forth in the document.*

Q51. What is the liquidation rate expected/anticipated as a result of this procurement?
A51. *The anticipated Liquidation Rate is to be determined.*

Q52. What Billing Servicer does the County use?
A52. *The County currently uses the County Tax Collector/Debt Set-off as the current Billing Servicer.*

Q53. Have all cases been fully adjudicated by the time of placement?
A53. *No.*

Q54. What is the County’s case management/accounting software system of record?
A54. *The County currently uses an In-house Program for Case Management and Accounting.*
Q55. Who is the County’s electronic payment/credit card processing vendor?
A55. *This information is not required for this project.*

Q56. What process should a vendor follow, or which individual(s) should a vendor contact, to discuss budget-neutral services outside of the scope of this procurement, but related to it, designed to recover more debt prior to outside placement and lower collection costs?
A56. *The vendor may contact the Procurement Services Division to provide more information regarding the services offered.*

Q57. How does the County’s current processes and/or vendor relationship(s) systematically determine if the death of a responsible party has occurred?
A57. *The County’s current process includes researching Probate Claims to determine if a responsible party is deceased.*

Q58. How do your current processes and/or vendor relationship(s) handle the death of responsible party?
A58. *The County’s current process includes researching Probate Claims to determine if a responsible party is deceased.*

Q59. Does the County have a designated process or policies around deceased accounts today, and what is envisioned in the future?
A59. *No. The County will rely on sources to offer a process for handling accounts for the deceased.*

Q60. Does the County currently search and file probated estate claims? Have you considered an automated tool to identify and file probated estate claims?
A60. *Yes, the County searches and files Probated Estate Claims. The County is not interested in an Automated Tool for this service.*

Q61. What collection attempts will the County perform internally prior to placement?
A61. *The County will perform collection attempts in accordance with South Carolina Statute, prior to placement.*

Q62. Will the selected vendor be allowed to litigate balances exceeding a certain dollar amount on your behalf, with your explicit approval?
A62. *No.*

Q63. In what format will accounts be sent to the collection agency?
A63. *The County has not yet determined the format to be used to send accounts to collections.*

Q64. Is the collection agency responsible for court costs?
A64. *Yes.*
Q65. Does the County anticipate the use of automobiles in collection of these accounts? If not, can the Automobile insurance requirement in the RFP be eliminated?

A65. The County does not anticipate the use of automobiles in collection of these accounts and may consider eliminating the Automobile Coverage outlined in the RFP.

Q66. Can the County provide more detail about the services required that are being mentioned is the section that says, “Provide services at no charge to the County.”

A66. The County expects the Collection Fee to be paid by the taxpayer.

Q67. Are collection agencies located in the state of South Carolina given an advantage in the scoring of the RFP responses?

A67. The Request for Proposals will be evaluated based on the responsiveness to the Request for Proposals, Statement of Qualifications and Evaluation Criteria set forth in the document.

Q68. Understanding the County’s first priority is resolution of the 22K accounts, what is the estimated volume and timing of on-going placements?

A68. This information is not available at this time.

Q69. In regards to Section II, Scope of Work (H), the County is requesting services be charged at no cost to the County, does the County pass collection fees to the consumer? If yes, please indicate the County Ordinance which describes this authority and the rate which is assessed to the delinquent party.

A69. Yes, the County desires for fees to be paid by the taxpayer, in accordance with South Carolina Statute.

Q70. In regards to Instructions/Terms and Conditions, # 32, would the County consider modifying this to include mutual indemnification for both parties?

A70. No, the County cannot indemnify per South Carolina Rulings.

Q71. Of the approximately 22,965 business personal property accounts to be resolved, what is the approximate percentage of accounts that are older than 10 years?

A71. Please refer to Addendum #1.

Q72. What is the approximate dollar value of the accounts that are older than 10 years?

A72. Please refer to Addendum #1.

Q73. Is there any state/county specific statute that would preclude the awarded vendor from pursuing accounts older than 10 years?

A73. Yes.
Q74. Section II (F) mentions that the awarded vendor shall provide resolution services that include: provide taxpayers with accurate contract information, required forms and instructions on how to file/refile appropriate tax related forms. Will the County provide the awarded vendor specific information related to this so as to ensure that the taxpayers receive adequate documents to assist them with tax-related forms?

A74. No.

Q75. Will the awarded vendor be permitted to charge higher percentage of fees on accounts that are older than 10 years?

A75. The County will rely on the proposer to offer the percentage of fees for all accounts.

Q76. Will any accounts to be collected be subject to owners’ forfeiture or foreclosure of collateral?

A76. This information is not known.

Q77. Will the awarded vendor be required to maintain a local office for the purpose of working with local taxpayers?

A77. No.

Q78. If the County does not have a current vendor performing collections, what is the County’s collection rate?

A78. The County’s Collection Rate is approximately 75%.

Q79. What collection efforts does the County employ before turning them over for collection?

A79. The County's performs collection attempts, in accordance with South Carolina Statute, prior to placement.

Q80. How long will the County permit the awarded vendor to perform collections before recalling accounts?

A80. The Awarded Vendor will have one (1) year to perform collections.

Q81. Will the County permit the awarded vendor to enter into payment agreements with taxpayers?

A81. Yes.

Q82. For FY 19, will the County provide the following:

- Total dollars collected.
- Liquidation rate achieved.

A82. This information is not available at this time.

END OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS