



# WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

[www.washoecounty.us](http://www.washoecounty.us)

## STAFF REPORT

**BOARD MEETING DATE:** *October 13, 2020*

**DATE:** September 14, 2020

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Amber Howell, Director, Human Services Agency  
775-785-8600, ahowell@washoecounty.us

**THROUGH:** Kate Thomas, Assistant County Manager

**SUBJECT:** Recommendation to approve a sole source agreement between Washoe County and Vietnam Veterans of California, Inc. d.b.a. Nation's Finest, in an amount up to [\$150,000] annually; authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the agreement retroactive to October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021, with the provision for up to two (2), one (1) year extensions at Washoe County's option to be executed at the discretion of the Purchasing and Contracts Manager. (All Commission Districts).

---

### SUMMARY

Recommendation to approve a sole source agreement between Washoe County and Vietnam Veterans of California, Inc. d.b.a. Nation's Finest, in an amount up to [\$150,000] annually; authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the agreement retroactive to October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021, with the provision for up to two (2), one (1) year extensions at Washoe County's option to be executed at the discretion of the Purchasing and Contracts Manager.

**Strategic Objective supported by this item:** Safe, Secure, and Healthy Communities.

### PREVIOUS ACTION

On October 24, 2017, Item 13, the Board approved a Veterans Services Office Agreement, in response to Request for Proposal (RFP) #3028-17 for community-based Veterans services, to the lowest responsible, responsive proposer, meeting specifications, between Washoe County and Veterans Resource Centers of America, in an amount up to \$189,894 annually, authorized the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the agreement retroactive to October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018, with the provision for up to two (2), one (1) year extensions at Washoe County's option.

On March 25, 2014, Agenda Item # 25, the Board awarded an agreement in response to Request for Proposal (RFP) #2866-14 for a community-based Veterans Services Office to

**AGENDA ITEM # \_\_\_\_\_**

the lowest responsible, responsive proposer, meeting specifications, between Washoe County and Veterans Resource Centers of America, in an amount up to \$189,894 annually, to be effective upon execution through June 30, 2015, with up to two (2), one (1) year extensions at Washoe County's option.

### **BACKGROUND**

The intent of this agreement is to continue to have an experienced community-based Veteran Services Agency to administer all aspect of a Veterans Services Office under the purview of the Washoe County Human Services Agency.

Prior to the establishment of this program, Washoe County currently had no formal program to assist the over 50,000 veterans and their spouses, dependents and survivors. The Veterans Services Office has established an office whereby Veteran Services Officers (VSOs) act as an advocate during the application and appeals process for U.S. Veteran's Administration benefits. A VSO is a professional certified by the U.S. Veteran's Administration to act on behalf of and represent Veterans. The program typically serves an average of nearly 1800 veterans per year in our community.

VSOs assist Veterans and their spouses, dependents and survivors of all ages and all branches of service to assure they receive the benefits for which they are eligible. VSOs know the extent, the meaning and the application of laws pertaining to Veterans' benefits. They also know the rules and regulations adopted by the Department of Veterans Affairs to clarify and implement those laws. VSO Certification training provides specialized knowledge in order to meet the needs of every individual veteran or other beneficiary who seeks assistance. They also assist Veterans in reintegrating into society by providing referral to community services and connecting them to the US Veterans Administration.

The program ensures that the local office:

- Provides reasonable availability for walk-in clients
- Conducts outreach routinely in the community, including homeless shelters, Veterans' residences, senior center locations and long-term care facilities
- Provides adequate support for telephone calls, reception, and the large amount of paperwork generated by applications and appeals

The County and Veterans Services Office work together on performance standards, US Veterans Administration requirements, project implementation and long-term effectiveness.

Veterans Services Offices in other communities have been shown to significantly increase pension and compensation, access to education, training, medical care and other state and federal benefits. Such benefits include "aid and attendance" funds that can be used to purchase long-term care (in-home, group home or nursing home care), which results in savings to City, County and State government tax dollars. In addition, Veterans increase their ability to live independently and support their families.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Should the Board approve the Agreement there will be no additional impact to the Human Services Agency's FY21 adopted budget as budget authority exists in Indigent Fund (221) in IO-60411 (Veteran's Services) and GL-710100 (Professional Services).

**RECOMMENDATION**

Recommendation to approve a sole source agreement between Washoe County and Vietnam Veterans of California, Inc. d.b.a. Nation's Finest, in an amount up to [\$150,000] annually; authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the agreement retroactive to October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021, with the provision for up to two (2), one (1) year extensions at Washoe County's option to be executed at the discretion of the Purchasing and Contracts Manager.

**POSSIBLE MOTION**

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to approve a sole source agreement between Washoe County and Vietnam Veterans of California, Inc. d.b.a. Nation's Finest, in an amount up to [\$150,000] annually; authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the agreement retroactive to October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021, with the provision for up to two (2), one (1) year extensions at Washoe County's option to be executed at the discretion of the Purchasing and Contracts Manager."