

Date: March 29, 2016

To: THE TRUSTEES

From: THE PRESIDENT and CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Subject: Procurement (Services) Contract – Niagara and St. Lawrence
Flow Forecast Improvement Initiative – Contract Award

SUMMARY

The Trustees are requested to approve the award of a single-source contract to the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (“UCAR”) for a not-to-exceed value of \$221,731 and a term of one year and five months to assist the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration’s Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (“NOAA-GLERL”) in improving the accuracy of its Great Lakes forecasting programs. The intent is to expedite work towards improved flow forecasting on the Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers. In accordance with the existing Memorandum of Understanding between NYPA and Ontario Power Generation (“OPG”), funding for this project will be cost-shared.

BACKGROUND

Section 2879 of the Public Authorities Law, the Authority’s Guidelines for Procurement Contracts, and the Authority’s Expenditure Authorization Procedures require the Trustees’ approval when the term of a personal services contract, including any extensions or options, exceeds one year.

NYPA is partnering with OPG to have NOAA-GLERL improve the accuracy of its Great Lakes forecasting programs. NYPA and OPG have been making long-term forecasts using the current version of NOAA-GLERL’s forecasting programs since about 1988. The major improvements will comprise: recalibration of the hydrology model; addition of the Lake Ontario regulating plan; and accounting for the effects of regional climate change on the Great Lakes hydrology.

This Trustee item will fund two climate scientists. One of the scientists will adjust historical weather data to reflect the weather expected in the future. The second scientist will work to move the application from a research state to a production-level state. A UCAR grant is funding approximately 50% of their salaries, while OPG and NYPA are jointly funding the remaining 50%.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Detroit District will host and maintain the revised model and prepare 5-year operational forecasts for flows in the Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers with resolution and model criteria specific to the needs of NYPA and OPG. This will be another major improvement because NYPA and OPG will no longer have to devote resources and expertise to running the current forecast models themselves.

The project is currently ongoing and is expected to be completed by the end of 2017. Through their Joint Works Agreement, NYPA and OPG will share the cost for the program beginning August 1, 2016 and ending on December 31, 2017.

DISCUSSION

The work will be carried out through the Postdocs Applying Climate Expertise (“PACE”) program, which is administered by UCAR. The PACE program pairs early-career climate scientists with institutions that provide climate research expertise, guidance and funding. NOAA-GLERL will direct the work of the two climate scientists selected for the Niagara and St. Lawrence Flow Forecast Improvement Initiative.

Completion of the project will be achieved in two phases. The first phase will require research of different forecasting methods and models and validation of the input meteorological forcings and output simulations. The second phase will focus on the transition of these forecast products to operations and implementing the production of operational output to be delivered to NYPA and OPG.

The PACE program was utilized because it could quickly identify available scientists qualified to address the gaps in regional climate research and climate-based decision making. Once the candidates were identified, NYPA and OPG participated with NOAA-GLERL in the competitive selection process. NOAA-GLERL uses the PACE program extensively and recommended its use for the forecast improvement initiative based on past success with the program. The program also has the advantage that UCAR is funding the first year of the scientists’ salaries. If NYPA and OPG had to procure the scientists themselves, the process would likely have been more time consuming, more expensive and less compatible with NOAA-GLERL’s standard practices.

UCAR is a non-profit consortium of more than 100 member universities and colleges. UCAR administers PACE through its Visiting Scientist Program (“VSP”), which provides professional program management and administration expertise for all aspects of postdoctoral fellowship, visiting scientist, and term scientist programs. A UCAR Steering Committee is responsible for scoping the participating institutions and funding agencies, vetting the postdoctoral applicant pool and overseeing the competitive selection process, and participating in the proposal and progress review process.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends an award of a single-source contract to University Corporation for Atmospheric Research for a not-to-exceed value of \$221,731 and a term of one year and five months.

FISCAL INFORMATION

Payment will be made from the Authority’s Operating Fund.

RECOMMENDATION

The Senior Vice President – Operations Support Services and Chief Engineer, the Vice President – Engineering and the Vice President – Procurement recommend that the Trustees

approve the award of a single-source contract to University Corporation for Atmospheric Research for a not-to-exceed value of \$221,731 and a term of one year and five months to expedite work towards improved flow forecasting on the Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers.

For the reasons stated, I recommend the approval of the above-requested action by adoption of the resolution below.

Gil C. Quiniones
President and Chief Executive Officer

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, That pursuant to the Guidelines for Procurement Contracts adopted by the Authority and the Authority's Expenditure Authorization Procedures, the award and funding of a single-source contract to the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, to expedite work towards improved flow forecasting on the Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers, for a term of one year and five months, and a not-to-exceed value of \$221,731, is hereby approved as recommended in the foregoing memorandum of the President and Chief Executive Officer;

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Contract Approval</u>
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research	Multi-year (1 year 5 months)
(Single Source)	<u>\$221,731</u>

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, the President and Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Operating Officer and all other officers of the Authority are, and each of them hereby is, authorized on behalf of the Authority to do any and all things, take any and all actions and execute and deliver any and all agreements, certificates and other documents to effectuate the foregoing resolution, subject to the approval of the form thereof by the Executive Vice President and General Counsel.