

**Columbus Consolidated Government
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

TO:	Mayor and Councilors
AGENDA SUBJECT:	Ambulance Billing and Collection Services for Columbus Fire & EMS Department (Annual Contract) – RFB No. 24-0004
INITIATED BY:	Finance Department

It is requested that Council authorize the execution of an annual contract with EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. (Winston-Salem, NC) for ambulance billing and collection services for the Columbus Fire & EMS Department.

The services are required to enhance and develop an internal revenue cycle. EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. will provide the following:

1. **Billing of patient care reports**, to include providing software that is compatible with ImageTrend Elite ePCR, processing claims; reviewing reports for accuracy, utilizing insurance coverage databases to provide billing information when not collected by Fire and EMS crews; and using its ticketing system to track and refer client complaints to a Columbus Fire & EMS employee.
2. **Electronic invoicing** in accordance with the Fair Dept Collection Practices act as well as the guidelines, procedures, and correct rates established by the City; prescreening of all claims; and verifying insurance eligibility.
3. **All collections and data tracking for claims**, which shall be divided into multiple revenue categories; recategorizing claims after payment is received; processing all claim denials; acting as the advocate for the client with Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance; and receiving and processing checks.
4. **Accounting and Reporting** for all billing, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles on a daily, monthly quarterly and annual basis and providing a secured portal for communication, reports and patient information. The portal shall be in compliance with all Medicare, Medicaid, and HIPPA regulations.
5. **Analytical services**, to include meeting with Columbus Fire & EMS and/or other City staff on a scheduled basis to review billing consistency, receivables performance, and other issues that may be encountered; and providing analysis and expertise in all issues related to ambulance billing and operations.
6. **Technology services**, to include evaluating the current data collection configuration of the City and provide reconfiguration recommendations; configuring the vendor's billing software to integrate with the ImageTrend Elite ePCR software that is currently being used by Columbus Fire & EMS Department; retaining records in accordance with

an agreed upon and legally compliant record retention plan; using file transfer; and providing a system that will ensure complete and uninterrupted flow of service via backup systems and a data recovery project plan/system in the event of a disaster.

7. **Training of EMS personnel**, at no additional cost, including in-depth documentation compliance training of Medicare and Medicaid regulations as they relate to the pre-hospital delivery of emergency medical care; providing additional training as requested by the City, which may include training sessions for any group or individual, at no additional cost to the City; and providing sufficient HIPAA compliance training to all employees who deal with applicable information.

The contract term shall be for two years with the option to renew for three additional twelve-month periods. The contract renewals shall be contingent upon the mutual agreement of the City and the Contractor.

Annual Contract History:

This is the first Annual Contract for these services.

RFP Advertisement and Receipt of Proposals:

RFP specifications were posted on the web pages of the Purchasing Division, the Georgia Procurement Registry and DemandStar on October 13, 2023. This RFP has been advertised, opened and evaluated. Seven proposals were received by the due date of November 21, 2023, from the following vendors:

EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. (Winston-Salem, NC)

- Colleton Billing, Inc. (Walterboro, NC)
- Digitech Computer, LLC (Chappaqua, NY)
- Elevos (LaGrange, GA)
- Quick Med Claims, LLC (Pittsburgh, PA)
- ¹ Thrive Business Consultant, LLC (Atlanta, GA)
- Transcend Health, LLC (Bradenton, FL)

¹ *The proposal submitted by Thrive Business Consultant, LLC did not include all required information, including a cost proposal. Consequently, the proposal submitted by Thrive Business Consultant, LLC was not included in the evaluation process.*

The following events took place after receipt of proposals:

RFP MEETINGS/EVENTS		
Description	Date	Agenda/Action
Pre-Evaluation Meeting	01/18/24	The Purchasing Manager advised evaluation committee members of the RFP rules and process, and the project manager provided an overview of the contract requirements.

		Proposal copies were provided via email to the evaluation committee.
1 st Evaluation Meeting	02/06/24	The committee discussed each proposal and determined clarification was required from the six vendors.
Clarification Requested	02/06/24	Clarification was requested from the six vendors.
Clarification Received	02/14/24	Clarification responses were received and forwarded to the committee for review; it was determined that the committee needed to meet to discuss the responses.
2 nd Evaluation Meeting	02/21/24	The committee discussed each clarification response and determined additional information was not required.
Evaluation Forms Sent	02/21/24	Evaluation forms were forwarded to voting committee members.
Evaluation Forms Completed	03/29/24	Evaluation forms were completed and returned to Purchasing for compilation results, which were then forwarded to the Evaluation Committee members for review. The committee determined that presentations were necessary, for the two highest-scoring vendors.
Presentations	04/19/24	The two highest-scoring vendors provided presentations of their proposals, having agreed beforehand to the recording of their presentations for the benefit of any member who was unable to attend.
Presentation Recordings	4/19/24	The presentation recordings were to the committee member who was unable to attend. The presentation recordings were also forwarded to the other committee members to determine if additional clarifications or information was required; there were none.
Recommendation	05/03/24	The voting committee members unanimously recommended award to the highest-scoring vendor, EMS Management & Consultants, Inc.

Evaluation Committee:

The proposals were reviewed by the Evaluation Committee, which consisted of three voting member from the Fire & EMS Department, a voting member from the Finance Department and a voting member from the City Manager’s Office.

An additional representative from the Fire & EMS Department served as an alternate voter.

Serving as non-voting advisors were an additional representative from the Fire & EMS Department and an additional representative from Finance Department.

Award Recommendation:

The voting committee members unanimously recommended award to the highest-scoring vendor, EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. for the following reasons:

- The vendor is 100% in the EMS billing business and are experienced in Georgia Medicaid and the Upper Payment Limit (UPL) program.
- EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. has multiple EMS agency accounts in Georgia, with some having the same volume as the City.
- The vendor has a crew analysis platform that points out corrections needed by crew members for billing.
- The vendor has process in place that will assist tremendously with the burden of collections.
- EMS Management & Consultants gave a detailed timeline for its 60-day process of implementation, with milestones incorporated to ensure a smooth transition.
- The vendor's cost proposal is comparable, and they provide several items without an additional cost.

Vendor's Experience/Qualifications:

- EMS Management & Consultants was founded in 1996 by a paramedic and is headquartered in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.
- The vendor has 918 government clients and a staff of 430, including employees with industry-specific experience in IT and healthcare executive management, EMS Medicare, state and federal reimbursement policy management, and EMS industry legislative development, involvement, and advocacy.
- EMS Management has a dedicated internal compliance staff that is dedicated to ethical, well-documented processes of compliance, risk management and professional billing practices.
- The vendor's Georgia clients include Atlanta Fire Rescue Department, Augusta Fire Department, Chatham County, Calhoun County EMS, Peachtree City Fire Rescue and Clayton County Board of Commissioners.
 - o Below are the firm's last three contracts of similar size and scope:
 - Mercy Ambulance Service, Inc. (Savannah, GA) May 2018 – present

EMS billing and collection services for 43,123 ambulance transports.

- Medical Center of Central Georgia EMS (Macon, GA) April 2021 – present
EMS billing and collection services for 21,600 ambulance transports.
- West Georgia Ambulance, Inc. (Carrollton, GA) March 2023 – present
EMS billing and collection services for 11,000 ambulance transports.

The City's Procurement Ordinance Article 3-110 (Competitive Sealed Proposals for the procurement of Equipment, Supplies and Professional Services) governs the RFP Process. During the RFP process, there is no formal opening due to the possibility of negotiated components of the proposal. In the event City Council does not approve the recommended offeror, no proposal responses or any negotiated components are made public until after the award of the contract. Therefore, the evaluation results and cost information have been submitted to the City Manager in a separate memo for informational purposes.

Ambulance fees collected will be deposited as: General Fund – Government Wide Revenue - EMS Collections; 0101-099-1999-4506 and payments to the vendor for services will be charged to General Fund – Fire/EMS – Operations – Contractual Services; 0101-410-1000-6319.

A RESOLUTION

NO. _____

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN ANNUAL CONTRACT WITH EMS MANAGEMENT & CONSULTANTS, INC. (WINSTON-SALEM, NC) FOR AMBULANCE BILLING AND COLLECTION SERVICES.

WHEREAS, an RFP was administered (RFP No. 24-0004) and seven proposals were received; and,

WHEREAS, the proposal submitted by EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. met all proposal requirements and was deemed most responsive to the RFP; and,

WHEREAS, the contract term shall be for two years with the option to renew for three additional twelve-month periods. The contract renewal shall be contingent upon the mutual agreement of the City and the Contractor.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

That the City Manager is hereby authorized to execute an annual contract with EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. (Winston-Salem, NC) for ambulance billing and collection services for the Columbus Fire & EMS Department. Ambulance fees collected will be deposited as: General Fund – Government Wide Revenue - EMS Collections; 0101-099-1999-4506 and payments to the vendor for services will be charged to General Fund – Fire/EMS – Operations – Contractual Services; 0101-410-1000-6319.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held the _____ day of _____, 2024 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of said Council.

- Councilor Allen voting _____
- Council District 1 Seat voting _____
- Councilor Begly voting _____
- Councilor Cogle voting _____
- Councilor Crabb voting _____
- Councilor Davis voting _____
- Councilor Garrett voting _____
- Councilor Huff voting _____
- Councilor Thomas voting _____
- Councilor Tucker voting _____

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B.H. "Skip" Henderson III, Mayor