



City of Gainesville Agenda Item Report

File Number: 2023-823

Agenda Date: December 7, 2023

Department: Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs

Title: 2023-823 Authorization of a Task Assignment Amendment with Wannemacher Jensen Architects, Inc. (B)

Department: Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs

Description: Requesting City Commission approval of a task assignment amendment with Wannemacher Jensen Architects, Inc. in the amount of \$469,318.00 for the professional design, permitting, procurement assistance and construction administration associated with the partial restoration of the Thelma A. Boltin Center as directed by the City Commission on April 27, 2023.

Fiscal Note: Funds in the amount of \$469,318.00 are available for professional design services from the Wild Spaces Public Places Fund Thelma Boltin Center project account.

Explanation: Built in the Northeast Residential Historic District in 1943, the facility originally known as the Gainesville Servicemen's Center was an entertainment venue for U.S. service members stationed at nearby military bases. The City later renamed it in honor of the late Thelma Boltin, the center's first director.

Recent timeline:

- 2000 – Thelma A. Boltin Center is last renovated.
- August 2019 – Gainesville City Commission approves a comprehensive renovation of the Center.
- March 2020 – Center closes due to the pandemic.
- December 2020 – City staff discovers a portion of the roof over the Center's auditorium appears collapsed, and hires a structural engineering firm to assess the damage and secure the roof.
- November 2021 – Firm finds structural damage to the Center, and recommends either demolition and replacement of the auditorium, or demolition of the entire building.

- April 2022 – Gainesville City Commission directs staff to work with Wannemacher Jensen Architects, Inc. (WJA) and the City’s Historic Preservation Board (HPB) on a plan for the property.
- Spring – Summer 2022 – City staff gathers input from stakeholders, and provides updates at monthly HPB meetings on May 3, July 5 and August 8.
- August 2022 – City staff meets with REG Architects to discuss a feasibility study for the complete restoration of the building.
- August 2022 – City’s Code Enforcement division declares the center a “Dangerous Building;” utilities disconnected from the building for safety reasons.
- September 6, 2022 – WJA and City staff deliver a presentation to the HPB with options for reconstruction of a new facility.
- October 18, 2022 – City staff provides an update to the HPB.
- November 1, 2022 – REG Architects, Inc. delivers a presentation on a restoration option to the HPB.
- November 8, 2022 – City staff applies for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for demolition of the Center.
- December 6, 2022 – HPB approves COA for demolition of the Center’s east wing, and restoration of its historic auditorium.
- Spring, 2023 – City staff works with a consultant on detailed cost estimates for four options to restore the functionality of the Center.
- April, 2023 – Gainesville City Commission directs staff to pursue a partial restoration of the Center.
- Summer, 2023 – Staff works with WJA. on a design services proposal for the partial restoration of the Center.

Wannemacher Jensen Architects, Inc.’s task assignment amendment in the amount of \$469,318.00 includes professional design, permitting, procurement assistance and construction administration associated with the partial restoration of the Thelma A. Boltin Center as directed by the City Commission on April 27, 2023. The following sub-consultants, two of whom are small and local, will be participating in this project: Mitchell Gulledge Engineering, Inc., Master Consulting Engineers, Inc., and JBrown Professional Group, Inc.

Wannemacher Jensen Architects, Inc. has worked on the Thelma A. Boltin Center project since 2020, when they were awarded a contract through a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) solicitation for design services, WSPP-200004-DM. This procurement was advertised on a national bidding clearinghouse, DemandStar. A notification of the project was broadcast to 1,029 firms that had previously registered as potentially interested in this type of work and included 16 supplemental vendors that had expressed an interest directly to Wild Spaces Public Places or were local firms known to be capable of this type of design work. A total of 36 companies downloaded the plans and specifications. There were two bids and one company was disqualified by the City Attorney’s office due to their involvement in preparing the scope of work for the solicitation. Staff feels that it is in the City’s best interest to continue working with the WJA design team to make the most of their institutional knowledge and dedication to this challenging project.

Strategic Connection:

- Goal 1: Equitable Community
- Goal 2: More Sustainable Community
- Goal 3: A Great Place to Live and Experience
- Goal 4: Resilient Local Economy
- Goal 5: “Best in Class” Neighbor Services

Recommendation: The City Commission authorize the City Manager or designee to execute all contract documents and other necessary documents, subject to approval by the City Attorney as to form and legality.