VI. PURCHASING

A. Overview
All completed check request forms must be signed by the person making the request and approved by a board member. In addition, a second board member must approve all purchases in excess of $500. Reimbursement check requests must be signed by a board member or show chair other than the person requesting reimbursement.

The President of the Board is the only person authorized to enter into any contract on behalf of MQ. Contracts in excess of $2000 must be approved by the Finance/Audit Committee. These policies shall also apply to renewals of existing contracts.

B. Required Solicitation of Quotations from Vendors
Purchase decisions in excess of $500 for labor, equipment, supplies or services purchased, leased or contracted for shall be made only after receiving, whenever possible, oral quotations from at least two (2) vendors.

Purchase decisions exceeding $1,000 for labor, equipment, supplies or services purchased, leased or contracted for shall be made only after receiving, whenever possible, written quotations from at least two (2) vendors. Specific selections shall be recommended, via a bid summary to the BOD Finance/Audit Committee for approval with written quotations attached for review. Recommendations shall be based on consideration of all applicable criteria as described under “Evaluation of Alternative Vendors” below in section D.

All Purchase decisions of $2,000 or more shall be made by obtaining competitive proposals from at least three (3) responsible vendors.

Solicitations for goods and services (requests for proposals) should provide for all of the following:
1. A clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product or service to be procured. In competitive procurements, such a description shall not contain features, which unduly restrict competition.
2. Requirements which the bidder/offeree must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals (see the next section entitled “Evaluation of Alternative Vendors” for required criteria).
3. A description, whenever practicable, of technical requirements in terms of functions to be performed or performance required, including the range of acceptable characteristics or minimum acceptable standards.
4. The specific features of "brand name or equal" descriptions that bidders are required to meet when such items are included in the solicitations.
5. Preference, to the extent practicable and economically feasible, for products and services that conserve natural resources and protect the environment and are energy efficient.
6. A description of the proper format, if any, in which proposals must be submitted, including the name of the MQ purchasing representative to whom proposals should be sent.
7. The date by which proposals are due.
8. Required delivery or performance dates/schedules.
9. Clear indications of the quantity(ies) requested and unit(s) of measure.

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C. Extensions of Due Dates and Receipt of Late Proposals
Solicitations should provide for sufficient time to permit the preparation and submission of offers before the specified due date. However, in the event that a prospective client requests an extension to a due date specified in a solicitation, and such an extension is both justified and compatible with the requirements of MQ, an extension may be granted by the purchasing representative.

Vendor proposals are considered late if received after the due date and time specified in the solicitation. All such late proposals shall be marked “Late Proposal” on the outside of the envelope and retained, unopened, in the procurement folder. Vendors that submit late proposals shall be sent a letter notifying them that their proposal was late and could not be considered for award.

D. Evaluation of Alternative Vendors
Alternative vendors shall be evaluated on a weighted scale that considers the following criteria:
1. Adequacy of the proposed methodology of the vendor
2. Skill and experience of key personnel
3. Demonstrated company experience
4. Other technical specifications (designated by department requesting proposals)
5. Compliance with administrative requirements of the request for proposal (format, due date, etc.)
6. Vendor’s financial stability
7. Vendor’s demonstrated commitment to the nonprofit sector
8. Results of communications with references supplied by vendor

E. Ethical Conduct in Purchasing
Ethical conduct in managing the Organization's purchasing activities is an absolute essential. Volunteers must always be mindful that they represent MQ and share a professional trust with other staff and the general membership.

Staff shall discourage the offer of, and decline, individual gifts or gratuities of value in any way that might influence the purchase of supplies, equipment, and/or services. Volunteers shall notify the MQ BOD if they are offered such gifts. Gifts to the Organization, viewed as normal business incentives to obtain future Organization-approved business such as for meeting sites, are acceptable donations.

F. Conflicts of Interest Prohibited
Conflict of interest issues are addressed by a separate MQ Conflict of Interest Policy.