



Quaker Springs Fire District #1  
107 Blodgett Road  
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Schuylerville, NY12871  
518-584-3349

## **Purchasing Policy:**

The Board of Fire Commissioners ("Board") defines the following policy on Purchasing.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to comply with principles of responsible fiscal management, generally accepted auditing standards, and the General Municipal Law of the State of New York (including but not limited to General Municipal Law §104-b (2) (f) and General Municipal Law §103 (16)).

### **GENERAL:**

- The Board shall have the final authority on all purchase decisions.
- All purchases require adherence to the processes outlined in this policy.
- Only a Chief, Assistant Chief, members of the Board, or another person designated by the Board, may commit the Fire District to make purchases.
- Materials, equipment, supplies, and services purchased by the Fire District shall be of a quality and quantity required to serve the functions of the Fire District in a satisfactory manner.
- In the event the Fire District needs to make a purchase from a specific vendor (i.e., a sole source supplier), this circumstance will be discussed at a Board of Fire Commissioner meeting and documented in the minutes.

### **PURCHASING PROCESS:**

- All purchasing will use the attached Purchasing Form (current revision) and the form (with any required quotes) must be submitted to the District Secretary / Treasurer, at least (3) business days before the Board of Fire Commissioners' meeting date.
- Every purchase that involves construction or building services will first be reviewed by the District Administrator to determine whether it is a purchase contract or a public works contract.
- A good faith effort must be made to estimate the total amount to be spent on the entire project. If appropriate, past purchases and the aggregate amount to be spent in a year should be incorporated into this estimate.
- For purchase contracts with an aggregate total (including shipping) of:
  - Up to \$2,999 – multiple quotes are not required except at the discretion of the Board;
  - \$3,000 to \$19,999 – a minimum of 3 written quotes is required; and
  - \$20,000 and above – see FORMAL BID PROCESS.
- For public works projects with an aggregate total of:
  - Up to \$4,999 – multiple quotes are not required, except at the discretion of the Board;
  - \$5,000 to \$34,999 – a minimum of 3 written quotes is required; and
  - \$35,000 and above – see FORMAL BID PROCESS.

- In all instances, references to catalogues and price lists may be substituted for obtaining written quotes.
- Purchases that can be made using New York State, Saratoga County or Federal approved contract pricing are not subject to the quote requirements detailed above. In the event pricing and/or discount programs can be found that result in greater cost savings than a comparable State, County or Federal contract, that pricing and/or discount program can be used without additional quotes.
- A good faith effort shall be made to obtain the required number of quotes. If the purchaser is unable to obtain the required number of quotes, the purchaser will document the attempts made to obtain the quotes. In no event shall the failure to obtain the quotes be a bar to the procurement.

#### FORMAL BID PROCESS:

1. Project specifications are developed by the Project Manager with input from the supporting Committee as appropriate. Specifications are to be a list of needed characteristics of the items / services requested with minimum and critical needs noted. A list of preferred characteristics can also be submitted. Specifications from a specific vendor are NOT acceptable.
2. Availability of a qualified purchasing plan is investigated. If a qualified purchasing plan is available and desirable, formal bidding is not needed. If a qualified purchasing plan is not available or desirable, continue with step 3.
3. A "Request for Bids" legal ad is prepared and published in the district newspaper, on the home page of QSFD.COM and additionally as determined by the Board.
4. Sealed bids are opened at the next appropriate meeting of the Board. Vendor names and bid amounts are read aloud and documented in the meeting minutes.
5. All bids are forwarded to the Project Manager for review and determination of compliance with specifications. The Project Manager will then notify the Board which bids do and do not meet specifications and will make a formal recommendation with justifications to the Board of who should be awarded the project.
6. The Board will determine the vendor to award the project to.
7. All vendors are notified of all bids and the decision of who was awarded the project.

**BEST INTEREST OF THE FIRE DISTRICT:** At the sole discretion of the Board, the solicitation of alternative proposals or quotations might not be required if it is not in the best interest of the Fire District. Examples that apply to this consideration include:

- Professional service or services requiring special or technical skill, training or expertise. The individual or company must be chosen based on accountability, reliability, responsibility, skill, education and training, judgment, integrity, and moral worth.
- Emergency purchases (goods or services) that must be purchased immediately because seeking alternate proposals may threaten the life, health, safety or welfare of the residents, members or district facilities.
- Purchases of surplus and second-hand goods from any source.
- Goods purchased from agencies for the blind or severely handicapped; goods purchased from correctional institutions; purchases under State, County, Federal and other government contracts.

- General Municipal Law §103(16) authorizes a Fire District to purchase apparatus and equipment through the use of contracts let by the United States or any agency thereof, any state or any other political subdivision or Fire District therein. See General Municipal Law §103(16) for further details.

**BEST VALUE PURCHASING:** General Municipal Law §103 provides for flexibility in awarding contracts by authorizing the award of purchase contracts on the basis of best value rather than requiring the arbitrary award to lowest bidder. Documentation and an explanation are required whenever a contract is awarded to other than the lowest responsible quote or proposal. This documentation will include an explanation of how the award will achieve savings or how the quote or proposal was not responsible. A determination that the quote or proposal is not responsible shall be made by the Board in its sole and unreviewable discretion. The acquisition should demonstrate a reduction in administrative and product cost, and increase efficiencies.

**UNINTENTIONAL FAILURE TO COMPLY:** The unintentional failure to fully comply with the provisions of General Municipal Law §103 or 104-b shall not be grounds to void action taken or give rise to a cause of action against the Quaker Springs Fire District #1 or any officer or employee thereof.