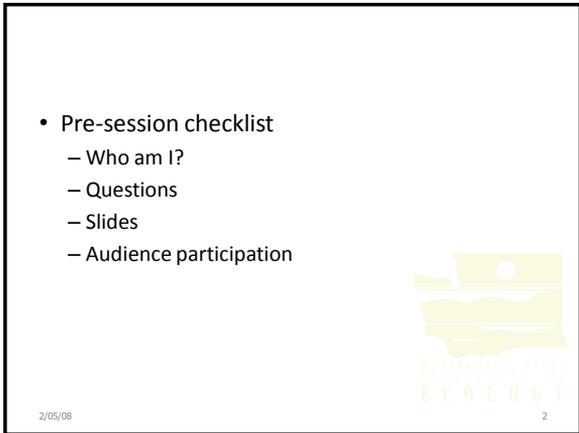


Working with Consulting Engineers

IACC conference

David Dunn
Department of Ecology



- Pre-session checklist
 - Who am I?
 - Questions
 - Slides
 - Audience participation

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WHY?



Agency Requirements

- Ecology Requirements
- Health Requirements
- Generally when the public will be depending on the infrastructure for their health and safety a licensed engineer is required.

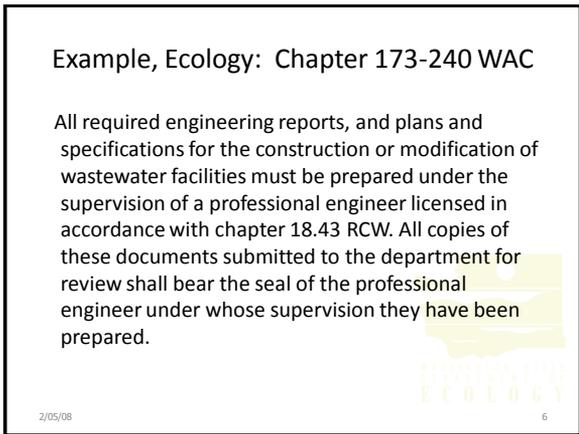
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Possible Projects

- Planning (WSP, GSP, ER)
- Design
- Construction Management
- “General Engineering Services”
- Developer Review

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Example, Ecology: Chapter 173-240 WAC

All required engineering reports, and plans and specifications for the construction or modification of wastewater facilities must be prepared under the supervision of a professional engineer licensed in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW. All copies of these documents submitted to the department for review shall bear the seal of the professional engineer under whose supervision they have been prepared.

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Hiring a professional makes sense

- Comply with State Regulations.
- Protecting Public Health and Safety
- Better Project Outcomes.
- Avoid Problems with your facility.
- Costs less \$\$ in the long run.



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Hiring the right professional makes a difference in your project

- Technical expertise.
- Communication styles.
- Vision of the completed project.
- Working relationship.



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HOW?



How to hire a P.E.

1. Things you have to do (legal requirements)
2. Things you should do (how to hire the best engineer for your individual community and specific project.)



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Legal requirements for hiring

Chapter 39.80 RCW "Contracts for Architectural and Engineering Services"

1. Advertise for engineers (RFQ or RFP). Must:
 - Describe type of work required
 - May advertise project by project, or a general request for engineering services.
2. Firms will submit a statement of qualifications (SOQ), or Proposal.

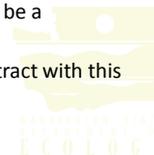


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Legal requirements for hiring

3. Community will interview one or more engineers
 - Discuss concerns with proposal, suggestions for alternate methods
4. Community will select the most highly qualified firm. Community will begin negotiations with that firm. (WA state law does not allow price to be a consideration before this point.)
5. Community will then negotiate a contract with this firm.



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Legal requirements for hiring

6. The contract price must be “Fair and reasonable to the agency”, considering:
 - Value of the services
 - Scope of work
 - Complexity of the project
 - Professional nature of the services
7. If the community cannot reach a fair and reasonable contract, terminate negotiations, and begin negotiations with other firms

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Recommendations during the hiring process

- Before Advertisement
- Advertisement
- Submittal review
- Interviews
- Negotiations
- Contract Management

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Before Advertising

- Figure out your budget
- Define Scope of Work
- Gather background info (old record-drawings, past plans, permit requirements, court orders, etc)
- Decide on rating criteria now.

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Before Advertising: Define the Scope of Work

- Define exactly what work needs to be done
 - Don't make them guess
- Why the work is necessary can be helpful
- Will any specific expertise be necessary?
- Will your staff do any of the work?
- Are specific agency approvals or coordination required?

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Before Advertising: Decide on rating criteria

- Technical Expertise?
- Specific Experience?
- Worked with similar communities?
- Worked with similar projects?
- Proximity to your community.
- Size of Firm.
- Feedback from references.
- Type of project oversight.

- Price cannot be a decision criteria. Select the firm most highly qualified to perform the work

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Your Advertisement Should :

- Explain your communities situation.
- Describe what work needs to be done and the approximate budget
- Provide contact info.
- Specify what applicants should submit. (Proposal, SOQ)
- Require references.
- How can firms get questions answered? (phone, email)
- Where and when is the site visit?
- Include deadline for submittals.

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Advertisement should specify what applicants should submit:

- Length
- Number of copies
- Format
- Resumes
- Past experience
- References



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Advertise in:

- WEBS (Washington's Electronic Business Solution)
- Local Newspapers
- State Wide Newspaper
- Can also contact firms directly
 - Your past experience
 - Experiences of your neighbors
 - Other firms
 - Community members
 - Contractors



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Procurement

- General Services
 - Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
 - Submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ)
- Specific Project
 - Request for Proposals (RFP)
 - Submit a Proposal.



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Review of SOQ/Proposal

- Get a good review team
- Compare the SOQ/Proposal to your Selection Criteria
- Check their references
- Set up interviews with top firms



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Get a good review team

- Choose a Lead: PWD, City Administrator.
- Treatment plant operator
- Reach beyond City staff
 - Neighboring communities
 - Local businesses (especially if large sewer dischargers)
 - Technical staff



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Check their references

- Best way to know how this firm actually works
- The references will typically be high quality projects
- Be prepared to ask tough questions
- Look for and follow up on problems.



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Questions for references

- Why did you choose this firm?
- What did they do for you?
- Was the work completed on time?
- How well did they manage the project?



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Questions for references

- Would you hire this firm again?
- Who actually did the work on your project?
- Is the treatment plant working well?
- Is the facility easy to operate?



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Questions for references

- Were there any problems with the design?
- How many change orders? How expensive were they?
- Were there any problems with communication?
- Under budget?
- Were bills clear?

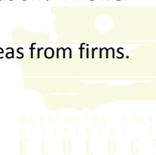


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Interviews: Invite the top applicants

- Specifically invite the person who will be doing the work.
- Pick a format for the interviews and let the applicants know.
- Do you want them to make a presentation? Answer questions? Discuss the project?
- Be open to suggestions or creative ideas from firms.

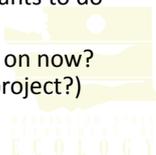


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Interview questions

- Does the firm have experience with this specific type of work.
- Does the firm have experience working with your regulatory agency.
- Will the firm be using sub consultants to do some of the work?
- What projects is the firm working on now? (And will they conflict with your project?)

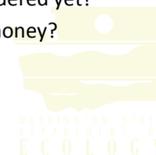


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Interview questions

- How far from your community is the firm located?
- Who, exactly, will be working on your project?
- How would the firm address your project?
- Does the firm have any innovative ideas or alternatives that have not been considered yet?
- What does the firm suggest to save money?

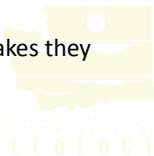


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Interview questions

- How will the firm communicate with you?
- What type of, and how many meetings will be involved?
- What kind of problems did the firm have on the last project like yours?
- How does your firm address mistakes they make?



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After the Interviews: Selecting the most qualified firm.

- Get the Selection Team back together
- Meet soon after the interviews
- Use your Pre-Determined selection criteria
- Rate all the firms
- Double Check references

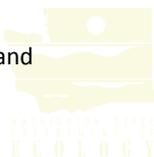


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Negotiations

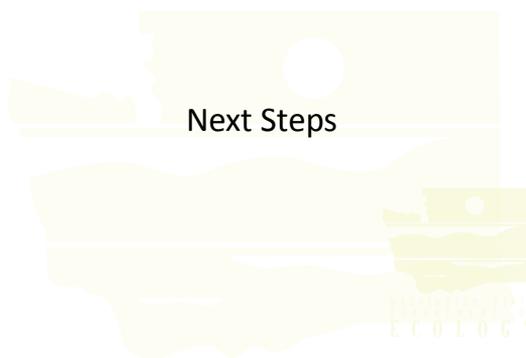
- Timetable
- Costs
- Payment schedule
- Bring in those ideas to reduce costs from the interview.
- Negotiate a contract that is "Fair and Reasonable" to you.



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Next Steps



Challenges of managing consultant contracts

- They are technical experts (you're not)
- You want a cordial working relationship
- You want to control costs



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Start with the contract:

- Hold the firm to the agreed scope of work.
 - Timelines
 - Deliverables
 - Progress reports
 - Billing practices
- Immediately address issues.
- Hold the right number of meetings.

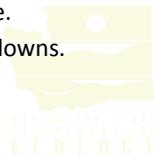


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If issues come up...

- let the engineer know what your concerns are.
- If something is confusing or doesn't make sense ask the engineer to explain it (again).
- If there are billing issues, go over the invoices and see if everything makes sense.
- Pay attention to the billing breakdowns.



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Manage project costs

- Trade offs between design costs and construction costs and change orders
- Good engineering work costs money
- Early Planning decisions have the biggest impact on project cost
 - Meeting regulatory requirements
 - Project vision
 - Growth projections
 - Cost Effective alternatives



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When to trust a consultants judgment?

- Always consider value analysis on your projects
- Talk directly with regulators.
- Get second opinions
 - Regulatory staff
 - Other local communities



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Any last questions?

Additional information

- David.Dunn@ecy.wa.gov 360/407-6503
- Ecology funding program site: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/funding/funding.html>
- FY2012 Funding information: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/funding/cycles/2012/index.html>
- Grant and Loan listserv: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/maillist.html>



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