



March 2005

Volume 2, Issue 2

E-Procurement Welcomes NCRC!

The North Central Regional Council (NCRC) of NAHRO has become the second regional council to enter into a revenue sharing agreement with Transpire related to the e-Procurement system!

The agreement provides NCRC with a share of the revenues generated by agencies and vendors in their region using the system. To make the most of this, NCRC will work with Transpire to promote the system, provide access to training and education on the system, and identify ways we can enhance

e-Procurement to better meet the needs of their agencies and vendors.



In keeping with this, NCRC will be providing a session on e-Procurement at their Spring Conference in Davenport, Iowa. The session will be **Monday, April 18th** and will be led by Transpire Board member and avid e-Procurement Procurer Jerry Schock, Executive Director of the

Port Huron Housing Commission. We welcome NCRC, and look forward to working with them over the next years!

The Pacific Northwest Regional Council (PNRC) was the first to join in revenue sharing, and will be holding its 2nd

e-Procurement training on **April 1, 2005** in Salem, Oregon. PNRC has been a great partner, and we appreciate all of their hard work!

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2005:

THE STATS SO FAR

Bids Published: 96

Bids Awarded: 56

Systems Integration—Yeah or Nay?

Integration is typically a "key" concept when planning for the software programs that we use in

Mike Gifford has been the Purchasing Manager at the Housing Authority of the City of Las Vegas, Nevada, for the past 28 years. Since the System debuted in April, 2003, LVHA has conducted 126 quotes and bids and 25 RFP's through e-Procurement, with a total value of over \$2.8 million .

conducting business. At LVHA, our computerized purchase order (PO)

system is fully integrated with our inventory and accounting systems. Full integration of these

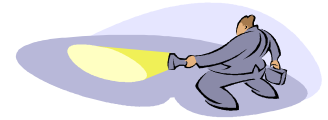
functions is key to ensure that materials and services are requisitioned, ordered, received and paid for in an efficient and timely manner. When we began design

Value of Bids Awarded

\$518,678.38



VENDOR SPOTLIGHT— American Drapery and Blind, Inc.



American Drapery and Blind, Inc. has been on the e-Procurement system for more than a year, taking the opportunity to reach out to agencies across the country. Vice-President Denny Thostrud notes that "The NAHRO e-Procurement system has really helped streamline our bid submission process, and has opened the door to bid oppor-



On their way to NAHRO's National Conference to exhibit!

tunities that we would otherwise have missed. We look forward to the exciting growth this system has to offer our company."

Transpire is glad to hear of successes by MSC members like American Drapery and Blind, and we look forward to an exciting 2005 with you!

Integration (cont'd)

of the e-Procurement system in late 2002 we intended that it would be fully integrated with our computerized in-house PO and accounting systems. Many IT professionals want to know, "Can e-Procurement be integrated with our other systems?"

The simple answer is yes, though with all systems integration nothing is truly simple.

The more complex question is whether or not you really want it to be.

As I have conducted competitive solicitations on e-Procurement, I've not found any great advan-

tage in integrating the processes. **Why?**

(1) First, some have suggested that integration is key so that they do not have to re-enter the requisition information into the e-procurement system. However, if the requisition is for materials and the agency has a stock-code inventory list, DET will download the agency's entire stock into the agency's own site on e-Procurement. Then, when agency staff enter such items into a competitive solicitation to be posted on e-Procurement, the descriptive information will be automatically posted by entering each individual stock code and a quantity. As for similar information pertaining to solicitations for services, the agency requisition seldom carries any kind of descriptive information that would be automatically entered as a result of integration.

(2) Second, some have also suggested that integration is key to converting the competitive solicitation results into a PO. Again,

me and my staff have conducted a number of competitive solicitations on e-Procurement and have not found that this to be much of a concern.

For stock materials we've found it just as easy to enter the PO information directly from our stock code library in our in-house system. For services, we use a standard language format for our PO's that does not appear anywhere in the competitive solicitation. Hence, integration would not provide any great benefit.

After using the NAHRO e-Procurement System for the past 2 years, I have found that if integration was readily available, I would not even bother to use it as it does not provide any great benefit.

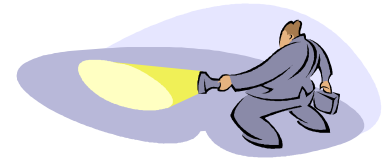
If anyone would like to discuss this issue with me, please feel free to contact me at the Las Vegas Housing Authority, 702/386-2973.

MSC CORNER



This month marks the debut of the MSC Newsletter, *Procurement Partners News*. During months when this newsletter is published, we will not have an MSC Corner, but will provide you with the full MSC Newsletter upon its release!

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT— Northeast Oregon Housing Authority



With the help of the Pacific Northwest Regional Council, e-Procurement's first revenue sharing partner, a number of agencies in the Northwest have gotten up and running in recent months. One of these is the **Northeast Oregon Housing Authority**, which provides housing and related services to approximately 942 households in a four county area. Dale Inslee, their Development/Modernization Manager, admits that he "was a little skeptical as to how E-Procurement



would work with our construction Bids, but I was surprised as to how well the system worked and how contractors were more than willing to get on board." In helping to meet their needs in serving a wide geographic area, he noted that

as a result of the system, they "have a much greater out reach program now with new contractors calling wanting to know how to sign up." Plus, once they do put out a bid, "answering questions and sending addendums is a snap saves loads of time".

Transpire is glad to welcome the **Northeast Oregon Housing Authority** as an active user of the e-Procurement system!

The Requirements Contract—A WIN for Kearney!

The Kearney Housing Agency is a small agency with 172 owned units and 83 managed units, and we've used the e-procurement system for more than two years.

Having a small maintenance staff with a working supervisor, it was difficult to get the best price for needed daily supplies quickly, efficiently and in compliance until e-Procurement's **Requirements Contracts**.

Our current contracts are broken up into bid packages of: Appliance Parts; Plumbing Fixtures and Supplies; Paints; Janitorial Supplies; Electrical Supplies; Refrigerators; HVAC Supplies & Equipment. DET assisted us in developing the bid package so it would attract vendors. Now that the bid process is done and contracts have been awarded, maintenance goes on-line and orders the items as they are needed.

Elaine Wiseman is the Executive Director of the Kearney Housing Authority. Carl Beans is the Maintenance Supervisor of the Kearney Housing Authority.

Advantages:

1. No more looking in several catalogs and spending time on the phone to find the best price and documenting the purchase;
2. The items are shipped and usually arrive within 2-3 days;
3. No large inventory is needed to be maintained;
4. The cost of the bid item is good for 12 months.

Prior to getting started with e-Procurement we knew we needed something better than the system we were using. In order to get started we said "this is it" and took the plunge! The e-Procurement staff provided excellent support. I would advise all small agencies - to "just do it!"

You won't regret it!

YOUR Supplier Marketplace IS OPEN!

Transpire is excited to unveil a new, **free** service for NAHRO members and their vendors to use to find each other. Our enhanced Marketplace is like an electronic yellow pages, except every vendor is interested in working with housing agencies.

So if you're an agency and you're wondering who's interested in providing audit services to your agency, or need to add vendors to your procurement process, then come visit the Marketplace! **It's free!**

If you're a vendor, trying to find new ways to let agencies know that you're

interested in working with them, come visit the Marketplace and sign your company up. **It's free!**

This Marketplace already has more than 1800 vendors on it - companies selling everything from refrigerators to tenant screening services are listed, along with their contact information. **Visit Today!**

March Issue

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Transpire, Inc. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of NAHRO

Our Purpose

To add value to communities through service to NAHRO members by developing and sustaining appropriate business lines of benefit to NAHRO members.

We will develop new tools and approaches to unresolved challenges, and meet the needs within the affordable housing and community development industry.

We will identify and promote partnerships across sectors that can assist communities in meeting their goals, and in doing so recommit to serving the members of NAHRO, first and foremost.



CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Customer support is

available at no charge by calling

toll free, 866-526-9266, from 8 a.m. Eastern to

5 p.m. Pacific. We can assist you with putting up bids, RFPs, contacting vendors and any other software questions.

Got Ideas?

The NAHRO e-Newsletter is distributed bi-monthly by Transpire, Inc.

If you have information or ideas, send them to droberts@nahro.org or fax them to 202-289-8181.

NEED **PROCUREMENT** TRAINING?

NAHRO's Procurement & Contract Management Seminar

Procurement's more than placing orders or processing requisitions. It's a major operation in any housing authority – a management-driven cost control center that requires constant attention and education.

Your agency will benefit from this session whether it's a one-person, one-desk operation or a sprawling enterprise.

April 19-20, 2005
Providence, RI

July 14-15, 2005
New Orleans, LA

NAHRO's Advanced Procurement Seminar

Are you ready to take your procurement process to the next level? With budgets tightening because of dwindling resources, we hear more and more, do less with more. This course, designed for procurement professionals, goes beyond the basics and focuses on how to increase effectiveness and efficiency in your procurement operations.

May 2-3, 2005
Colorado Springs, CO

August 22-23, 2005
Hartford, CT

For more information go to: <http://www.nahro.org/professional/seminars.cfm>