



File#: 12600327 Opening Date: 9/16/2025

## **Request for Qualifications Evaluation Committee Report**

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

RUTH F. QUINTO, CPA – Assistant City Manager, Office of the Mayor & City Manager

NICK MASCIA – Assistant City Manager, Office of the Mayor & City Manager

JENNIFER RUIZ – Deputy City Manager, Office of the Mayor & City Manager

BRIAN BARR – Director, General Services Department

CLIFFORD TRAUGH – Assistant Director, General Services Department

VIKKIE CALEDERON – Airport Marketing/PR Coordinator

TAMMY TOWNSEND – Community Member

### **FACILITATOR:**

JENNIFER RUIZ – DEPUTY CITY MANAGER

### **BACKGROUND:**

The City solicited proposals from qualified private management firms for the operation and promotion of the Fresno Convention and Entertainment Center (FCEC). It is the City's desire to find a firm that can deliver a broad array of cultural, educational, entertainment, sporting, meeting, conference, and exhibition activities to provide a wide variety of events for the region's residents while maximizing the event mix to optimize revenues available for reinvestment in the facility. The City has an existing contract for management services of the FCEC, however, it's original term expired in June 2025 and was extended to December 31, 2025 to allow additional time for the bidding process.

The City advertised on Planet Bids on August 20, 2025. At the conclusion of the RFP opening, four proposers submitted proposals as follows:

1. VenueWorks
2. Legends Global (formerly ASM)
3. The Sport Facilities Company
4. Oak View Group

### **SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:**

RFQ Release: 8/20/2025

Opening: 9/16/2025

Committee Evaluation: September 17 – 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Proposer Interviews: September 29<sup>th</sup> – October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Final Committee Selection: VenuWorks

**EVALUATION CRITERIA AS LISTED IN THE RFQ:**

1. Qualifications
2. City objectives
3. Demonstrated experience and understanding of the local demographics
4. Community expectations
5. Regional tourism dynamics
6. Financial capacity and soundness
7. Timeframe of the development Response
8. Capacity to perform the proposed development within the timeframe
9. Any other factors, whether quantifiable or not

**EVALUATION COMMITTEE NOTES:****VENUEWORKS**

VenuWorks proposes to partner with ATG Entertainment to achieve the goals of the City of Fresno's Fresno Convention and Entertainment Center (FCEC). This strong partnership offers Fresno the benefit of the expertise of both companies: VenueWorks, which specializes in small to medium-sized event venues, and ATG Entertainment, an international corporation that specializes in theater management. This partnership resulted from feedback issued to ATG during the first RFP bidding round earlier this year, which the committee felt indicated responsiveness and innovation that is required for FCEC.

The company presented as a professional and strong team that is very experienced in the event center management and the theater industry. VenueWorks has an employee-owned business model and represented their leadership as "servant leadership". They demonstrated creative and innovative models of doing business in the other venues they manage and provided specific well-researched examples of events they would look to bring to FCEC. Despite their Executives not being local residents, the committee felt that they clearly knew and understood Fresno and therefore demonstrated their interest in this market and community.

The committee also discussed that VenuWorks seems to be a large enough company to contain the necessary experience and capacity to manage FCEC well, but not so large that Fresno would not be a priority for them. VenueWorks demonstrated their willingness to prioritize Fresno by being the only bidder to attend their interview in person and by being available for every follow-up call with the committee even when notice was short. Their responsiveness during the bidding process was unparalleled with the other bidders. The company also made a point to communicate a commitment to transparency and the sharing of data to ensure the City has the information necessary to make good decisions for FCEC in the future.



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## **LEGENDS GLOBAL**

The company is the current contract holder and does demonstrate that it has the corporate infrastructure necessary to manage the facility as it has been doing so for over 15 years. The committee was pleased that the company made some adjustments to their proposal based on feedback from the first RFP bidding round earlier in the year. However, the committee's primary concern is that many of the company's statements sounded as if they were proposing to serve the community for the first time. The ideas they proposed to improve attendance and increase events at FCEC could have been implemented at any point in the recent years, however, the company has operated status quo and originally proposed to continue to do so until the City's second bidding process this year.

The committee discussed that FCEC continues to lose events that are instead held at the Save Mart Center in Clovis, which is also managed by Legends Global, despite some of the committee members having first-hand experience of attendance being low enough that half of the venue was covered with drapes so as not to appear empty. Smaller-sized events are clearly a better fit for FCEC given seating capacity of both venues. The committee discussed that FCEC did not seem to be a priority venue for the company, and their proposal did not make it evident that would change in the future.

## **THE SPORTS FACILITIES COMPANY**

The company demonstrated a strong administrative corporate framework to support the network of venues that they currently manage. The committee's primary concern is that the company is almost exclusively focused on sports facilities and had few examples of the other high-profile events despite the committee's feedback in this regard. The committee discussed that it thought a greater focus on sporting events could be a benefit for FCEC and surrounding business community, however, the company did not offer enough assurances nor examples that it could produce in areas beyond sports.

## **OAK VIEW GROUP**

The company demonstrated a strong administrative corporate framework to support the network of venues that they currently manage. However, they did not demonstrate that they had a deep enough understanding of Fresno to offer innovative or well-researched ideas about how to improve business at FCEC. The company manages many venues, and it was not clear to the committee how Fresno would be prioritized among their portfolio nor was there any compelling strategy offered that would benefit FCEC more than the current management arrangement. Additionally, the company failed to address recent public news reports about their CEO stepping down this year after his indictment.



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## **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**


The committee unanimously recommends awarding the Fresno Convention and Entertainment Center (FCEC) contract to VenueWorks for the reasons noted above.

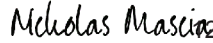


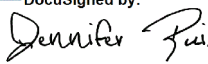
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## Evaluation Committee Sign-Off


The following Evaluation Committee voting members have read the enclosed report and concur with the findings as written:


Signed by:  
  
12/2/2025  
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RUTH F. QUINTO, CPA  
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