1. **Overview**

**1.1 Goals**

The Lowndes County Board of Supervisors is planning to implement a fully functional, county-wide, premise based telecommunications system utilizing VoIP, ensuring long-term growth through effective management and maintenance in the County. The Lowndes County Board of Supervisors invites proposals from qualified firms that can provide an IP telephone system that meets or exceeds the specifications listed in this RFP. The project requires the design and implementation of a new IP telephone system and includes the interconnection of this system to the County’s multi-site data and telecom network. Proposals must not only meet the current functionality requirements, but should also be adaptable for future growth of users and system features.

**1.2 Current Environment**

The County currently maintains a mixture of telephone equipment that is aging and no longer supported by the vendor. The County wishes to migrate to a VoIP based system for improved functionality. All switches in the current infrastructure are NOT Power over Ethernet (POE) ready and will be replaced as part of this RFP.

The vendor will install a VoIP system that blends technologies into a reliable and manageable system that will grow with the needs of the County. All proposed equipment should be able to integrate with existing network infrastructures to form a complete telecommunications system that accommodates current and emerging trends.

The County consists of a number of buildings. These include the County Administration Office, County Tax Office, Chancery Clerks Office, Circuit Courts Office, EMA/911 Center, Justice Court, Juvenile Detention Center, County Road Department, Building Inspection Department, County Coroner’s Office, Recreation Department and Veterans Services Office.

**1.3 General System Requirements**

The County is soliciting bids for an IP based phone and voicemail system that meets or exceeds the specifications listed below:

Call Control System:

* Redundant Call Control
* High Quality Voice with Minimal Latency
* Configure to Support at Least 150 Users and Scalable Beyond 150 Users
* SIP Compatible
* PC – Web Based Management Interface
* Detailed Call Logging and Reporting
* Music on Hold
* Telephones Capable of Providing 1000MB/s Pass Through

Voice Mail Servers:

* Voice Mail
* Configured to Support at Least 150 Users and Scalable Beyond 150 Users
* SIP Compatible
* Web Based Management Interface

Deployment and Training Services:

* Provide Programming Services for the Call Control and Voice Mail Messaging Server
* Provide Phone Programming
* Provide Technical Support Staff Training
* Provide End-user Training

**1.4 System Features**

Please indicate whether the proponents system includes the following features with an explanation if necessary. Proponents can add additional features available with proposed solution.

* Call Control
* Call Menus
* Call Hold
* Call Parking
* Call Forwarding Busy/No Answer
* Call Routing
* Conference Calling (Max number of users in Conference Call/Max concurrent CCs)
* Auto Attendant
* Hunt Groups
* User Directory (Integrated with Active Directory)
* Integrated Voice Response
* Automated Phone Installation Configuration
* Automatic Phone Moves (Follow Me)
* Direct Inward Dialing
* Performance Monitor Interface
* Toll and Nuisance Number Restriction
* Tone or Music on Hold
* Visual Message Displays
* Web Administration
* Group Paging through Phones
* Call Logging w/ Export Abilities
* Call Accounting
* Roaming User Support (Log Into Phone)
* Enhanced 911
* Caller ID
* Multiple Line Appearance on Phones
* Message Waiting Light
* Messages on Hold
* Distributed or Centralized System
* How is QoS managed
* Soft Phone Availability
* Full Duplex Speaker Phones
* Backlit Displays

Voicemail:

* Unified Messaging
* Email Integration
* Voicemail Hardware Platform
* Distributed or Centralized System
* Voicemail Storage Limit
* Voicemail Simultaneous Access Limit
* Maximum Users Supported

System Maintenance and Upgrades

* Management Platform (PC, Browser, etc.)
* Cost of Adding Users Beyond the Capacity of the System Bid
* Event Logging
* Email Notification
* Security
* How is Documentation and Support Provided
* Scalability
* Built in Monitoring and Troubleshooting
* Self-administration w/ Nominal Training
* Single Management Interface for PBX, VM, E911, Phones and Users
* Single Management Interface to Manage All Sites

**1.5 Facilities Inspection**

As an option, Proponents may schedule a visit to each proposed site at their expense prior to the submission of its proposal and take the time to ascertain site conditions and surrounding features for the performance of the work. Proponents shall report to the County any condition which might prevent them from executing the work in the manner intended.

**1.6 Scope of Work**

The proponent will provide all costs for the installation and setup of a turn-key VoIP phone system meeting the minimum specifications provided in this RFP including any equipment, connection cables, cross connect wire, grounding wire, power connection cables, lightning protection, and any other hardware, software, adapters, and other materials or labor not specified, but required for a complete working system. The proponent will not interrupt the current phone system operation until the approved cutover date.

**1.7 Network Assessment**

The County understands and expects the proponent to conduct a full network assessment to determine the viability of integrating and installing the new VoIP system into the existing data network. The needs and expectations of a converged network place different requirements on the network in terms of QoS, packet prioritization, cable quality, termination specifications, etc.

**1.8 Project Management**

The Proponent is expected to provide a project manager for this installation that will be the primary contact for the duration of the project. This project manager will be assigned to the County throughout the life of the project. The proponent is required to present a proposed schedule that includes projected completion dated for various phases of the project. The implementation will be coordinated with County schedules in order to minimize any impact to the normal operations of the County. Any changes to the project timeline must be approved by the County’s designated representative.

On the first day after cutover, the Project Manager will ensure a technician(s) will be on-site to ensure a smooth transition and optimum user acceptance.

**1.9 Training**

The proposal must include a plan that outlines how system users will be trained on the proposed system. Training must be conducted prior to system cutover. Training will include sufficient information and experience to familiarize users with system software and handset features, functions, and basic operation.

Similar training must be provided for System Administrators of the proposed system, enabling them to administer, maintain, and troubleshoot the system after cutover. Administrative training shall include moves/adds/changes, voicemail administration, call handling management, conference calling set-up/reservation, call forwarding, desktop forwarding (each phone type), and auto attendant/attendant console features and training. Each administrator who is trained shall be able to provide simple system administration, such as moves, adds, and changes, without incurring additional charges from the vendor.

All system administration and end user documentation must be provided. Documentation may be in hard copy form, but electronic documentation is preferred.

Staff will not be required to travel for any training, so only on site, in person (at a County facility) or web based (video conference) training will be considered.

In developing this training plan, in no case will ad-hoc or demonstration-only training be considered adequate to fulfill the training requirement for any operational level position.

1. **Submittal Procedure**

**2.1 Proposals**

Proponents must submit one (1) printed original, signed in ink, and sealed. Proponents may elect to either personally deliver, or mail, their proposals to:

***Hand, FedEx, UPS Delivery***
Lowndes County Chancery Clerks Office
Attn: VoIP RFP
505 2nd Avenue North
Columbus, MS 39701

***U.S. Postal Service Delivery***
Lowndes County Chancery Clerks Office
Attn: VoIP RFP
P.O. Box 684
Columbus, MS 39703

**2.2 Proposal Format**

All proposals should be electronically generated and the printed original signed in ink. Proposals need not be submitted in elaborate or expensive binders. Legibility, clarity and completeness are important and essential. Electronic bids can be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814

The deadline for the submittal of proposals is no later than Friday, November 30, 2018 at 10:30 AM.

Proponents may submit their proposals at any time prior to the above stated deadline. Failure to submit the required number of copies by this deadline may be subject for disqualification from the RFP process.

**2.3 Addenda and Modifications**

Requests for additional information and questions may be addressed to Al Quinn via email at aquinn@lowndescountyms.com with subject title "VoIP RFP Request" no later than Monday, November 26, 2018 at 4:00 PM local time.

Any changes to the RFP or the RFP process shall be posted to the website as addenda.

**2.4 Estimated Timeline**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event | Date |
| Issue RFP | November 8, 2018 |
| Optional Building Walk Through | Arranged with Staff |
| Deadline for Submittal of Proposals | November 30, 2018 |
| Approval of Contract | December 17, 2018 |
| Installation | TBD |

**2.5 Information for Bidders**

Bidder must submit:

Title Page. The title page includes the heading: "VoIP RFP", full legal name of business entity, mailing information and telephone information for headquarters and local office; contact information including phone, cell, fax and email address.

Pricing Structure Sheet. Pricing Sheet must show detailed breakdown for every item.

References (minimum of two, along with contact information to allow follow-up with references).

May include alternative suggestions.

**2.6 Evaluation Procedures**

A contract shall be awarded to the most responsible and responsive Vendor based upon, but not limited to, the following criteria:

The quality of the system(s) proposed, conformity with technical specifications, ease of operation, and ease of administration.

The ability, capacity and skill of the Vendor to provide the goods and services required, including the character, integrity, reputation, judgment, experience and efficiency of the Vendor.

The ability for the Vendor to provide a minimum of a 4 hour onsite response time in the event of a system malfunction.

The ability for the Vendor to pass a background check for any work.

The capital (purchase) cost and life cycle costs for all products and services considered or proposed.

Training, maintenance and ongoing servicing issues.

Additional system functions or capabilities beyond the specified requirements but pertinent to the County’s use of the system.

Such other information as may be secured and have bearing on the decision to award the contract.

**3.0 Miscellaneous**

Proponents must accept Net 45 payment terms. Proponents may also provide installment options for payment.

Please specify any minimum purchase, term or volume discounts, package pricing or exclusivity that may pertain to your offer.

Bids must be quantified on the Pricing Structure Sheet and must be good for 180 days after submission date.

Alternative and/or additional required products must be completely and thoroughly described, including associated costs.

The Lowndes County Board of Supervisors is tax exempt.

Bidders must provide details on their technical support commitment, including hours of operation and technical capabilities.

All bids must include all shipping/handling/postage charges and fees.

Bidders must provide a delivery schedule.

Bidders must show unit prices.

The Lowndes County Board of Supervisors reserves the right to cancel this RFP or to reject any or all proposals received prior to contract award.

The Lowndes County Board of Supervisors reserves the right to waive any provisions contained in this RFP.

The Lowndes County Board of Supervisors reserves the right to request clarification of any proposal after all proposals have been received.