

Idaho Public Purchasing Association

Newsletter



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Public Purchasing: Where To Begin

By Keith Watts

Where to begin, that was the subject I was tasked with a little over a year ago when I signed on as the City of Meridian's first Purchasing Agent. I had been in public purchasing for over fourteen years and had never been tasked with some of the issues that would need to be addressed when starting a purchasing department from scratch, which is exactly where I was.

My first task was to read the State Statutes and familiarize myself with the nuances of Idaho policy and law. I then turned to the existing City Purchasing Policy. The City purchasing policy, which was written by past and present public works directors, was designed as a decentralized system and did not reflect the current economic conditions. The City was looking to me to centralize the purchasing responsibilities and manage all contracts.

I am a current member of IPPA, NIGP & ISM and I use them regularly as resources. The networking that is available through these purchasing organizations is priceless. I also served several years on the Board of Directors for the California Public Purchasing Association and have many colleagues from that experience to bounce ideas off as well.

If any of you have been in the situation of starting from scratch or simply decentralizing, you know it can be a tricky one. In essence you are taking control away from departments that did not ask for it. Being the new guy with the City, I had to approach this with caution and team work. First I met with each department and informed them of the task I was given, the reasons behind the decision to centralize and asked for feedback. I then created a Purchasing Users Group for continuing dialog. I updated the Purchasing Policy to reflect the new centralized direction and the current public works requirements.

With this approach, I was amazed at the positive responses I received. There was opposition of course, and there still are several challenges as not everyone likes the idea of centralization. After the first few meetings and continued trial and error, we have established a centralized bidding procedure. I created new bid documents, contracts, purchase orders, form letters, sole source and inventory transfer forms which have been placed on the Purchasing intranet site. I implemented the purchase order module of the City's existing financial software, which proved to be a larger hurdle than I had imagined. But once again, with trial and error we managed to work it out. The City's IT Department massaged their help desk software to accommodate a requisitioning tracking process that has saved me countless hours tracking down quotes, requisitions and approvals from requisitioners.

Recently I met with the department heads and set authorization limits within each department. At sixteen months new, the Purchasing Department is a smoothly functioning centralized department. There is still much to do, with continued communication and training of the City's personnel, and presenting the updated purchasing policy & procedures to City Council. It has been very challenging and rewarding starting from scratch and I look forward to the future growth and development of the department and City.

Upcoming IPPA Board Nominations

It's that time of year when the holidays start to pick up their frantic pace, leaves are falling from the trees and the Idaho Public Purchasing Association Board nominations are due. There are three positions up for elections this year: President — Treasurer — Director At Large (all are 2 year terms)

Elections are by majority vote of the regular members and retired members in good standing. The elected board members will start their term as of January 1st following the December election.

Please submit nominations to

ippa@nigp-idaho.org



MISSION STATEMENT

Promote professionalism in public procurement by providing a forum for shared resources education and networking for all members and stakeholders.





NIGP FORUM IN HARTFORD

By Diane Morrison

The 62nd Annual National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc. (NIGP) Forum and Vendor Exposition was held in Hartford Connecticut in August 2007. All in Public Procurement owe it to themselves and to their agencies to try to take advantage of the opportunities offered by NIGP. The NIGP Annual Forum and Products Exposition, the largest national conference exclusively for individuals in Public Purchasing, is a once-a-year event that was developed to provide educational opportunities to Public Procurement personnel. It is a great way to re-motivate yourself and remind yourself why you love this profession. The intent of the Forum is to engage in professional development by attending educational workshops and general sessions, and to gain new ideas, tips, and techniques by networking with purchasing peers from across the United States and Canada. The Products Expo is the ideal place to meet with vendors and discover new products and services available to governmental and educational entities. This year there were 3 attendees representing Idaho: beside myself, Diane Morrison from City of Boise, Bob Perkins from DEQ and Tina Klamt from ITD were there and who have been to several conferences and who continue to recognize the benefits of NIGP. Frank Pierce, formerly with the State of Idaho, was also there from Hawaii. It was great to spend some time with Frank; by the end of the conference I think he invited all of us out for a visit.

As always, the best reason to go to NIGP Annual Forum is to attend the fantastic seminars and networking sessions. There is no better way for procurement professional to be exposed to so many topics at one time and for one price. Locally we cannot offer the wide variety of topics and presenters offered at the national level. I hope more of you can attend in the future. Next year the conference is scheduled for July 26-30 in Charlotte, NC.

My favorite workshop was on e-Procurement systems it was great to hear what the different agencies were using and what they liked and didn't like about the systems. Since the City of Boise is not using electronic bidding yet it was nice to hear what is going on from other professionals. A topic that was hot at the conference was emergency preparedness, as you can imagine after all the storms/hurricanes this past year.

In the evening it was great to get together with other professionals that I have met over the years at the different conferences and catch up on what everyone had been doing. All in all, the Forum was a wonderful educational experience with plenty of opportunities for networking and a little sightseeing. I even stayed a few extra days with a couple of Ohio purchasing friends and went to New York City for a day and then went to a little coastal town called Mystic, CT. It was the location for the popular 1988 film in which Julia Roberts got her start. The movie was called Mystic Pizza. We even went and had some pizza at "Mystic Pizza".



Bob, Frank , Diane and Friends
NIGP Forum

Spot Light on IPPA Board Members-This Month: Robert Perkins, IPPA Vice President

Bob Perkins is the current IPPA Vice-President and is a charter member of IPPA. Bob is employed by the Department of Environmental Quality as a Sr. Buyer where he oversees all purchases in excess of \$1,500. He has been with the Department since 1995. In 1994 Bob graduated from Boise State University with a B.A. in Political Science emphasis in Law and Philosophy.

Bob has been a National Member of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing since 2002.

Bob has two certifications from the Universal Public Purchasing Certification Council (UPPCC)

Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB)
April 19, 2002

Certified Public Purchasing Officer (CPPO)
October 18, 2004

Outside of work Bob enjoys spending time with his wife Leslie, and their children Kaylee and Cash. They like to camp, hike, hunt and fish. When they are not spending time outdoors they like to attend BSU Football and Basketball Games.

Bob was a member of the Idaho delegation to the 2007 NIGP Forum in Hartford, CT.



IPPA Dues

Thank you for supporting the Idaho Public Purchasing Association by your membership. We encourage you to renew your membership for another year.



Due deadline for IPPA dues was October 31st

You should have received our invoice in October for renewing your membership. Dues were due by October 31st. If you did not receive or need another invoice copy, please contact Diane Morrison at dmorrison@cityofboise.org. Please remember to send in the appli-

cation form with your renewal so your membership information can be updated.

You will have prorated amount of \$2.50 for each month in addition to or taken from your \$30.00 total due.





Idaho Public Purchasing Association

E-mail: ippa@nigp-idaho.org

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Links

NIGP www.nigp.org

The National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc. (NIGP) is a national, membership-based non-profit organization providing support to professionals in the public sector purchasing profession. NIGP provides its members with many services, including education, professional networking, research, and technical assistance. Organized in 1944, NIGP is an international not-for-profit educational and technical organization of public purchasing agencies. The Institute is composed of 73 affiliate chapters and more than 2,300 agency members representing federal, state, provincial and local government levels throughout the United States

Additional Resources

NIGP (National Institute of Governmental Purchasing)

NAPM—Idaho Southwest (Local affiliate of the Institute of Supply Management)

ISM (Institute of Supply Management [formerly NAPM])

NAEB (National Association of Educational Buyers)

NCMA (National Contract Management Association)

NASPO (National Association of State Procurement Officials)

WSCA (Western States Contracting Alliance)

Oregon Chapter of NIGP (Oregon Public Purchasing Association)

The RFP Report (A free newsletter from Michael Asner regarding Request for Proposals)

Calendar of Events

IPPA Luncheon Meeting

Wednesday December 12, 2007 12:30 P.M.

Place: To Be Determined

Bring your significant other!

**See Proposed NIGP Training available
through the State of Idaho Division of
Purchasing**

<http://www.adm.idaho.gov/purchasing/training.htm>