

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (*Qualifications II B*)

The principals of Neher & Associates are focused on Executive Search and Human Resources Consulting. We have conducted over 255 assignments. Our success can also be measured in the sizeable number of multiple search assignments that we have completed for many Clients.

We have worked in partnership with literally hundreds of clients to help them find their key Managers and Executive Officers. We have placed numerous Executives in governmental, not-for-profit and public sector organizations including States, Counties, Cities, Utilities, Transportation, Association, Foundation, Healthcare, Education and many other industries. We have also worked for a number of private sector companies.

We have read the RFP in detail and understand its objectives. We will comply with all items as listed under the "Scope of Services" and "Proposal Requirements" as noted in the RFP. We have also gone to the Marina Coast Water District website and other sources for additional information.

The principal/project manager assigned to the search has over 20 years experience in executive search. Other parts of this proposal cover details regarding process, additional experiences, etc.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (*Qualifications II B*)

Profile of Neher & Associates

- Neher & Associates is a national firm. We operate as a California Limited Liability Company (LLC) Corporation. Our FEIN is 06-1804574. We were established under the current name in January, 2007. We primarily serve government and nonprofit organizations and recruit experienced leaders and managers into positions that improve the capabilities of those institutions. Our principal consultants have over 45 years of combined executive search and consulting experience and many more years in direct service and management.
- We have offices in California and a satellite office in Florida. We also have support staff in Illinois, and Kansas/Missouri. We provide services on a national level. Services for a contract with MCWD will be provided primarily from our California Office.
- The address for our main corporate office is: 3790 Millerton Place, Suite 100, West Sacramento, CA 95691. The phone number for our California office is (916) 443-2421, and the fax is (916) 443-5949. Cellular number is (310) 809-0618. Our website is: www.executivesearchneher.com and e-mail should be addressed to: robertneher@executivesearchneher.com
- Correspondence should be directed to Robert Neher, President of Neher & Associates at the address, phone numbers, e-mail etc. as noted above.
- No other firm other than Neher & Associates is currently intended to be party to this proposal or fulfillment of the contract when approved, and there is no current or pending litigation.

ORGANIZATION (*Qualifications II B and Consulting Staff II D*)

- Current Neher & Associates staff is seven. A partial listing of staff for assignment to assist the MCWD is included under "Project Team." Seventy five percent (75%) of our Principals are minority and over eighty five (85%) of the total staff are women or minority.
- No other firm other than Neher & Associates is currently intended to be party to this proposal or fulfillment of the contract when approved.
- Organizational Chart:

President

Executive Vice President

**Vice President and CEO
Value Training Group**

**Vice President and
General Counsel**

**Business Manager
and Senior Consultant**

Senior Consultants

Consultants

Research and Administrative Staff Support

FIRM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (*Qualifications IIB*)

Neher & Associates is well known for our strategic process, partnering methodology with our clients, thorough screening and background checking, ability to tailor our consulting and executive searches to the specific and unique needs of our clients, and to get results. We will work on a search until it is complete regardless of the time and effort required. **We also provide a one year replacement guarantee.**

- Although primarily known as a leading executive search firm, Neher & Associates also provides other general and specialty management consulting services, including management audits, organizational development, public safety, strategic planning, assessment centers, leadership development training, performance management, executive coaching, diversity training, and human resources management.
- We have completed about 255 executive searches throughout the United States of which about one hundred (100) searches have been in California for forty eight (48) different agencies and organizations including numerous organizations in northern California.
- We specialize in recruiting leadership for cities, counties, state, education, healthcare, regional authorities, utilities and nonprofit organizations. Our client list (see Appendices) attests to our

experience in assisting these organizations large and small to find the talent they need.

- Working with boards, councils, search committees, executives and human resource offices in such settings, we are accustomed to the complex internal dynamics, networking, and candidate screening and evaluation processes that routinely arise in recruitments of this nature, and to the high level of constituent, political, and media interest they sometimes engender.
- Neher & Associates consultants have built long-term relationships with our Clients. We have conducted multiple searches for many of these Clients.
- As previously noted, we have conducted about 255 successful executive search consulting engagements covering a broad range of positions including many positions in water utility and other public sector agencies. A copy of our Client List is attached as *Appendix B*.

City and County populations of our clients have varied from a few thousand to over 9.6 million. A sample of some of these clients in California includes: Contra Costa County, CA; City of Los Angeles, CA; County of Los Angeles, CA; City of Oakland, CA; City of San Diego, CA; City and County of San Francisco, CA; City of Richmond, CA; City of San Jose, CA; County of Alameda, CA; Monterey County, CA; Napa County, CA; Riverside County, CA; Sacramento County, CA; San Mateo County, CA; Solano County, CA; Stanislaus County, CA; and Ventura County, CA. We have also conducted searches for state governments such as Illinois, Washington State, Oregon, and Oklahoma.

We have also worked with clients in California such as AC Transit, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART); El Dorado County Emergency Services Authority – JPA; Port of Oakland; Qualcomm; University of California System and UCLA, UCSF, and the University of California, San Diego and more.

Some of our clients involving water utility, utilities and related clients have included: Contra Costa County, CA (Director of Environmental Health); City of Los Angeles, CA (Director of Telecommunications, Department of Water and Power); East Bay Municipal Utility District (General Manager, Chief Engineer, Assistant Chief Engineer-Planning, Manager of Employment); Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Assistant Director of Information Services, Manager of User Services); Marin Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District, CA (District Manager), Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, CA (General Manager); San Diego Gas & Electric Company, CA (Financial Analyst/Planner); City of San Antonio Water System, TX (Vice President, Human Resources); City of Richmond, VA (Director of Public Utilities, Deputy Director of Public Utilities/Operations). We have also completed numerous public works and engineering searches that included significant responsibility for utilities, water services etc , and have recently completed a search for the Director of Ethics and Corporate Governance, and are completing a second search for the Assistant Operating Officer – Water Supply for the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD)

- We have worked on long-term contracts with a number of Clients. We have also been

fortunate to conduct multiple searches for many of our Clients over the years that attests to the quality of the searches and satisfaction of those Clients with our work on their behalf.

- Please see the attached client list for a detailed listing of some of these and other searches. Our search process and methodology used with our searches is also addressed in detail in this proposal. References for some of these searches are attached and include a listing of the lead consultant on the search (es).
- The management and supervision of any and all staff providing services to the MCWD will be provided by Robert Neher (President), and Lawrence Davenport (Executive Vice President) of Neher & Associates.

WORK PLAN/TECHNICAL APPROACH/PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Work Plan – (*Scope of Services IIC*)

As the successful contractor, we will provide you with the quality services and expertise our clients have come to expect. Nearly half of the candidates hired as a result of our searches have been women or people of color. And we warranty our work: if the person you hire does not work out within a year, we will reopen the search and replace the person for no additional professional fee.

Our Search Services Feature:

- Designing a customized recruitment strategy to match your history and leadership patterns, current issues and future challenges;
- A calendar that starts immediately upon authorization to proceed, includes regular progress reports, and usually concludes within 90 to 120 days. We can expedite the search if desired, and will work with the Board of Directors' meeting schedules as needed;
- An extensive, narrative-written job profile including your organization's history and leadership patterns, current issues, and future challenges of the job;
- A recruitment process and approach that includes advertising, but also relies more upon aggressive networking than passive advertising;
- A large pool of applicants who meet the minimum qualifications and a targeted, diverse pool of qualified, proven candidates for interview;
- Comprehensive reference and background checking;
- Ongoing quality review of project deliverables, time and service benchmarks, weekly status reports, candidate reports, and coordination/communication between Neher & Associates and the MCWD Board and Selection Committee;
- Personal guidance and assistance to the MCWD Board, Selection Committee, Human Resources, Departmental representatives, and other staff that facilitates interviews, candidate travel, evaluation of candidates, decision-making, relocation, negotiations, and employment agreement assistance with the candidate selected.

Task Summary – General Approach:

We have a straightforward, structured search process. We adapt it to your requirements, and then ask

you to join us as partners in its implementation. We will work closely with the MCWD Selection Committee, management and staff to establish agreed upon strategy, tools, critical path items and decision points of note in the search process.

Please see "Project Team and Resumes" for our firm's work team assignments. At each stage, we provide written materials, training, and explanations as needed. Although we follow a clear strategic work plan and closely monitor agreed upon tasks and goals, we also believe that, in the long term, results are most important.

The following Tasks and Outcomes address the general approach and services provided:

- **Scope of Services.**

The scope of services will consist of recruitment/market strategy, recruitment including advertisements, mailings, networking, cold calling and development of a position profile/brochure; candidate contacts/evaluation, screening, including review and the development of a written Progress and Final Report of leading candidates and finalists; performing reference and background checks; regular verbal and written status reports; assisting in the interview process, candidate negotiation, and holding periodic meetings with the Board, the Selection Committee and appropriate designated MCWD staff.

- **Key Meetings.**

We will also meet with the MCWD Board, Selection Committee, designated staff, community/public representatives, and other key stakeholders at the beginning of the contract to identify major issues the future hires will face; determine the critical qualifications for the position(s) as identified by you; establish specific timelines; and collect information to develop the search criteria and develop a search profile. We would also anticipate at least two later meetings to discuss/review the written Progress Report (Leading Candidates), and participate in final interviews (Final Report).

- **Initial Candidate Screening.**

We sort candidates based on the criteria established, profile, comments from peers and colleagues, training & education, resume/bio review, communication ability and experience, accomplishments, references, background checks, telephone and personal meetings, review of appropriate writing and work samples, the degree of their expressed interest/commitment to consider the specific position, and many other methodologies. The written Progress Report and Progress Meeting that is provided to you is also key to assuring that we are on track and to narrow the field from leading candidates to finalists for interview, and reduce (with your input) to a list of screened finalists.

- **Interview Process.**

In addition to our telephone interview/screening/assessment of candidates, and face-to-face or video conferences with potential finalists, we will assist with the interview process as well as provide negotiation support.

- **Recruitment Brochure.**

Qualifications and criteria for the position will be developed from review of existing job descriptions, review of budget, strategic planning, other relevant MCWD documents, chamber of commerce, news media and many other sources, as well as discussions with the Selection Committee, Human Resources, key Department Heads, and others as designated by the MCWD. We will also conduct a compensation study/review for the General Manager position that is relevant to the local/regional area.

- **Advertising.**

Appropriate advertising will be used. This includes hard-copy publications and electronic media and other organizations and publications specific to the type of position including to the job type as well as our web-site, local media, etc. Please note, however, that in our experience, the best candidates often come from networking rather than advertisement. We therefore focus a great deal of time on the networking and personal contacts.

- **Candidate Screening.**

Together with the designated staff/contacts, we will reduce the pool of candidates to a list of no more than 15 semi-finalists and from there to approximately five or six (5-6) screened candidates for interview. Summary information will be provided on the leading candidates to include – background, achievements & strengths, etc. We also conduct initial reference and media checks on the top candidates invited for interviews. A complete background and reference check will be conducted on the final candidate.

- **Reference & Background Screening.**

Applicant information is verified via discussion with the applicant, peers, colleagues, subordinates, bosses, news media, review of reports & documents, writing samples, background screening and references, education & employment verification, telephone, video conference and/or face-to-face meetings/interviews, and other means including occasional psychological testing and assessment centers. DMV, Criminal, Credit and other background checks are also completed.

- **Selection Process.**

Selection is made using all of the above plus an interview(s) between the candidate(s) and you. We also involve the candidate's family and significant others in the process as appropriate. During the interview and screening process, we will consult and assist you with screening including rating and other tools.

- **Offer Negotiations.**

We work closely with the final candidate(s) and you to help negotiate an offer, acceptance, employment agreement/contract, starting date, etc. This often includes assistance drafting offer letters, compensation/benefit research, contract/agreement review, discussion with legal counsel when appropriate, and individual negotiation. We make it a point to be available to help both the final candidate and you to reach an amiable conclusion that ends with confidence and enthusiasm on both sides.

- **MCWD, Board, Selection Committee, Human Resources & Appointing Authority.**

As noted earlier in this proposal, we have worked with hundreds of public sector and quasi private sector clients including cities, counties, states, the federal government, and numerous utility, transportation, educational institutions and other public service organizations. As such we have also worked with the Boards, Councils, Advisory Boards, Stakeholder Groups, and Committees, Selection Committees, Public & Citizen's groups, State, Local and Federally legislated and mandated advisory boards, commissions, as well as elected local, state, and national representatives. The MCWD Board, Appointing Authority, Selection Committee and other Executives (and their delegates) are critical to the search process from assistance in providing initial information regarding goals and objectives of the MCWD, criteria relevant to the duties and responsibilities of the position being recruited including input and approval of the overall recruitment process and recruitment profile/challenge statement/ brochure, interview and selection of the final candidate, approval of the final employment agreement,

etc. Our role is to assist in the process and to consult with and help you to make a well informed decision. We believe the final choice is yours to make. We will help you make a well-informed choice by framing what we have together learned about the candidates in the context of the job and specific requirements. Our role is to help make that decision easier.

- **Search Closure/Sign-offs.**

At the end of the search, all applicants will be appropriately notified of the result in a professional manner that reflects well on the MCWD.

- **Quality Control/Assurance.**

All work done as part of any and all search or consulting work for MCWD will be subject to quality assurance, quality monitoring, quality improvement, task review/confirmation, and standards review as part of current Neher & Associates Policy and Operating standards. Overall supervision is provided by the President of the company with support from the Executive Vice President and Vice President/General Counsel as needed. We will establish benchmarks in conjunction with MCWD as required or appropriate.

POLICY REGARDING POSSIBLE OUTCOMES GUARANTEES (*Cost II H*)

Service Guarantee

We guarantee you that we will identify and recruit highly qualified candidates for MCWD General Manager position regardless of the time and effort required, and that we will complete the search to your satisfaction. We ask in return that you commit to respond to our inquiries and candidates in a timely manner, to pay our bills promptly, and to provide honest guidance to us in the course of the search on both criteria and candidates. If you hire a candidate whom we have found and recommended, and if within twelve months from the date of hire you choose to terminate that person for any reason except disability or the person leaves for any reason except death, disability, military, or a national emergency, we will reopen this search and replace the person for no additional professional fee. The only charge to you would be for direct expenses as outlined above. We offer this warranty provided that you request such a process within 30 calendar days of the hire's termination or resignation.

PROJECT TEAM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (*Consulting Staff II D*)

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND OF ASSIGNED PERSONNEL

Project Staffing

- Our team brings to this project a combination of background and skills vital to the requirements of the MCWD. As previously noted, the overall Project Manager will be Robert Neher, assisted by Lawrence Davenport, Rahn Sibley and others who will also lend support as needed and are listed with their Bios in *Appendix A - Project Team*. Robert Neher will be the primary on-site manager. His background and experience includes over 20 years of executive search experience on a national level.
- Our executive search staff are all professionals, each with extensive management background as key executives in public organizations. The recruiters to be assigned to this work have

significant personal experience recruiting a range of executive and administrative leadership for a broad range of clients. We assure that the individuals listed represent our current team assigned to search for the MCWD and that any additional future staff assigned will be submitted to you for prior approval. We are available to immediately assist with your current needs.

- Eighty Five (85) percent of current Neher & Associates staff are women and minorities , and seventy five (75) percent of our Principals are minorities as defined by current US ethnic and census criteria.
- The primary Neher & Associates contacts for MCWD will be Robert Neher, MA, FACHE, President; Lawrence Davenport, MA, EdD, Executive Vice President; Rahn Sibley Vice President and CEO Value Training Group; Raymond Massie, JD, Vice President and General Counsel; Art Chaudry, Senior Associate, BSE, MBA; and other staff and research associates as needed.
- All of the above mentioned staff may be involved in some phases and tasks of the search as previously outlined. On-sight representation will, however, primarily be the responsibility of Robert Neher and Rahn Sibley. Robert Neher and Neher & Associate Research Staff will be responsible for advertising. Research will be coordinated by Robert Neher with assistance from other company Principals and Research Staff. General Networking and Outreach will be coordinated by Robert Neher with support from Lawrence Davenport and Rahn Sibley. Specific Diversity Outreach will be coordinated by Rahn Sibley with support from Lawrence Davenport, Raymond Massie and perhaps Art Chaudry. Offer negotiations will rest mostly with Robert Neher, and contract development (if needed) for MCWD and the new hire with Robert Neher and Raymond Massie. An organizational chart was provided earlier in this proposal.
- We will spend whatever time is necessary to complete all tasks and objectives in the search plan. The main project Manager (Robert Neher) will be available by office and cell phone on a seven day per week, 24 hour per day basis. Other staff will be available during regular business hours during the day and by cell phone in the evenings if critical issues need to be discussed.

SCHEDULE –TIMETABLE (*Scope of Services II C*)

We generally hold the first meeting with you within 5 days or less of contract signing and search assignment. Typically, we will deliver a written Profile/Recruiting Brochure within approximately two and a half to three weeks of the start of a search, and in addition to regular weekly verbal/written reports, will also produce a written Progress Report that includes information on the leading candidates at about the 6th or 7th week. A written Report on finalists will be provided prior to candidate interviews at your offices. This would usually include written reference and other related checks such as education and licenses/certifications and is typically delivered approximately 3 weeks following feedback from you on the Progress Report. A detailed background check including criminal, department of motor vehicles, credit, etc. will be conducted on the finalist unless you choose to conduct your own. We would be happy to provide you with a copy of a typical schedule flow chart if this would be useful.

This time table may also vary depending on your need to move the search more quickly. *With close coordination with the MCWD Board/Selection Committee we could focus on a 60 to 75 day*

recruitment process. We will develop an approved time schedule and important milestone markers with you at the start of the search.

CLIENT REFERENCES (*References IIE*)

References are attached in Appendix C. of this proposal.
Additional references are available upon request.

COST/PRICING INFORMATION (*Cost II H*)

Neher & Associates is a retained firm and as such we charge our clients on either a negotiated fixed fee or negotiated percentage of the base salary of the placement. We do not provide contingency recruiting services.

We are proposing the professional fee for the MCWD search as a flat fixed fee. Direct expenses are also charged, and are being estimated separately from the professional fee. **These expenses are capped with a not to exceed limit of \$4,500 for a national search focus (the amount would be less for a regional search).** Direct expenses include such items as advertising in professional journals and publications, research, data, fax, telephone communication costs, photocopying, printing, brochure development, printing, administrative support services, video conferencing and travel for our project team members to meet with you and interview candidates, etc. consistent with your standards and approval process. We would be happy to provide any additional details you may require. Expenses for multiple searches will also be lower.

We also do not, like some firms, believe that once the expenses cap is set that we have a right to bill out 100% of the figure set. We will invoice only for actual expenses and will provide documentation. **Unlike most firms, it is not uncommon for us to leave some expense savings on the table at the end of the search that can be returned to your budget. As an example we saved over 25% of original projected expenses for one recent client and over 30% for another.**

Please note that we generally check at least five (5) to eight (8) telephone references on finalists including immediate superiors, colleagues, staff reporting to the candidates, and significant others who can provide other specific information warranted or suggested. We also complete a thorough background check (education, certification/licenses, DMV, criminal, and media) on the finalist(s).

Given the current budget concerns facing most public organizations today and the budget and staff size of the MCWD, the professional fee for the General Manager search is proposed at a reduced rate of \$11,500. A significant reduction is also offered for additional searches initiated within one year or less of the first search conducted.

As an accommodation to the MCWD, the professional fee(s) may be payable in three installments with one third due at the beginning of the search, the second third in 30 days, and the final third when finalist selections are made.

We will bill you monthly at cost for direct expenses (as noted above) necessary to successfully complete the search. These costs will be advanced by Neher & Associates. We would appreciate reimbursement by the District upon the presentation of receipts and an itemized statement. Direct

expenses are capped as noted above.

As noted, reimbursement of candidates' interview expenses with you will be your responsibility, and we will arrange to have these expenses submitted to you for direct payment. We have, however, incorporated candidate expense in some contracts and would be willing to discuss this.

We will begin work when a signed Contract or Engagement Letter is returned to us. Unless there are special circumstances, we ask that if possible, payment would be due within 30 days or less of the statement date. Retainers paid to Neher & Associates are non-refundable.

We will at all times provide services that are ethical and responsible in support of the interests and goals of MCWD.

If, in the course of this search, we introduce you to a person whom you hire for another position within twelve months of the closing of this search, we will bill you another 50% of the retained fee or a pre-negotiated fee for the comparable recruitment or a predetermined agreed upon rate.

In the event it becomes impossible or unnecessary for Neher & Associates to complete a search, due to supervening circumstances beyond the control of either party or at your choosing, Neher & Associates would be discharged from this Agreement and the District will owe us nothing beyond the retainer installments accrued since the start of the contract and any as-yet-unreimbursed expenses incurred.

If you would like to discuss individual tasks, in general the services and tasks would divide as follows:

- 15% - Scope of Services and initial meetings
- 15% - Initial research and position profile/brochure
- 5% - Ad placement
- 25% - Candidate research, recruiting and networking
- 20% - Candidate screening and reporting
- 20% - Background checks, Final Report, Client Interviews and negotiations
- 0% - Follow-up with Client and Candidate after placement

SAMPLE PROFILES AND OTHER MATERIALS (*Sample Materials II F*)

Recruiting materials including announcements, ad copy/placements, networking and invitation letters, research listings and e-mail contact lists, position profile, recruitment brochure, supplemental candidate questionnaires, evaluation/screening sheets, resume summary materials(minis), evaluation/reference reports etc are usual in our searches and are developed to fit the specific client and position. We consider some of these materials to be proprietary but will be happy to share some of the formats etc. in advance if we are selected.

The recruitment brochure almost always includes: a description of the Organization and Community; an overview of the position with duties and responsibilities, Issues, Challenges and Opportunities,

Qualifications including education and experience, candidate expertise, management style and personal traits, Compensation, and the Application Process. The brochure also includes pictures of the Organization and Communities, the District Logo etc.

We also conduct media checks on candidates as well as education, license and certification checks on leading candidates/finalists, being invited for interview. As previously mentioned we also arrange for a full and complete background check on the finalist(s) and have specific forms for education, certifying and licensing bodies, candidate signed release forms/authorization forms etc.

In addition we provide weekly electronic/e-mail and written status reports on the search, a "Progress Report" with information on Leading Candidates, and a "Final Report" for use at the interview with Finalists that includes, resumes, summary materials, supplemental materials/information, interview questions, interview rating forms, interview process/legal information, etc.

Sample profiles of previously conducted searches are attached.

FINAL COMMENT AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We will work with the MCWD as partners in the search. The search process will be tailored to your specific needs. We do not treat all searches the same and we do not recycle candidates but rather search specific to your organization, community criteria and needs. We work heavily with networking and personal calls and see advertising as an adjunct.

We are also highly computerized and use electronic correspondence and recruiting mechanisms to a high degree. Although some mailings etc may be done, we have found that information given directly to potential candidates and networking contacts in their direct e-mail is more efficient and gets longer term positive results.