Purchasing and Procurement Policy

Brandywine Community Library
Policy Updated: 3/27/25

Purpose

The Board of Trustees of the Brandywine Community Library has established this purchasing policy to govern the purchase of goods and services for the Library. The Library will make purchases that provide the greatest economic advantage. First consideration will be given to vendors within the library district who offer competitive pricing and acceptable quality and service.

Purchasing Agent

The Library Director shall be the chief purchasing agent of the Library. The Library Director is responsible for the library- wide purchasing function and shall have the authority to delegate powers to staff for purchasing items when necessary. The Youth Service Coordinator has the authority to make purchases for youth programming and a portion of the summer reading budget. Any authorized persons are required to coordinate their purchasing with the Library Director.

Purchasing Guidelines

With the understanding that purchases for library materials are often available through statewide or national discount programs for libraries, the Board of Trustees establishes the following policy related to bids:

Library Materials

Books, magazines, A/V, and other such materials intended for patron use are generally purchased from vendors offering volume discounts or vendors offering a contract discount program. Materials available only from the publisher are generally purchased with little or no discount.

Capital and One-Time Purchases

The following schedule is related to capital or one-time purchases of non-library materials (i.e., equipment, furniture, etc.) where individual items are at the stated prices and for which there are sufficient budget appropriations.

All public work contracts in excess of $35,000 and all purchase contracts in excess of $10,000 shall be subject to competitive bidding. All purchases between $1,000 and $9,999.00 must have full board approval. All purchases between $301.00 and $999.00 must receive approval from the Executive Board (Board President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer). The Director is authorized to approve purchases that do not exceed $300.00.

Under normal circumstances, contracts shall be awarded based on board examination and approval, and will be awarded based on how they meet the needs of the library and their project.

For all materials and services not subject to competitive bidding, the library will solicit at least three competitive quotations for public works and purchase contracts. Such price quotes will be either written or verbal based on the following criteria:

1. Procedures for procurement of purchase contracts not subject to competitive bidding: Dollar Limit and procedure

- Under $300.00 - Discretion of authorized staff
- $301.00-$999.00 - Discretion of the Executive Board
- $1,000-$9,999.00 - Requires Full Board Approval
- $10,000 + Formal written quotes from at least three separate vendors (if available)

2. Procedures for procurement of public works contracts not subject to competitive bidding: Dollar Limit and procedure

- Under $2,500 - Discretion of authorized staff
- $2,500 – $9,999.00 - Documented verbal quotes from at least three separate vendors (if available)
- $10,000.00 + Formal written quotes from at least three separate vendors (if available)

The Library Director shall compare prices from as many responsible suppliers of the goods or services required as is practical, and shall purchase from that supplier where total costs are lowest, when quality and timeliness of delivery are comparable. Preference will be given to purchasing from local businesses when total cost, quality and timeliness of delivery are comparable.

The Director is authorized to establish charge accounts with businesses from which the Library will make purchases on a continuing basis. The Director may assign other employees responsibility for purchasing supplies needed for specific library programming.

The Director is authorized to establish and maintain a credit card for making library purchases when more traditional methods of payment are impossible or not timely or practical in the circumstances.

Major library vendors that are supplying computer hardware and software, books, audio-visual materials, and periodicals subscription vendors are exempt from the restrictions of this policy.

Under normal circumstances, contracts shall be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. Circumstances under which the contract may not be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder may include, but are not limited to: (1) vendor cannot guarantee delivery of goods or services

within the time frame or under the conditions established by the library; (2) vendor's terms of payment are disadvantageous to the library; (3) vendor cannot comply with the full specifications set forth in the bid; and (4) vendor's after purchase support services are deemed inadequate.

If the Library Director expects the purchase to exceed $20,000, he/she will prepare a Request for Proposal or follow the competitive bidding procedures below.

Advertisements for sealed bids or requests for proposals will be properly handled through the public media. Sealed bids, based on authorized specifications, or RFPs shall be received at a public bid opening and include all costs for labor and materials, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, and Certificate of Insurance as appropriate. Bids will then be tabulated and submitted to the Board along with a staff recommendation for action. Formal contracts with appropriate signatures for both Board and Contractor are required.

All purchases, contracts, and expenditures of library funds shall be awarded to bidder considering conformity with specifications, competitiveness of bid, terms of delivery, quality, and serviceability.

When Competitive Bidding is not required

a) Where the goods or services to be procured are economically procurable from only one source

b) Where the services required are for professional skills. Professional services such as an auditor, attorney, architect or engineer, which involve specialized expertise, use of professional judgment, and/or a high degree of creativity.

c) In emergencies involving public health, public safety, or where immediate expenditure is necessary

d) Contracts for the maintenance or servicing of equipment which are made with the manufacturers or authorized service agents of that equipment

e) Where the goods or services are procured from another governmental agency or through a library cooperative program in which prices have been previously determined by competitive bidding

f) Purchases and contracts for the use, purchase, or installation of proprietary software

g) Contracts which by their nature are not adapted to award by competitive bidding, contracts for utility services such as water, light, or heat.

Emergency Purchases

An emergency is defined as an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action. If a situation impinges on Library services or facilities and an emergency purchase contravening the policy statements above is deemed necessary, it must be

approved by the Library Director and/or his/her designee. Established procedures will be followed as much as is practicable under the circumstances. A written justification of the nature of the emergency and the selection of the particular vendor shall be submitted to the Library Board and shall become part of the record for the purchase.

The Procurement Policy shall be reviewed every two years by the Board of Trustees.