

Brothers, Sheila C

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Subject: FW: Dining RFP document link

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY PUBLIC RELATIONS

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FOR RELEASE

Request for Proposals for Dining Partner Outlined

LEXINGTON, Ky. (Sept. 12, 2013) — Underscoring strong commitments made to current employees and the community, the University of Kentucky Thursday released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to further consider whether a potential business partner for dining services should be engaged.

"The release of an RFP is the next step in what has been a methodical process — all focused on delivering the best dining service possible for our students, faculty, staff and the community," said Eric N. Monday, UK's executive vice president for finance and administration.

Specifically, the RFP -- which can be viewed at <http://www.uky.edu/Purchasing/bidlist.htm> -- requires potential business partners to:

- Outline what resources would be invested in current facilities and the construction of new facilities. Currently, UK's dining operation provides services for approximately 5,100 students living on campus. As a result of a public-private partnership with publicly traded EdR, UK is building up to 9,000 residence hall beds over the next several years, a significant expansion that will necessitate upgrades to dining services as well as increased options.
- Ensure employment for the 114 current full-time dining employees on the university payroll as of Feb. 1, 2013.
- Provide a commitment to sustainability as demonstrated by the potential business partner's previous record and annual commitments "relative to purchasing local products and to expansion of the direct farm impact of UK food dollars," according to the RFP.
- Provide information regarding corporate policies and an implementation plan for the Kentucky Proud program, and a "plan on how (the) company would exceed current spending and grow spending levels for locally produced food options.
- Ensure support and sponsorship for campus activities and that engagement will continue, including interaction with existing units such as the student-run Lemon Tree Restaurant, the Butcher Shop run by the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment as well as other campus academic departments such as Hospitality Management and Nutrition and Food Sciences.
- Provide a commitment to wellness and healthy foods as well as marketing and safety, among other factors.

A community forum is planned for 6-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 18, in William T. Young Library Auditorium. Similar forums about the future of dining services were held last semester as well.

An RFP evaluation committee — with representation from faculty, staff, the administration and the student body — will review RFP responses from potential business partners and create a short list for more formal presentations.

The committee will then recommend which, if any, potential business partners should be engaged for further negotiations. President Eli Capilouto, ultimately, will decide if the university should engage in contract negotiations with potential business partner(s) to provide dining services.

Those decisions, if necessary, are expected by semester's end. The dining services process began last year. A national consultant, Envision Strategies, was retained to complete a Dining Services Master Plan as part of a review of the limited and aging capacity of existing dining facilities on campus. A committee, composed of a broad cross-section of campus representatives, evaluated requests for information (RFI) proposals from UK's current dining services operation as well as from potential business partners.

A decision was made to take the next step of more formally evaluating RFP responses from potential business partners.

"Dining services provide an important segment of student life," said Roshan Palli, president of UK Student Government. "They can make a real impact on the college experience for thousands of students. For this reason, it is important that we consistently strive for improvement through innovation and conversation."

"The RFP released today further demonstrates that we are steadfast in the commitments we are making — no matter which route we ultimately take with dining services — to ensure that we have the best possible dining service for the University of Kentucky." Monday said. "The way to do that is to undertake a thoughtful and transparent process, where feedback and input are taken from our stakeholders and where an in-depth review is conducted, all designed to arrive at the best service available. That's the process that is underway. That is the commitment we have made as a students' first university."

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