

Range construction meeting attracts multiple contractors



County officials led a May 5 pre-construction meeting for the soon-to-be built Union County Gun Range. Photo by Mark Smith

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North Georgia News
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Eight contractors attended the Union County Gun Range pre-construction

meeting held in a conference room of the new Union County Sports Center on May 5.

The first round of proposals from the fall of 2021 resulted in only a single bid, which was significantly higher

than projected costs due largely to inflation and supply chain disruptions.

Cost estimates have since been recalculated and the county has also received

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approval for increased federal funding, so a new Request for Proposal was released on April 20 and the pre-proposal meeting was set.

The Request for Proposal, including project specifications and drawings, can be found at <http://www.unioncountygga.gov/government/commissioners-office/purchasing/>.

Union County SPLOST Manager Kevin Hamby led the May 5 meeting with assistance from Alan Wiczynski of Breedlove Land Planning, Inc., the engineering firm that designed the proposed Gun Range.

County Manager Larry Garrett and County Purchasing Director Pam Hawkins were there to answer questions and support Hamby and Wiczynski, and the meeting began with Hamby outlining the mechanics of the RFP.

"Generally speaking, this will not be a low-bid job," Hamby said. "This will be a cost proposal, and the award will be to the best, most responsive bidder."

Wiczynski gave a brief overview of the Gun Range project, stating that it will involve a 7.12-acre disturbance of U.S. Forest Service land and

he described the scope of the project and mentioned things not to include in the contractor bids.

Hamby added, with emphasis, that timber cut at the site is owned by the Department of Natural Resources and will have to be appraised and paid for before it can be removed. He also said that extra care must be taken when constructing the access road, as it crosses a trout stream buffer.

Four commercial construction general contractors were represented at the meeting: Carroll Daniel Construction of Atlanta; Charles Black Construction Company of Cleveland; Milestone Construction of Athens and Augusta; and Astra

Construction of Saudi Arabia.

Carroll Daniel, Charles Black and Milestone Construction are all based in Georgia. Short for Arab Supply and Trading Company, Astra is "100% Arab owned and managed," according to the company website.

Four specialty construction contractors also attended the meeting.

SERD Construction of Fayetteville specializes in commercial roof decks and engineered fill. SERD stands for Southeast Roof Decks.

Colwell Construction Company of Blairsville and Colditz Trucking of Blairsville specialize in grading and paving, while Ricky Rich Backhoe and Grading of Blairsville specializes in grading and concrete work.

The deadline for proposal

submissions is May 24 at 4 p.m. All questions concerning the RFP must be submitted in writing by May 12.

Concerning the timeframe for awarding the contract, Hamby said the award would be announced in the June 16 meeting of Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris and that the Notice to Proceed would be issued a couple of weeks after that.

"This is an extremely worthwhile project in my opinion," Union County Sheriff Mack Mason said, "because of the shape that this country has gotten into.

"It's gotten very dangerous in a lot of places. We see it every day. People, hopefully, will be able to take young kids up there, teach them to shoot. People will be able to target shoot, to learn skills with a firearm, how to protect themselves."