



**HOUSTON**  
HOUSING AUTHORITY

Transforming Lives & Communities

**RESOLUTION NO. 3614**

At the meeting of the Houston Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, on **May 16, 2023**, the following resolution was moved by **Andrea Cooksey** and seconded by **Stephanie Ballard**:

**Resolution:** That the Houston Housing Authority Board of Commissioners authorizes the President & CEO or designee to negotiate and execute a one-year contract not to exceed \$300,000 per year with an option to extend the contract two additional years in one-year increments, to Etched Communication and make necessary changes or corrections, pursuant to the memorandum dated April 27, 2023 from Jennifer Jensen, Communications & Social Media Coordinator to David A. Northern, Sr., President & CEO.

A true and accurate copy of the vote is listed below, and a true and correct copy of the Resolution that was approved is attached hereto.

Name	Aye	No	Abstain	Name	Aye	No	Abstain
L. Snowden, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	M. Miller*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. Kirkendoll, Vice Chair*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Cooksey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. Thomas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	S. Ballard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\* **Absent: K. Kirkendoll and M. Miller**

(SEAL)



DocuSigned by:

*David A. Northern, Sr.*

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David A. Northern, Sr., Secretary  
HHA Board of Commissioners



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**REQUEST FOR BOARD AGENDA ITEM**

**1. Brief Description of Proposed Item**

Consideration and/or action to authorize the President & CEO or designee to award and execute a contract with Etched Communication for Public Relations Services.

**2. Date of Board Meeting:** May 16, 2023

**3. Proposed Board Resolution:**

**Resolution:** That the Houston Housing Authority Board of Commissioners authorizes the President & CEO or designee to negotiate and execute a one-year contract not to exceed \$300,000 per year with an option to extend the contract two additional years in one-year increments, to Etched Communication and make necessary changes or corrections, pursuant to the memorandum dated April 27, 2023 from Jennifer Jensen, Communications & Social Media Coordinator to David A. Northern, Sr., President & CEO.

**4. Department Head Approval**

Signature  Date: 5/10/2023

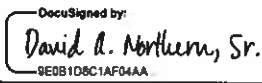
**5. Statement regarding availability of funds by VP of Fiscal Operations**

Funds Budgeted and Available  Yes  No Source \_\_\_\_\_

**VP of FO Approval**

Signature  Date: 5/10/2023

**6. Approval of President & CEO**

Signature  Date: 5/10/2023



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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** DAVID A. NORTHERN, SR., PRESIDENT & CEO  
**FROM:** JENNIFER JENSEN, COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR  
**SUBJECT:** CONSIDERATION AND/OR ACTION TO AUTHORIZE THE PRESIDENT & CEO OR DESIGNEE TO AWARD AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH ETCHED COMMUNICATION FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES.  
**DATE:** APRIL 27, 2023

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This memorandum recommends that the Houston Housing Authority Board of Commissioners authorizes the President & CEO or designee to award and execute a contract with Etched Communication for Public Relations Services.

**BACKGROUND:**

Etched Communication (Etched) is a full-service, award-winning MWBE-certified communication agency. The professional services provided by Etched to HHA include, but are not limited to, strategic public relations planning and management, media relations, and crisis communication.

The Houston Housing Authority has experienced a high volume of media requests and visibility due to heightened public interest in a number of agency initiatives that require public relations support to assist in media responses, crisis prevention strategy, and proactive agency messaging to fortify the reputation of the HHA. Due to the amount of PR services required to address the high volume of media inquiries and the need for public relations deliverables, the agency has reached the maximum funding amount in the past contract, thus justifying the increase in the new contract estimate.

To date Etched has assisted in developing comprehensive public relations strategy and deliverables, including but not limited to:

- Crisis planning and development
  - Developing strategic PR crisis prevention plans
  - Developing strategic media approaches and responses
  - Developing Houston Housing Authority message
- Media relations management
  - Facilitating media outreach
  - Writing and distributing press releases
  - Providing media training to agency spokespersons
  - Following up with reporters to provide additional information
  - Compiling and providing media updates

Etched has been a contracted partner of the HHA since 2016 and has an established knowledge of the agency's historic and present operations, which provides a valuable asset to represent the agency effectively and comprehensively. The Etched team has assisted HHA in developing, managing, and executing comprehensive external strategies, support tactics, and communication assets in response to

media investigations and inquiries regarding agency operations. Outputs of their counsel included support for our crisis response team, including expert assistance with crisis protocols for the main office and our properties, formal written and visual assets, and crisis management expertise. Vital assistance in written communication assets includes press releases, media interview talking points, and graphic design for high-profile reports. The visual assets the team created helps to effectively communicate urgent updates to government officials, community partners, local stakeholders, and media outlets. Support and guidance from Etched has been instrumental in helping HHA manage crisis situations and respond strategically to ensure the agency is represented in the best and most accurate manner.

#### **ADVERTISEMENT:**

In January 4, 2023, a legal notice advertising RFP 22-53 Agency-Wide Public Relations Services was posted in the Houston Chronicle and Forward Times Newspapers, and in the Houston Business Journal.

In addition to posting RFP 22-53 on its website, HHA's Procurement Department sent e-mails advertising this solicitation to potential firms on its bidder's List.

Interested parties were also able to access RFP 22-53 by going to the websites of the City of Houston Office of Business Opportunity ("OBO"); the Greater Houston Black Chamber of Commerce ("GHBC"); the Houston Minority Supplier Development Council ("HMSDC"); the Houston Chapter of the National Association of Minority Contractors ("NAMC"); and to the Houston Office of the United States Small Business Administration ("SBA").

#### **EVALUATION PROCESS**

The following HHA staff evaluated the five (5) responsive proposals received:

1. Jennifer Jensen – Communications & Social Media Coordinator
2. Cupid Alexander – Senior Vice President, Operations
3. Khadija Darr – Senior Vice President, Administration
4. Corey Franklin – Special Assistant to the President & Chief Executive Officer

Each proposal was reviewed against the following evaluation criteria:

Evaluation/Selection Criteria	Maximum Score
Experience and Qualifications	55
Fees	35
M/WBE Participation	5
Section 3 Participation	5
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>100</b>

After each scoresheet was submitted the totals were averaged as follows:

Rank	Firm/Company	M/WBE	Evaluation Rating
1	Etched Communications	M/WBE	89
2	Outreach		77
3	Elmore	WBE	71
4	Connective Agency	M/WBE	63
5	PR Firm	M/WBE	53

- References for Etched Communication have been checked and returned positive. There are no conflicts of interest, and they are not on the HUD Debarment List

The committee determined that the most responsive bidder recommended to receive a contract for consultant services is Etched Communications.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Accordingly, I recommend that the Board considers this resolution, which states:

**Resolution:** That the Houston Housing Authority Board of Commissioners authorizes the President & CEO or designee to negotiate and execute a one-year contract not to exceed \$300,000 per year with an option to extend the contract two additional years in one-year increments, to Etched Communication and make necessary changes or corrections, pursuant to the memorandum dated April 27, 2023 from Jennifer Jensen, Communications & Social Media Coordinator to David A. Northern, Sr., President & CEO.