



# NEWPORT BEACH

## City Council Staff Report

April 15, 2025  
Agenda Item No. 11

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Jeff Boyles, Fire Chief - 949-644-3101, jboyles@nbfd.net

**PREPARED BY:** Lili Banuelos, Assistant Management Analyst - 949-644-3360, lbanuelos@nbfd.net

**TITLE:** Approval of Professional Service Agreement with Bloc Films, LLC for Junior Lifeguard Video Production Services

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### **ABSTRACT:**

The Newport Beach Junior Lifeguard Program provides youth ages 9 to 15 with ocean-based safety and skill building, and receives upward of 1,500 participants annually. The Lifeguard Operations Division utilizes contracted video production services to produce professional-grade videos depicting the seven-week program for the benefit of its participants and their families. The existing video production services agreement expired following the completion of the 2024 Junior Lifeguard Program, and a new Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued. Bloc Films LLC (Bloc Films) was ranked as the highest rated proposer; staff is requesting award of a new professional services agreement with Bloc Films.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
- b) Approve a Professional Services Agreement with Bloc Films LLC with a two-year initial term, with three additional one-year extensions (for a total possible five-year term), for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$375,760, and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the agreement.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Newport Beach Junior Lifeguard Program is a seven-week, ocean-based program for youth ages 9 to 15 that centers on ocean skill building, physical fitness, and lifeguarding skills. The program is managed by the Lifeguard Operations Division of the Fire Department and is one of the City of Newport Beach's most popular youth-based educational programs. The City has historically contracted with a professional video production company to film the program as a benefit to the participants and their families as the videos highlight the progress of program participants as they undergo the various activities and events each week.

Following the expiration of the existing agreement at the conclusion of the 2024 season, Fire Department staff developed a new RFP solicitation for Junior Lifeguard video production services. RFP No. 25-17 was posted on the City’s online bidding platform (PlanetBids) on November 19, 2024. A total of 16 responses were received by the January 13, 2025 deadline. One proposal was considered non-responsive for missing the required documentation. The 15 remaining proposals were evaluated via a multi-step process using a combination of technical qualifications (80% of total score) and cost (20% of total score). A four-person evaluation panel consisting of Lifeguard Operations and Fire Administration staff reviewed each proposal, rating them on technical factors such as: qualifications and experience of the firm, the method of approach, and quality of production sample(s) submitted. Only those proposals earning a passing score of 70% or more were allowed to continue in the evaluation process. The remaining eight firms were then evaluated by the City’s Purchasing Division on submitted costs per episode and ranked on the combined total of their cost and evaluation scores.

Finally, the top three ranked firms were invited to a panel interview with Lifeguard Operations staff.

Rank	Proposer	Technical Score (3200 Max Points)	Cost Ratio Score (800 Max Points)	Aggregate Score (4000 Max Points)
1	Bloc Films LLC	2960	623.07	3583.07
2	Red 88 Media	2455	679.18	3134.18
3	Justin Phu Media	2130	800.00	2930.00

Based on this process, Bloc Films was ranked as the highest-qualified proposer. The company cited its extensive history and experience working with youth-focused programs and sports documentaries. Its experience filming in outdoor settings and recreational programs also demonstrated an ability to meet the quick turnaround times requested by City staff.

Therefore, staff is recommending the approval of a professional services agreement with Bloc Films LLC to provide video production services for the Fire Department’s Junior Lifeguard program. The agreement will be for a two-year initial term, with an option to extend for three additional one-year terms.

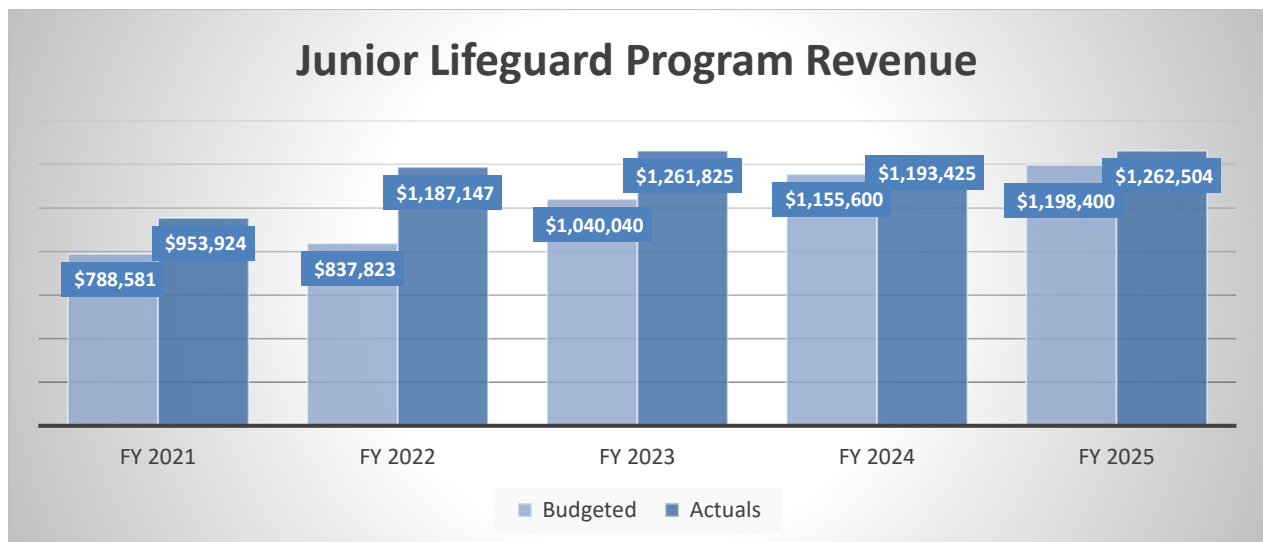
**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The submitted per episode cost of \$10,336 by Bloc Films reflects the total cost of professionally filming (including underwater footage and aerial/drone footage), editing and producing an episode, with each episode averaging seven to 10 minutes. The annual cost for all seven episodes would be \$72,352. Additionally, at the request of the City, the City could opt for to pay the \$400 fee necessary to secure official licensed music (instead of using royalty free options) for each episode.

In comparison, the prior agreement was executed in 2019 with a not-to-exceed amount of \$235,954. The agreement required a total of only six episodes, averaging seven to 10 minutes each, and came at an annual cost of \$45,519, or approximately \$7,587 per episode.

The pricing for Bloc films is reflective of rising costs in various industries in the post-pandemic era and is in-line with most current production rates in the professional film industry. Bloc Films agrees to hold the per episode rate for the duration of the agreement and any renewal terms.

Program enrollment has seen an approximate 12% increase compared to average program enrollment prior to 2020. This rise in demand reflects the continued growth in popularity and the community's recognition of the importance of the quality, ocean safety education provided by the program. In turn, actual revenues have exceeded revenue estimates each year since FY 2020-21; FY 2025-26 revenues are estimated to be \$1,239,000.



The Junior Lifeguard program takes place over the summer and crosses two different fiscal years. Expenses in year one of this agreement, which are for program year 2025, will be expensed to the Fiscal Year 2025-26 budget. Additional funding of \$25,412 is requested for the Fire Department's FY 2025-26 budget. If approved, the Junior Lifeguard Professional Services Account, 01040405-811008, will be increased from \$49,740 to \$75,152 as part of the annual budget process for FY 2025-26.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

Staff recommends the City Council find this action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

**NOTICING:**

The agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Council considers the item).

**ATTACHMENT:**

Attachment A – Agreement