



## City of Racine, Wisconsin

### AGENDA BRIEFING MEMORADUM

**AGENDA DATE:** May 10, 2021 – Finance and Personnel Committee  
May 18, 2021 – Common Council

**ITEM** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT:** Communication sponsored by Mayor Mason requesting to waive formal bidding and enter into an agreement with Kane Communications to assist the City with outreach and communications directly related to increasing vaccination rates in the City of Racine.

**PREPARED BY:** Shannon Powell, Chief of Staff  
**REVIEWED BY:** Kathleen Fischer, Finance Director  
**APPROVED BY:** Paul Vornholt, City Administrator

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Under consideration is a proposal to sole source a communications contract with Kane Communications Group to enhance our community outreach and communications efforts to inform our residents about the reasons they should get vaccinated from COVID-19, clear up misconceptions about the vaccines, and sign residents up for vaccination appointments. Kane will be tasked with amplifying other efforts the City is already undertaking to increase vaccinations rates through a variety of media platforms including social media, digital video, cable TV, streaming services, radio, bill boards, and direct mail.

#### **PROJECT BACKGROUND:**

The City of Racine has contracted with Kane Communications Group at least two other times in recent years. The first project being towards the onset of COVID-19, in which we created the Safer Racine Campaign. That campaign won the Platinum Award from the International Competition for Marketing and Communications Professional in the category of Strategic Communications – Crisis Response.

Kane was also contracted to support the November 2020 elections, through the City Clerk's Office. Kane had the goals of helping to increase voter turnout over the 2020 election, increasing the number of absentee ballots returned without mistakes, and support the training of more than 200 poll workers to run a successful election – most of whom were first time poll workers. On all accounts, they were very successful.

As part of our work to increase vaccination rates to at least 75% of eligible residents who are completely vaccinated (currently at about 33%), the City was awarded a grant for \$100,000 from DHS to deploy strategies targeted at vaccine hesitant individuals and communities of color, as large disparities do exist in numbers of vaccinated individuals by race and ethnicity. In this work, the City has partnered with several organizations including Higher Expectations of Racine County and the Racine/Kenosha Black Nurses Association to do direct and targeted community outreach to talk to our residents about the need to get vaccinated and ultimately sign them up for appointments to get vaccinated. This DHS grant also funds 25 part-time "Vaccine Champions" who will be the trusted voices and faces in the community encouraging residents to get vaccinated and find opportunities for the Black Nurses Association to interact with residents and ultimately get more residents vaccinated. This effort, however, based on the grant amount, does not include enough funds for a broad, supportive, communications campaign.

Under this agenda item, Kane Communications would develop and execute a supportive communications plan. The goal is to use the same, Safer Racine themes, which was previously developed by Kane Communications as part the DHS grant and the new communications plan. Additionally Kane plans to use the voices and images of our Vaccine Champions to encourage, educate, and increase the percentage of residents who are fully vaccinated through a variety of media platforms including social media, digital video, cable TV, streaming services, radio, bill boards, and direct mail.

Kane will use data collected through community focus groups put together by Higher Expectations and Payne & Frazier through the DHS grant, from the hired Vaccine Champions, and learn what is working from other partners to develop effective messaging and to target media tactics at populations who are vaccine adverse or currently under-served.

**ANALYSIS:**

Kane will research, develop and manage a COVID-19 vaccine communications plan that will aim to:

- Increase City of Racine vaccine rate among all citizens with a goal of 75% by Aug. 31, 2021
- Emphasize BIPOC populations as targeted segments
- Drive traffic to the two community-based vaccination clinics and other pharmacy / health care options
- Dispel myths and rumors being perpetuated about the effects of the vaccine

Kane Communications is responsible for:

**Creative Development**

- Theme development and graphic standards; Creative direction; Key message and creative concept/theme development; Copywriting; Art direction & graphic design; Production management; Video / audio pre-production, production and post-production, including directing, filming/recording and editing; Photoshoot, if needed; Creative project management; Translation services

**Implementing paid media and advertising**

- Media strategy, planning, buying and placement; Media trafficking & print production (billboards/bus ads); Media performance monitoring / reporting; Print/mail research and coordination; Social content planning and posting

The proposal is for a sole source for the following reasons:

- Previous work with the City of Racine
- Kane Communications developed the branding and tactics for the Safer Racine Campaign, which the City wishes to deploy again for the Vaccinate Racine Campaign
- Payne & Frazier Consulting is the City's outreach consultant on the DHS grant, and they frequently work with Kane Communications on other projects

**FISCAL NOTE:**

- Funds will be reimbursed by FEMA, under the FEMA vaccination grant application, not to exceed \$235,000 as proposed

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

- **MOVE TO APPROVE** waiving the formal bidding process and enter into an agreement with Kane Communications to assist the City with outreach and communications directly related to increasing vaccination rates in the City of Racine

