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City Council Report

Date: January 25, 2010
To: City Council
Through: Bryan Raines, Deputy City Manager
From: Edward Quedens, Business Services Director
Subject: Purchase of a Mobile Dispatch and Service Order Scheduling System for the Water Resources and Energy Resources Departments (Contracts #2008148 and #073103)
"Citywide" Contract

Purpose and Recommendation

Council is requested to approve the Purchase of a Mobile Dispatch and Service Order Scheduling System as recommended. Proposals were obtained and evaluated by the Information Technology, Water Resources and Energy Resources Departments, and the Purchasing Division.

The Purchasing Division recommends awarding the contract to GE Energy Management Services, Inc. at \$787,865.38, purchasing from the National Intergovernmental Purchasing Alliance (IPA) contract with CLH International, Inc. at \$94,479.40; various system components purchased through normal purchasing processes with multiple vendors at \$46,281.00; and 10% project contingencies at \$92,862.58, for a combined total of \$1,021,488.36, including applicable taxes.

The five-year total for the Mobile Dispatch System includes the total above, plus Mobile Dispatch and Service Order Scheduling System support and maintenance for years two through five at \$122,518.39, and other support and maintenance for years two through five estimated at \$145,000. The evaluated five-year total is therefore estimated at \$1,289,006.75.

Background/ Discussion

At present, work related to a customer's water, gas, or electric service (called Service Orders) are handled through inefficient manual methods that fail to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the labor resources applied. Service Orders, including turn-ons, turn-offs, and meter read checks, and high bill investigations total around 120,000 per year (400 to 1,500 per day). The majority of service orders are manually loaded onto handheld meter reading devices. The lack of automation results in numerous inefficiencies including inefficient travel by field workers, inability to provide up-to-date status to customers, as well as up to four dispatchers to handle each day's cancellations and new orders. Implementation of a system that provides real-time optimized scheduling and dispatching will lower operating costs for the Water Resources Department, the Energy Resources Department, and the Customer Service Call Center, and improve overall customer response and satisfaction.

The recommended automated Mobile Dispatch and Service Order Scheduling System will replace a predominantly manual system and will interface with the City's Customer Information System (CIS). Anticipated benefits expected include the elimination of 3.5 positions as the system will be able to:

- Automatically assign, schedule and route field service order work, eliminating 2 dispatch positions;
- Reduce travel, routing, and radio communication time, eliminating 1 field position;
- Eliminate duplicate manual data entry, eliminating at least 0.5 FTE in administrative support;
- Provide real-time information on service order status to customers, increasing customer satisfaction and allowing for more flexibility in appointment scheduling for customers; and
- Enhance accountability and track performance.

The total estimated payback on our initial investment based upon expected annual efficiencies is three years.

In addition, staff recommends purchase of Panasonic CF-30 "fully-ruggedized" laptops for use with this system. The current meter reading devices in use will need to be replaced if we do not move forward with the new system. Their estimated replacement costs are \$102,000 – more than the cost of the ruggedized laptops which provide expanded capabilities for the crews. Information Technology has developed tiered levels of laptops for mobile City workers with the Panasonic CF-30 being the recommended option. The next lower tiers, "semi-ruggedized" laptops, have proven to be unreliable when outdoor temperatures exceed 100° F. Due to the type of work involved, field staff will need to lock and leave the laptops in the vehicles, which would require a ruggedized laptop that can operate at internal vehicle temperatures of over 140° F. The CF-30 Toughbooks® will be purchased using the National Intergovernmental Purchasing Alliance (IPA) contract, established in 2007 through a collaborative effort of public agencies across the United States to reduce procurement costs by leveraging group volume.

Proposal Results: The City issued an RFP and received six (6) proposals. Three proposals, from GE Energy Management Services, Inc., Trimble Navigation, and Ventyx Inc., were deemed responsive and evaluated by an evaluation team comprised of City staff from Information Technology, Water Resources, Energy Resources, and Business Services. The recommended vendor, GE Energy Management Services, Inc., scored highest on the functional/technical specifications, as well as proposed the lowest system pricing, receiving 886 points out of a possible 1,000 points.

Alternatives

Council may choose not to approve staff's recommendations and new proposals/bids will be obtained.

Fiscal Impact


The total amount of \$1,021,488.36 is available in Water Resources and Information Technology Departments' budgets. Funds for subsequent years' support and maintenance will be included in future budget requests.

Coordinated With

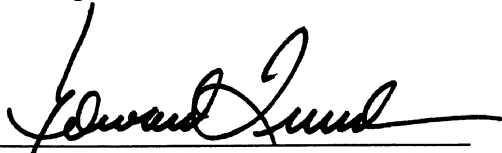
Information Technology
Water Resources
Energy Resources
Business Services



Pamela Chavez,
Management Assistant II



Jim Ruiz, CPPB
Purchasing Administrator



Edward Quedens, CPPO, C.P.M.
Business Services Director



Bryan Raines,
Deputy City Manager

