



COMMITTEE of the WHOLE

CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES
June 16, 2008
5:00 P.M.
Council Office

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

V. Spencer, S. Marmarou, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, D. Sterner, M. Baez, J. Waltman, S. Fuhs

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

D. Hoag, S. Katzenmoyer, L. Kelleher, R. Hottenstein, C. Younger, representatives from Hill International, MWH, Entech Engineering, CDM, Spotts, Stevens and McCoy

Vaughn Spencer, President of Council, called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

I. Award of Contract – Project and Construction Manager for Waste Water Treatment Plant project

Mr. Spencer reviewed the issue.

Mr. Fuhs called Council's attention to the letter received from MWH. He noted he is very concerned that the Hill International proposal could be compromised.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if these process issues should be discussed in executive session. Mr. Hottenstein noted that all three finalists were approached to answer the same questions. He noted the advantage of having one firm oversee both portions of the project. He noted that the selection was made in the best interest of the City.

Mr. Younger noted that this was not appropriate to discuss in open session. There was a discussion of the grounds to discuss this topic in executive session. Mr. Spencer noted the need for Council to monitor discussion to be sure inappropriate information is not shared.

Mr. Hottenstein responded to the letter from MWH point by point. He noted that the pricing was not an issue in the review process. Firms were scored on other points and price was reviewed as the last step. He noted that Hill International was not the lowest price.

Mr. Hottenstein noted the proposal was not compromised. He noted that purchasing guidelines allow additional questions. He noted that all finalists were requested to answer the same questions.

Mr. Spencer noted other situations in which a firm did not follow purchasing procedures and they were eliminated from consideration. Ms. Hoag noted that the issue was clarity. She noted that the topic was addressed but that staff needed additional interpretation.

Mr. Spencer questioned if clarification is always requested. Mr. Hottenstein noted that it is.

Mr. Hottenstein addressed the value engineering issue. He noted that no information was shared with other firms.

Mr. Fuhs questioned if some firms included value engineering information why others did not. Mr. Hottenstein noted that some value engineering information was too extensive and more than what the City needs.

Mr. Hottenstein addressed the local business issue. He noted that this is not a hard and fast rule. He noted the need to award contracts to those who will benefit the City most.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if being located within the City was a factor in the scoring. Mr. Hottenstein noted that firms within a two hour travel time to Reading were considered.

A representative of MWH noted his belief that the number of hours and the scope of services should place MWH as the firm to be awarded the contract. He noted the need for the City to hire a firm who works on projects of this size regularly. He feels MWH could have overcome the price issue. He noted their partnership with Entech Engineering and a response time of five minutes.

A representative of CDM believes there to be a misunderstanding in the scope of the project. He noted his surprise at the cost disparity between firms. He noted the problems surrounding this project since its beginning. He noted the importance of awarding these projects to local firms and noted their partnership with Spotts, Stevens, and McCoy.

A representative of Hill International noted that their proposal was compliant with the terms of the RFP.

Mr. Waltman questioned benchmarks in a project this size. Hill International noted that they look to specialists within their firm. Ms. Hoag noted that references were

requested and contacted. She noted benchmarks used were plants of a similar size and the scope of work needed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz requested hearing from the review committee of the process they used. Mr. Spencer questioned if Council should review this information as a contract has not yet been awarded. Mr. Younger agreed that Council should not review this information.

This discussion will continue at the next Committee of the Whole meeting on June 23, 2008.

II. Giannasca Master Developer Agreement

There was discussion of the need for a special meeting to approve this agreement. Council is not ready to endorse the agreement. No special meeting will be held.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

By: _____
Linda A. Kelleher, City Clerk