

Minutes  
Capital Improvements Committee  
December 14, 2009

Members present: Mayor Raeanne Presley, Alderwoman Cris Bohinc, City Administrator Dean Kruithof, Bob McDowell, and Michael Pinkley. Also present were Public Works Director, Larry VanGilder, Mike Ray, Tad Clarkson, Environmental Specialist Mona Menezes, City Engineer David Miller, and Finance Director Lori Helle.

Visitors: Alexis, Danny, Ivy and Cedrick from Ozarks Community College Government class.

Meeting called to order 10:45 a.m.

**Item No. 3. 2" Water Meter Change Out.** Mike Ray introduced Tad Clarkson, Water Treatment Supervisor, to the committee. Mr. Ray made it known to the committee that he appreciated the initiative and hard work that Mr. Clarkson dedicated to this project. Mr. Ray further stated that the public works utilities department would like to purchase and change out 303 water meters beginning this summer. He stated that the cost for replacement is going to run approximately \$375,000. Mr. Kruithof stated that there has not been a large scale change out of meters since 1999. Alderwoman Bohinc questioned if the new meters will have a longer life than the old ones. Mr. Clarkson replied that these should have a life span of 15-20 years. He further stated that a 2" meter produces more revenue compared to the smaller meters. Mr. Ray explained the project. Mr. McDowell questioned that if the useful life of a water meter is approximately 10 years, why these are not budgeted maintenance items. Mr. VanGilder replied that some funds are allocated each year, but heavy workloads do not allow staff to replace all of them. Mr. Clarkson explained that one major reason the 2-inch meter change-out is behind schedule is the amount of time it takes to replace this size meter. To accomplish replacement each 2-inch meter must be completely excavated and removed from the service line. Average time to replace one 2-inch meter is 6 hours. With other daily duties of current staff, it is not feasible to accomplish this task in a reasonable timeframe. He further explained that in order to begin recovering the needed lost revenue in a timely manner, staff is recommending contracting the meter change-out with a private contractor. Mr. Kruithof inquired of the overall water system loss at this time. Mr. Ray replied that the loss is around 25%. Mr. Kruithof stated that his understanding of the goal of this change out is to have the water system loss reduced to around 10%. Mayor Presley questioned the length of time it will take contractor to do the project. Mr. Clarkson answered that it would take approximately one year. Mr. Kruithof stated that with the economy as it is, the city should be able to receive pretty competitive bids for the construction work. Mr. VanGilder stated that the public works department is also researching the possibility of adding remote reader capabilities to the computer system. Mr. McDowell inquired as to how many meters the city has that are over 2". Mr. Clarkson replied that the city has over 4200 meters of which 500 of them are 2", 3,200 are less than 2" and approximately 200 are over 3". Alderwoman Bohinc stated that she is pleased that staff has taken the initiative and done the research and appreciates the time that went into this change. Mr. McDowell recommended that in the future the Finance Committee have a line item addressed in the budget for change-out of meters. Mayor Presley questioned who is handling the PR or customer service for this project. Mr. Clarkson replied that there will be a lead person from the installation crew and sending letters to the property owners

has also been discussed. Mayor Presley suggested that the PR should be personal contact from a city representative and not the construction crew. Mr. McDowell made the motion to accept the proposal for 2” water meter change out, seconded by Mr. Pinkley. Vote – all yeas, no opposed.

**Item No. 4. Consultant Selection and Discussion of Energy Performance Qualification Proposals.** David Miller stated that 8 qualification statements were received by the city. Mr. Miller also stated that he had received recommendations for the consultant selection from Roger Clark, Project Manager from the Engineering Department, Mona Menezes, Environmental Specialist, Mike Ray, Interim Utilities Director, and Public Works Director Larry VanGilder.

Mr. Miller stated that the responses received fit into four general categories, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. The first type of company is one that specializes in energy performance contracts. He further stated that since this type of work is their specialty, they would theoretically be focused and have plenty of expertise. These firms don’t sell products that would be used in the building renovations so they would not be biased toward a particular brand and they may be divisions of bigger companies. Chevron and ConEdison are examples of these types of firms.

Mr. Miller stated that the second type of firm is a manufacturer or “vendor” who actually supplies things that control energy use such as operating systems for heating and ventilating systems. He went on to state that the advantage of these types of companies is that they are “in the business” and they should know the best way to control systems. The disadvantage is the perception that they are not “vendor neutral” and if they could specify their particular brand of control system, then they would want to increase their own business. The firms of this type are Johnson Controls and Trane.

Mr. Miller stated that the third type of company is also a vendor, but it is basically a huge company – much larger than the other vendors. These big companies have the advantage of being experts in every aspect of facility control and they also are big enough to provide the financing for the project. The disadvantage of this type of company is again the perception of not being “vendor neutral” plus with being such a big company, they may not be as focused on Branson’s small part of their business. Siemens and Honeywell are this third type of firm.

Mr. Miller stated that the final type of firm is the engineering firms. These are general engineering consulting firms that have divisions that specialize in energy performance contracts. Their advantage is that they are definitely vendor neutral since they don’t supply any of the equipment and they are also more focused on the engineering side of the project. Benham and Burns & McDonnell Engineering are this final type of firm.

Mr. Miller recommended four firms for consideration by the committee. Those firms are Benham Companies, Burns & McDonnell, Honeywell and Chevron. Mr. Miller further gave an explanation for his recommendations. Mr. Miller further stated that staff recommends the suggestion of interviews with these firms. Mayor Presley inquired if any of the firms that qualification statements were received from are currently working for the city. Mr. Miller replied that Johnson Controls handles the maintenance of our existing HVAC system. Benham Companies are finishing work on the floodplain issue at Branson Landing and they were the

project consultant on the Branson Landing project as a whole. Burns & McDonnell are currently assisting the city with the Water Master Plan and will probably submit a proposal for the Cooper Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion design.

Roger Clark stated that his top recommendations are Burns & McDonnell, Chevron and the Benham Companies. He further stated that he had not worked with Burns & McDonnell Engineering or the Benham Companies but that he had worked with Johnson Controls, Inc. (JCI) in the past, but not while working at the City of Branson. He further explained that JCI and Trane also make a product that they try to sell. He stated that an engineering firm would look at all aspects and explained his recommendation of Burns & McDonnell.

Mike Ray explained to the committee that he categorized the proposals in three categories; engineering, equipment representative and neither. He stated that he felt that Burns & McDonnell Engineering has the most qualifications and experience. He further stated that Burns & McDonnell have experience in our process and if the city makes changes, in his opinion it would be best to work with a company that has a history of the city and how it works.

Mr. VanGilder explained that of the proposals he selected 4 companies; Burns & McDonnell, Chevron, Johnson Controls and Benham. He stated that he has worked with Burns & McDonnell on many projects and that they have a lot of diversity in their experience. He stated that they are familiar with our water and wastewater processes and that familiarity with overall sensitivities of the city processes is a plus.

Ms. Menezes stated that her outlook on the project was for outreach and education which she feels are very important in any sustainability aspect. In keeping with that outlook, she selected two companies due to the fact that they refer to training/working with our staff which she believes is a critical component of this project. She stated that Chevron included a statement in their proposal that reads, *“Another important step is...training for staff. Included in the initial cost of the EMCS is scheduled training for the appropriate facility personnel.”* She also stated that Burns & McDonnell’s report included a statement that reads, *“B&M will provide the City with classroom and field training on all new equipment and systems... Training will incorporate review of design intent, equipment and system configuration and operation and standard maintenance practices. ...All training sessions will be recorded and provided to the city on DVD.”* Ms. Menezes also explained that Burns & McDonnell has completed some nice solar projects and assisted the City of Ft. Smith, Arkansas with the EECBG application process which was approved in 2009 at a cost of \$878,200.

Ms. Menezes further gave an example of thermostat in the water tower office building. She stated that two of the firms mentioned training and working with city staff. She further stated that she agreed with Roger Clark’s assessment and that she has confidence in the Burns & McDonnell firm in supplying what the city needs to assess any needed changes where energy sustainability is concerned.

Mr. Kruithof explained to the committee that this process was undertaken in Ft. Smith approximately six years ago and that through the process, Burns & McDonnell came out as number 1. He stated that from what he is hearing today from staff, Burns & McDonnell is the

top selection. Mr. Miller stated that he thought a local presence would be a plus and although Benham was his top rated firm, Burns & McDonnell was a very close second. Mayor Presley questioned about dividing the project into two contracts. Mr. Miller replied that there is less staff time and contracting if remains in one contract. Mr. VanGilder suggested challenging the companies in determining a cost savings to the city. Mr. Kruithof stated that he is very interested in the outcome and that replacements of older equipment is just around the corner and that maintenance is truly becoming an issue for this older equipment.

Mr. McDowell suggested the firm come up with an audit and recommendations with a laundry list of tiered recommendations. Mr. Miller stated that the city will be able to decide which items from the laundry list need to be done. Alderwoman Bohinc stated that she is pleased that the majority of the staff came up with same decision and recommendation.

Mr. McDowell stated that coming in behind the project is hard. He suggested that the city stay ahead of the game with the new construction coming into the city, especially using the LEEDS program. Mr. Miller further stated that he didn't believe splitting the project between two consultants would result in a cost savings to the city.

Mr. Kruithof explained that Burns & McDonnell is a Missouri based company and it is to their advantage to use Branson as a highlight for their company and this could turn out to be a high profile project for them.

Mr. McDowell made a motion to follow staff recommendation to accept Burns & McDonnell Engineering, Inc. qualifications statement and proposal to perform the initial audit for the energy sustainability performance project. Seconded by Michael Pinkley. Vote – all Yeas, no opposed. Motion carried.

**Item No. 5. Discussion of Adopted 5-Year Capital Improvement Program.** Mr. Kruithof stated that the program has been approved by first reading of the Board of Alderman. Lori Helle stated that the 5-year program has also been presented to the Finance Committee. Mr. Kruithof explained that the intent of this 5-year program is to bring current information to this committee concerning not only capital projects but also complete budget.

Mr. Miller explained that the Highway 248/65 Interchange project included a ½ clover leaf, a new traffic signal and a roundabout. A recommendation has come from MoDOT and from the engineer on the project to look into the possibility of installing a diverging diamond which could result in a cost savings on the project. Mr. McDowell inquired if there was a timeline. Mr. Miller stated that the city is currently awaiting a proposal from the engineering firm for the redesign costs. If the project can keep on task, possible bid date of February 2011. He stated that he will have a model on DVD to present to the Board of Alderman with a possible cost savings of up to \$700,000.

**Item No. 6. Discussion of City Hall Modifications Consultant Proposals.** Mr. Miller stated that the city had received 9 proposals for the modifications and that staff had requested that the consultant limit their proposals to five pages. He further stated that there are five components to the project and the city budgeted \$300,000 for the project. Copies of the proposals were given to

the committee members for discussion at the next regularly scheduled capital improvements committee meeting to be held in January.

**Item No. 7.** Update on Change Orders. No change orders to present to the committee.

**Other Items for Discussion.** Mr. Miller stated that the utility rate study project is progressing and that HDR is now reviewing all information provided and should have the study by April. He suggested linking the energy sustainability audit with the utility study.

76 Sidewalks project – Mr. Miller explained that, as part of the cost sharing project with Branson, he had requested that MoDOT install sidewalks from Roark Valley Road along Highway 76 to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and not stop at 6<sup>th</sup> Street, however, MoDOT's final project design stops at 6<sup>th</sup> Street with the possibility of a crosswalk at that location.

Alderwoman Bohinc reminded staff and committee about the wheelchair access downtown. There is not easy wheelchair access from the convention center or Branson Landing to downtown and that this was a recommendation from the walkthrough in June with the council and the downtown association. Mr. McDowell suggested putting together a long term plan. Alderwoman Bohinc further reminded meeting participants that additional monies were budgeted for street improvements and neighborhoods and that the city needed to stand behind promises.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.