

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 8th, 2011
Chairman Steve Lee
Vice-Chairman Charles Julien

Members: Haston Lewis, Danny Millet, Charles Julien, Jaclyn Hotard, Darnel Usry, Cheryl Millet, Raydell Morris

PRESENT: Haston Lewis, Cheryl Millet, Ronnie Smith, Steve Lee, Raydell Morris, Danny Millet, Darnel C. Usry

ABSENT: Charles Julien & Jaclyn Hotard

BID OPENING REPORT/AWARDS:

Brenda Labat – Bid Awards – (Tabled 1-11-11) – 2011 Removal & Replacement of concrete, sidewalks, driveways & streets – Authorization to award the low bid to DMC of Metairie

Tom Daley, District Attorney & Legal Counsel, *"The first item on the agenda was tabled a few meetings ago. It is the concrete, sidewalks, driveways and streets annual bid as well as the second one which is the drainage excavation annual bid. There is pending litigation in both matters. I recommend to the council that it remain on the table pending resolution of those two law suits."*

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to accept the recommendation of the District Attorney representing administration to leave items one and two on the table as a result of pending litigation. The motion passed with Councilwoman Hotard and Councilman Julien absent.

Brenda Labat – Bid Awards – (Tabled 1-11-11) – Drainage Excavations of Parish ditches – 2011 Annual Contract – Authorization to award the low bid to Compass Ventures of LaPlace

Brenda Labat – Bid Awards – Building Materials & Supplies for Weatherization Program related to ARRA & regular DOE Weatherization Programs to Home Depot of LaPlace

Brenda Labat, Director of Purchasing, stated, *"Administration recommends awarding this low bid to Home Depot of LaPlace. There cumulative bid was \$1,511.99. That was a total for 97 unit items and these will be purchased as required."*

MOTION: Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to accept administrations recommendation and award the bid for building materials & supplies for Weatherization Program related to ARRA & regular DOE Weatherization Programs to Home Depot of LaPlace. The motion passed with Councilwoman Hotard and Councilman Julien absent.

Councilwoman Hotard arrived at 5:48 PM.

Brenda Labat – Bid Awards – Labor/Service & Materials for installation of Insulation related to ARRA & regular DOE Weatherization Programs to Brotherhood Way of Metairie

Brenda Labat stated, "The low bidder, Brotherhood Way General Contractors of Metairie is recommended for award. Their cost is \$2.10 a square foot."

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Lewis seconded the motion to accept administrations recommendation and award the bid for labor/service & materials for installation of Insulation related to ARRA & regular DOE Weatherization Programs to Brotherhood Way of Metairie. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

Ronnie Smith/Guidry & Associates, LLC – Technical correction to current contract

Ronnie Smith stated, "Back in December of 2009, the council met, voted on and approved for Mr. Chris Guidry & Associates, LLC to be our lobbyist on the federal and the state level. Somewhere in between the meeting here and the negotiations with the parish president at that time I think something may have not been as clear as we intended to make it. I just wanted to move on. I think I am going to need a motion and support on this just to have administration and Mr. Guidry get back together and to go ahead and give him that contract back for two years, the state and the federal contract, so that this matter can be cleared up."

Marie Brown-Mercadel, CAO, stated, "Administration met with Mr. Guidry & Associates today to talk about the statement of work for both this contract and the state representation and we are prepared to move forward with executing the contract."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I would just like to make some clarification to the motion that it is not actual lobbying. They are a government liaison or however we want to word exactly what it is but it isn't a lobbying contract, if we can just clarify that in the motion."

Councilman Lee stated, "I believe what the motion is asking for is state and federal work. So if perhaps it was my fault I should have asked for a specific motion. At this time I would be happy to make an effort at that Mr. Smith because Ms. Hotard has a good point there. I believe the intent of the motion with administration and this council is to extend Guidry & Associates for a two year term from February 1, 2011 for state and federal work as deemed by council and administration. Is that an acceptable motion?"

Councilman Smith stated, "Yes."

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to extend the contract with Guidry & Associates for a two year term from February 1, 2011 for state and federal work as deemed by the council and administration. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

Ronnie Smith – Renewal of contract with LarMar Video Productions, Inc. for the taping of the council meetings 2011 and 2012

Ronnie Smith stated, "It was brought to my attention the other day that LarMar Video was for some reason or another their contract with us had

expired and this is simply the contract for the video taping of the council meetings. So as the item stated I would like to make a motion that we renew the contract with LarMar Video for the taping of the council meetings for 2011 and 2012."

Councilman Lewis stated, "How much are we paying him?"

Councilman Smith stated, "It is showing me \$1,555.00 a month."

Councilman Lewis asked, "How long has he been getting that?"

Councilman Smith stated, "There is a small 3% increase Mr. Lewis. It was \$1,300.00 before."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I think we need to look at it down the road."

Councilman Smith asked, "To increase it you mean?"

Councilman Lewis stated, "Yes."

Councilman Lee stated, "I think an obvious comment from the chair would be that the administration has reviewed it and their satisfied and the contractor is satisfied with the contract as presented."

Natalie Robottom, Parish President, stated, "We actually have been in conversations with Mr. Marino in his request for an extension of his contract. He documented historically what it had been, included what the amounts covered and we are actually working on a template that would include all the pertinent information for all contracts and we are in agreement with moving forward for two years. I have also asked Mr. Marino to plan to get together with us on ways to improve our current systems and moving forward we may be back with you to discuss those items but at this time we are in agreement with what his request is and we will be working to complete that contract document."

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Lewis seconded the motion to renew the contract with LarMar Video Productions, Inc. for the taping of the council meetings 2011 and 2012. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

Brenda Labat – Authorization to go out for bids for the Annual contract for Reverse Osmosis Membrane Filters

Brenda Labat stated, "These filters are for our RO water treatment system. This will establish pricing so that when we are ready to replace additional filters we will have it all set for the year 2011."

MOTION: Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilwoman Usry seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to go out for bids for the Annual contract for Reverse Osmosis Membrane Filters. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

Brenda Labat – Authorization to go out for bids for the Homewood drainage project

Brenda Labat stated, "This Homewood drainage project was engineered by Shread-Kuyrkendall and it is financed by the 2009 Bond Issue. The

estimate is 1,343,254.00."

Councilwoman Millet asked, *"What is our budget on this project?"*

Brenda Labat stated, *"The engineer's estimate is \$1,343,254.00."*

Councilwoman Millet asked, *"Was that our bond amount or is that the budgeted amount?"*

Brenda Labat stated, *"That is the budgeted amount."*

Councilwoman Millet asked, *"We don't know what it has come in at because we are going out for bids now? This is still in line with our 2009 Bond Issue correct?"*

Brenda Labat stated, *"That is correct."*

Councilwoman Millet stated, *"I know we were very close on our numbers and I want to make sure we stay close with that. Thank you."*

MOTION: Councilman Morris moved and Councilman Lewis seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to go out for bids for the Homewood drainage project. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

Marie Brown-Mercadel – Authorization to sign a State/Parish Maintenance Agreement between the Department of Transportation and Development and St. John the Baptist Parish for the interchange lighting project at I-10 and Belle Terre Blvd (LA 3188)

Marie Brown-Mercadel, stated, *"Administration request authorization to sign an agreement between the DOTD and St. John Parish for the interchange lighting project at the foot of Belle Terre Blvd. In December of 2010 we signed a MOU they are now asking that we replace that with a state/parish maintenance agreement. There is no change in cost to the parish. We have already submitted the \$74,350.00 which was our 10% of the total project which was \$743,500.00."*

Councilwoman Millet asked, *"It is my understanding that ground breaking will be in May of 2011 on this project?"*

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, *"That is correct."*

Councilwoman Millet stated, *"Thank you very much for all your effort on this. It has been a long drawn out deal but I wanted to make sure that the parish didn't foot the entire bill and our patience has paid off. I will take the \$74,350.00 over the \$743,350.00 any day."*

Councilman Morris stated, *"While we are talking about lights, can you give me an update on the project on E. 22nd Street?"*

Councilman Lee stated, *"Mr. Morris I will have to rule, unless I get over ruled, that would be out of order. We have a motion on the floor that being the Belle Terre project. We can take that up at any and all other financial concerns at the end of the meeting if you like but I will have to rule that out of order at this time."*

MOTION: Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilwoman Usry seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to sign a State/Parish Maintenance Agreement between the Department of Transportation and Development and St. John the Baptist Parish for the interchange lighting project at I-10 and Belle Terre Blvd (LA 3188). The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

Marie Brown-Mercadel/Mike Carmouche – Change order #1 for Shread-Kuyrkendall in the amount of \$5,133.69 for re-bidding of the Riverlands Drainage Project

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, *“Administration request approval of this change order. This amount reflects an increase to the lump sum design for the basic engineering service for the Riverlands Drainage project specific to the rebidding phase. This project was successfully rebid and awarded in December of 2010.”*

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to grant change order #1 for Shread-Kuyrkendall in the amount of \$5,133.69 for re-bidding of the Riverlands drainage project. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

Marie Brown-Mercadel – Authorization to execute a contract for the canal permitting process with Royal Engineering for an amount not to exceed \$48,000.00

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, *“Administration request authorization to execute an agreement with Royal Engineering of New Orleans. This firm will complete the application process and secure the necessary permits for each of the 11 canals that are listed in your booklet. The contract is for a not to exceed amount of \$48,000.00 of that amount \$35,000.00 is allocated for agency permitting which includes application fees, maps, drawings and land rights and \$13,000.00 is allocated for client and agency coordination.”*

Councilman Smith asked, *“I see the next contract that we have is for the same thing. One is \$50,000.00 and one is for \$48,000.00, is there any particular reason for that?”*

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, *“One of the contracts is for 11 permits and one is for 12 permits.”*

Councilman Smith stated, *“Okay, thank you.”*

MOTION: Councilwoman Hotard moved and Councilman Morris seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to execute a contract for the canal permitting process with Royal Engineering for an amount not to exceed \$48,000.00. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

Marie Brown-Mercadel – Authorization to execute a contract for the canal permitting process with Krebs, LaSalle, Lamieux Consultants, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$50,000.00

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, *“This is the second of two contracts that we want to award. This firm will complete the application process for 12 of the canals listed in exhibit A in your booklet. The contract is*

for a not to exceed amount of \$50,000.00 of that amount \$40,373.00 is allocated for agency permitting which includes the applications fees, maps, drawings and land rights and \$9,627.00 is allocated for client and agency coordination."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "Is this going to take care of the majority of the canals in the parish or do we still have another list to go?"

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "This will take care of the majority of the canals in the parish."

Councilman Lewis asked, "How much money do we have left for canals?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Mr. Lewis obviously I don't have that number in front of me. What we are discussing tonight is the permitting process for it some of these canals are funded by FEMA and some are LRA but before we could do any work at all we needed the permits. It has been a long time coming. There are a couple from the West Bank that are included for permits and there is also an agreement with the Lafourche Basin Levee District to do some of the work and they are very cooperative with us on the West Bank. They are going to be doing the ones right now that do not require permitting. The 23 listed includes canals both on the East Bank and the West Bank."

Councilman Lewis stated, "Mrs. Robottom, even before you came on and in the past, we have been fooling with canals over there for the last 12 years and we haven't gotten a permit yet. I think we have been having trouble with the way we do it. We get Mr. Savoie, then after that somebody else takes over. I think we need to get Mr. Savoie and let him stay on it because I know he knows how to get permits."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Well actually Mr. Lewis these contracts are to give somebody authority to do that, this is their job to get these 23 permits because we are all very busy with outside things. Mr. Savoie has actually been successful in getting us some permits but we have 23 left. We are concerned about the time it is taking and that is what these two contractors are going to be charged with doing, getting those permits."

Councilman Lewis stated, "Well while we are having a lot of trouble over the river there we have about two plantations since they ran 3127, all those plantations are all under water big time on the St. Charles line and in the middle of the parish it is very bad there."

Natalie Robottom stated, "We are going to go over the list of canals with you to make sure that the ones that you are referencing are included. We will also go over the list that the Lafourche Levee District has and if we have excluded any we will be happy to work on those as well."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I will be glad to get with you."

MOTION: Councilwoman Hotard moved and Councilman Morris seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to execute a contract for the canal permitting process with Krebs, LaSalle, Lamieux Consultants, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$50,000.00. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

Marie Brown-Mercadel – Authorization to execute a contract with South Central Planning & Development to conduct the Re-apportionment process for \$30,000.00

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "Administration request approval to execute the contract with SCP to coordinate the development and implementation of the 2011 reapportionment plan as outlined in the exhibit A in your book. The contract is to begin on February 9th, 2011 and will terminate no later than December 31st, 2011."

MOTION: Councilwoman Hotard moved and Councilwoman Usry seconded the motion for discussion.

Councilman Julien arrived at 6:07 PM.

Councilman Smith stated, "I was contacted by one of the groups that attempted to get this contract and I was shown a couple of things in the process that I might have some questions about. What type of time frame or time limit are we in? Does this have to be passed today?"

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "Well we have a very tight time line for the reapportionment process. The time line that has been set forth is allowing for two sixty day periods for the plan to be submitted to the Department of Justice because as you know there is a sixty day protest period and if someone protest on day fifty-nine for example your protest period has to start over again for sixty days and so we are on a tight line to award this contract so that we can begin the process and make sure that we have everything finalized by the time the next election cycle comes around."

Councilman Smith asked, "Can we wait two weeks to do this or is your time line that tight?"

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "I believe we would be pushing it if we waited two weeks?"

Councilman Smith stated, "Then I have another question, are we authorized to allow a gentleman to speak on behalf of this process because if not I am going to table it."

Councilman Lee stated, "I would say this, it would uncustomary for me as the chair to allow other comment on an item but I yield and serve at the pleasure of this council. If I were in your position it is a matter of the votes one way or the other. I think a table would be in order. If I am asked to do this I am going to rule against it because it would be uncustomary for me to do this at a finance meeting but I serve at the pleasure of the council. A motion to override me and five votes overrides me and then we will allow public comment at the finance committee Mr. Smith, if that helps."

Councilman Smith stated, "That is what I am requesting at this time."

Councilman Lee stated, "In discussion I have no problem being overridden. I just want to remain consistent in the way I run the finance committee meetings and this is how we have done this for a number of years. So with that in mind I want the council to vote their

conscious. If they want to hear on this issue it certainly doesn't upset this chair."

Councilman Smith stated, "Mr. Lee just for further comment, if we weren't on such a tight time schedule I would simply table this issue and try to deal with it within the next two weeks and then bring it back up but because we are on such a tight time table I would rather try to get this out in the open and get this settled right here and right now."

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Morris seconded the motion to override the chair not to allow public comment on a finance item that is being presented at this time. The motion passed unanimously.

Cedric Floyd, President of Data Center, stated, "A company that has been doing re-districting full time for thirty years. What happened is I did a public records request on Friday to get the results of the scoring and as a governmental entity once you enter into and say you have a process it must be followed fairly. Before you is the scores, I have the score sheets and what I did was I summarized the score sheets and I invite Mrs. Labat to verify exactly the numbers. The last category and I put first is proposed fee. South Central did \$30,000.00. I negotiated under \$25,000.00 and Redistricting did \$25,000.00 plus expenses but as you see in the scoring I was 20% lower and I scored even with South Central even though I was \$5,000.00 lower and 20% lower. I didn't even prevail in that category and it seemed to be unfair just based on a number. \$30,000.00 is 20% higher than \$25,000.00 and it was 82 to 82 in fact one person on the selection committee scored it lower even though \$25,000.00 is much lower than \$30,000.00. The first category on the scoring sheet was firm/team qualifications. It said that you will lean towards the primaries, which is myself or the lead person for Redistricting. As you see under and you can check the RFQ or whatever because I do think that we have time because when it comes down to well over 20 submissions I have done to the justice department and court cases all it takes is 60 days if you do it properly but anyway for the firm/team qualifications and experience South Central put their lead person with 10 years experience. I am the lead for Data Center with 30 years and also let me note to you that 10 years ago Councilman Steve Lee was the only person on the council that is remaining, South Central did the redistricting for this parish council and it was thrown out in court. In fact the parish of St. John ended up paying about \$100,000.00 in legal fees as a result of the legal plan that South Central created but you graded them the highest when it comes down to qualifications and experience and a team at Data Center's combined experience was 98 years, mine is 30 years that lead person at 10 years and a remaining crew and I got that from their response to your qualifications. So I don't know exactly what was going on but the firm that you selected did an illegal redistricting plan after the 2000 census was thrown out in court and I do have the consent judgment in court showing that your plan was thrown out. In fact on number 8 that the judge signed off on that you had to pay all expert witness and legal fees of the plaintiff who brought the lawsuit. So I wanted to pass it out so you know what happened after the 2000 census when South Central did the redistricting and it was thrown out in federal court. I have been associated with many governmental entities and once a firm does have a flaw like this most of the time they aren't

even eligible to respond to the redistricting proposal. Also when it comes down to the statement of qualifications, Redistricting LLC created the redistricting plan for the St. John School Board and it was also thrown out in court with the same lawsuit and I ended up doing both plans and the plan that you have in place for the St. John Council is the plan that I created as a result of the lawsuit and Councilman Lee you remember because I worked with you many days and nights getting the plan together in time for the 2003 election and all I am saying is that I have the most experience. The other two firms in St. John Parish did fatally flawed plans but they scored ahead of my firm in every category. So when it comes down to firm's relevant and similar experience again I said that we did the plan. The plan that you ran for office in 2003 & 2007 is the plan that Data Center did and South Central's plan was thrown out in court. Also when it comes down to experience work plan and approach, experience with the user, which is you the St. John Parish Council, I have the most experience but in that category South Central scored ahead. They also showed in the last redistricting that they could not create a plan to comply with state and federal law. So there it is you had a price 20% cheaper and a firm who did it before successfully. I don't know who scored and how it was scored and you can verify the numbers those are the numbers I got with my public records request that it showed that it seems like my firm was treated unfairly based on what you asked about and how we scored."

Councilman Lee stated, "Thank you Mr. Floyd, I appreciate you keeping that as concise and brief as you did. Council we have set precedence here, is there anyone else from the audience that cares to make public comment at this time. The public hearing is closed. I will move back to the original motion. We have a motion Hotard second Usry to accept administrations recommendations. We have heard from the public. Do I have any comments from the council?"

Councilman Smith stated, "The only thing that I want to let the public know is that after all the information that was just presented to you was brought to my attention, I cannot with good conscious go ahead and vote for South Central Planning. It is nothing against South Central Planning, it is just that from what I just heard and what the public just heard I have a company that has just as much if not more experience that is giving us a cheaper rate and we are not going to give this contract to that company. So in good faith I just cannot support the request that administration is making at this time."

Councilman Julien stated, "I came to the meeting prepared to support administration as well. After hearing some of the facts I don't think they intended to mistreat your firm Mr. Floyd. I just think that there are certain facts that sometimes we are not privy to or that we are just are unfamiliar with. I will say that at this point I would ask administration to consider working with the council on this issue. I know this is a touchy situation because this is not normally how business is conducted however in light of the facts."

Natalie Robottom stated, "This is administration's recommendation before the information to the public and the council. This was a RFP that was scored by two representatives from my administration and three sitting council members. This wasn't a purely administrative recommendation. All three of the firms were evaluated based on the criteria that was set based on those scoring results the recommendation

was made based on the total of everyone's recommendations for South Central Planning. We understand that Mr. Floyd has that impression but I can assure you there were no attempts on our part nor was there on any of the council member's part to treat your firm differently. However there were different aspects of all three proposals that based on the proposals that were submitted that source selection committee felt that South Central Planning met the needs that we requested more than any of the other two firms. I was not a member of the scoring committee so I will allow Mrs. Mercadel to discuss the variations in pricing but what I can tell you is that it isn't an inconsistent process. It is a process that is being participated in by our neighboring parishes. There was no attempt to discount your firm. I do think it was a fair process. I do think the three council members that gave their time to score, read all three of the proposals and spend the extended amount of time reviewing them did so in good faith and our recommendation is purely based on that selection process as we have made other recommendations today that is the process that we follow."

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "When we are looking at a RFQ, pricing is not the only consideration, we look at other factors. In fact if I do look at the scoring Data Center out of the three proposals that were submitted they were third with the third lowest score. If it would not have been South Central Planning it would have been the second lowest score. So each of the members of the committee were instructed not to compare the proposals to one another when they were scoring, we talked about the process at length prior to the scoring and I do believe that it was a fair process. We could have had the opportunity to conduct interviews if we so chose to but we believed that the information that was contained within the proposals was sufficient to allow us to make a decision at that time."

Councilwoman Millet stated, "I would just like to state that I was in the scoring meeting, along with two other council members, and we did do extensive reading, every item was taken and we went through each item individually it wasn't a real quick thank you very much it was very extensive and the reading that we had to do and we compared each one and I think that the scoring reflects the decisions that we made by reading the information that was presented to us."

Councilman Julien stated, "Taking into consideration the monies that would be saved from awarding Mr. Floyd's firm a contract sometimes it is on the money, sometimes we say we don't have enough money to award a certain contract or to do certain types of jobs of work at the same time we turn around now and we have an opportunity to save money with a firm that has more experience. So I just think that I have to stand with Mr. Smith on this one."

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "One of the things that I have to say is that we have not had an opportunity to verify any of the information that Mr. Floyd has presented today. We are talking about approximately \$5,000.00 difference. Again pricing is not the only consideration. We look at the work that was also done on the state level in terms of other redistricting processes and the success of those processes. So when we have a process to score we do it for a reason. We do it because we want to look at the most qualified candidate and I think that we don't want to compromise the integrity of this process and the individuals that were sitting on that committee that actually read the

information that was submitted to us and scored regarding that same process that we have developed and discussed in front of this council."

Councilman Julien stated, "As we are in the process of coming up with ways to better spend the public's money, to do a better job of awarding contracts sometimes we find that maybe we made a mistake or missed something, we just correct it while we can."

Councilman Morris stated, "As a committee member, I think I was the only council member that scored Data Center on the high side. We discussed it and had the information but now I think that we may be unfair by hearing Data Center and not having a representative from the other two companies here. So it is almost to the point if I was one of the other companies I would come back later regardless what you do and rebut because I didn't have an opportunity. So in my opinion I think it may be better if we table this and give everybody a chance."

Councilman Lee stated, "I think I hear something coming that I will certainly honor but I think there are some additional comments that want to be made by the fellow council member's number one. Number two I clearly want to have our legal counsel step up here and explain to the general public the way about which administration designed and chose this selection process so that there is no misunderstanding with the public that this process may have been flawed. Mr. Daley can I get a comment for that, Mr. Daley isn't here, can I get a comment for that and then I will continue to move on."

Kerry Brown, Legal Counsel, stated, "I believe that honestly it has been set forth by administration as to what the process was. I think if there is any concern as to whether or not this administration did anything inappropriate I think is foolish. I believe that they went by whatever the law required. They actually have a committee put forth that they allowed the council and also their administration to meet with and it appears as though the council and the administration made a decision. You simply have to right now make a choice as to if you are going to proceed forward with that decision."

Councilman Lee stated, "Thank you Mr. Brown. That is exactly what I wanted to get for the record to make sure that the administration and the council or this committee was not questioned or chastised about the process because it was a process that involved the council and the administration."

Councilman Smith stated, "Again I want administration to understand I don't think you did anything wrong or that the process was done incorrectly. I just had more information that was brought to me and as Mr. Julien stated it is going to save the parish approximately \$7,000.00 just by going with the other firm. There was one comment, Mrs. Mercadel that you made a second ago saying that you have no proof or you didn't have time to verify that what Mr. Floyd is presenting is accurate. I do have one question. Did we verify anything on any of the three companies for instance their experience did we check to see if they really had thirty years of experience or twenty-five years of experience on any of the companies?"

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "Well no we didn't, we went and we looked at their proposals which talks about their historical experience doing

this type of work. It actually asks on the proposal the local, federal or state organizations that they have worked with for similar work or work that correlates with what we are asking for. So basically that is the information that we looked for. We looked at it for Mr. Floyd's firm as well."

Councilman Smith stated, "The reason I asked that question was I can submit you a proposal and put anything I want down there. If we as a company are not verifying what is being put on those applications, Mr. Floyd could have put that he had sixty years of experience."

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "That can happen with any process."

Councilman Smith stated, "I don't mean it was done intentionally again, I just think that if it is a flaw, then that is part of our flaw. We may need to find a way to look at that to correct that problem so somebody can't pull the wool over our eyes in other words and put something on their application that helps them to get a contract and it isn't really true. That is my concern."

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "When we do put projects out for bids you take the lowest price by law. When you do a request for proposals or you do a request for qualifications, price is not the only consideration, you look at other factors. So I know that we are looking at a \$5,000.00 or \$6,000.00 difference but we also took the other factors on the scoring sheets in front of you into consideration when scoring this project."

Councilman Smith stated, "I understand that."

Councilman Lee stated, "Mr. Smith I really appreciate it but we are running at a lost for time. Your comments were well taken Mrs. Mercadel but I believe these things have been said and I am obligated to yield to a motion that I see forth coming from Councilman Morris but I want to give the council all the opportunity. Any other comments that the council wants to make because you know what is coming and that is going to be a motion to table. Once we get a motion to table there will be no discussion."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "What I would like to offer instead of a motion to table because we are under a time line. I would rather hash this out tonight and decide what we are going to do because this redistricting process is very important. It is going to determine our upcoming elections and we saw what happened with the school board when they had to push their elections back because they didn't get it done. We have 60 days and on the 59th day somebody can come and contest it then we have 60 more days and we may be faced with that similar scenario. So if we need to stop the finance meeting, go into the regular meeting and then come back into finance I would rather stay here for a little while longer then run the risk of having a problem with the election process because that is really going to cost the tax payers money."

Councilman Julien stated, "At this point I would like to make a substitute motion to award the contract to Data Center Services."

Kerry Brown stated, "If I may, many of you are looking at the price and

it looks like you are weighing heavy on that particular price but the law looks at the lowest responsible bidder, not just the lowest bidder, especially under these conditions. So I would encourage you to don't look at the price simply as your factor, it appears as though that is what you are looking at right now and clearly you have that right to make your decision."

Councilman Lee stated, *"If I may counselor, I think it goes beyond that. I had dialogue this afternoon this was brought up late and not to stop you here but we are this is at the council table now and the council needs to make a decision and I know I have a substitute motion to award the contract to Data Center. That is a motion Julien. Do I hear a second?"*

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Councilman Julien moved and Councilman Lewis seconded the motion to award the contract for Reapportionment Services to Data Center.

Councilman Lewis stated, *"Let me tell you why I think we need to let someone else handle this. The problem I have is listening to Mr. Floyd talking and he is saying what happened with South Central and how we had to go to court and everything else that is more important to me than the money. The \$5,000.00 doesn't mean nothing if what they are doing and it isn't working in the justice department I don't see how we can go with them."*

Councilman Julien stated, *"I agree."*

Councilwoman Millet stated, *"I would like to make a substitute motion that we recess and go into the regular meeting."*

MOTION: Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to recess and go into the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Councilwoman Hotard moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to go back into the finance meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Lewis stated, *"I think this is too important to try and handle this up here tonight from what I am hearing."*

Councilman Lee stated, *"So it sounds to me like you are asking maybe to go back to Mr. Morris's original comments. If that be the case let me suggest what I believe as chair is the best way to accomplish this. If I get the second by Mr. Lewis if he withdraws his second and Mr. Julien withdraws his first then we remove the substitute motion and the floor is still open. I at that time could accept a motion to table but I must caution this council that once a motion is made and seconded that no discussion will be held. So before that happens if there are any council members I just want to make sure, this is very unusual that everybody gets an opportunity to say their piece before I accept a motion to table. So please honor my request on that."*

Councilwoman Millet stated, *"I was in this meeting and it was very extensive and very thorough and for you to come at this time and question the effort that was put in by the members of this committee."*

You are going to find it very difficult. Why do we have a meeting? Why do we score? Why are we participating if you are going to question the decision that was made? You had the opportunity to serve and were not there. We came."

Councilman Smith stated, "Let's get something understood Mrs. Millet, we didn't all have the opportunity to come so I am not going to even start going back and forth with this okay. I can question anything I want to question for the simple fact if I think something isn't being done right and there is a better way to do something for the public I have the right to question anything I need to question because I have just as much right sitting on this council as you do. So please don't ever tell me again I can't question something that was done by either this council or administration."

Councilman Julien stated, "I would say that there is no disrespect meant when we are questioning. All we are trying to do is be responsible in spending the tax payer's dollars. So it isn't disrespect to you or a slap or disrespect to administration. All we are trying to do is make sure we get the most bang for the buck for the parish."

Councilman Lee asked, "Do I have a motion Mr. Smith to remove?"

Councilman Smith stated, "I remove my second."

Councilman Julien stated, "I remove my first for the substitute motion."

Councilman Lee stated, "We are back to the original motion. As I said before the recess, this allows us at this point, if the council is complete at this point with their discussions to honor Mr. Morris's motion. Mr. Morris do you have a motion at this time?"

MOTION: Councilman Morris moved and Councilman Lewis seconded the motion to table the item on reapportionment. The motion passed with 7 yeas and 2 against (Cheryl Millet, Usry).

Any and all other financial concerns

There were no other financial concerns at this time.

Adjournment

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.