

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
August 9th, 2011
Chairman Steve Lee
Vice-Chairman Charles Julien

Members: Haston Lewis, Danny Millet, Charles Julien, Jaclyn Hotard, Darnel C. Usry, Cheryl Millet, Lucien Gauff, III, Ronnie Smith, Steve Lee

PRESENT: Haston Lewis, Ronnie Smith, Jaclyn Hotard, Charles Julien, Danny Millet, Lucien Gauff, III, Steve Lee & Darnel C. Usry

ABSENT: Cheryl Millet

BID OPENING REPORT/AWARDS:

Brenda Labat – Bid Award – Authorization to award the contract for the grass cutting services

Brenda Labat, Director of Purchasing, stated, "Administration requests authorization to execute two-year contracts for grass cutting services with the following vendors at the specified amounts. Specific sites and descriptions are included in contracts and if approved would result in a savings to the parish of more than \$97,350.00 over 2010 pricing. Pricing also includes additional sites and a greater overall number of cuts per year. Cypress Land Contractors, LLC of LaPlace for \$29,520.00 per year; Corporate Green, LLC of Baton Rouge for \$29,700.00 per year; St. John Grass Cutting and Maintenance of Edgard for \$56,700.00 per year; B & D Tractor Services, Inc. of LaPlace for \$35,100.00 per year; Hymel's Turf and Landscape, LLC of Reserve for \$12,600.00 per year; Pac's General Contractors, LLC of Edgard for \$30,600.00 per year."

Natalie Robottom, Parish President, stated, "I would like to give the council, as well as the vendors and the general public a little background information on these contracts. Obviously, they have been in existence for some time. They have been extended a couple of times and they are now working off of a purchase order. Early on in the year we decided to conduct a request for proposals so that we would have a fair opportunity for all vendors to participate in this process which was done by my administration. We selected several source selection committees involving the directors and managers of all the areas that were served by these grass cutting contracts. It was an RFP. Pricing is obviously a portion of the scoring criteria, however it was not the sole criteria. In evaluating all of the proposals and in discussions with some of the existing contractors I would like to say for the record many of the proposals that we received this time were significantly lower than what was previously paid. That was a concern to me. So I met with the contractors to see if those were valid numbers and if in actuality they could do the work for those amounts. Those meetings were productive. They were competitive prices. We worked on areas that were not previously addressed and listening to the contractors with regards to what they have previously done and what they thought could possibly change. The recommendation is as it is worded. We have had meetings with several of you. Obviously everybody wasn't able to make it. These are our recommendations."

Councilman Julien stated, "I have had an opportunity to look over the bids and I can't support administration's request for the individuals that we have. It is nothing on the companies. I would op to go with local people. I think the economy that we are dealing with right now we have to keep jobs in St. John. I won't be able to support it as it stands. If you come back with something else I might be able to look at it but as it is I cannot support it."

Natalie Robottom stated, "For the record, five of the six vendors are local."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I would like to go back to our old contracts because looking at some of those bids, some of them were really low. I just don't think you are going to get the service for the money. I will use the airport for example. Out of five contractors I think it was from \$19,000.00 to \$3,000.00, the lowest bidder was \$800.00 for 200 acres. He isn't going to be able to buy the gas for that. If you go through those things step by step you will see what they are asking to do those jobs. They can't do those jobs for that. We are going to get stuck with those jobs. I say what we need to do is give them another year and whoever is there let them work it out and come out with a price for each one of those areas instead of letting these people come up with prices of their own. It isn't like if you go out for a project and you say well it is under the bid or over the bid. The way it is these guys are making up prices themselves. Some of them most probably have never been in the grass business at all. I think we need to stay with our contract and wait until next year and let the new administration or whoever is here go ahead and come up with a bid and lay it out so that we know exactly what we are getting for our money."

Councilman Smith stated, "I have to kind of echo what Mr. Julien and Mr. Lewis has said. I can't support these contracts for several reasons and the main reason is what Mr. Lewis has said. There is no way possible you are going to cut 230 acres for \$850.00 a cut. You can't even supply the gas for that let alone go out and buy the equipment and maintain the equipment, insurance and everything else. I know who the bidder on that contract is and nothing against that bidder. I would love that person to have the work but what is going to happen is that person is not going to be able to do it then we are going to have to hire somebody at an outrageous price to finish that contract out because that bidder's company is going to go under because of that contract not being bid right. I don't want to see that happen especially not to one of our local vendors. I am sorry. I just cannot support these contracts."

Councilwoman Usry asked, "Mrs. Robottom did you speak with the contractor for the airport?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Yes I did and I spoke with the Port who is responsible for the airport. Historically our employees have cut the airport. We have paid for the fuel and the equipment. We were reimbursed for the salary. However in doing that it takes our employees away from some of the parish grass cutting and we thought it would be better served to have a contractor provide the service. As with all of our contractors they will be held to the prices that they submitted. There is a thirty day out clause should they fail to meet their obligation and the discussion was held with the contractor. He is here

tonight if those of you with questions about his ability and his number would like to address those to him we would be happy to have him address that with you. You are not the only persons to express that as a concern. So did we. We asked the question. He submitted a number. We are going to hold him to it. If you would like to address that with him I think he is here."

Councilwoman Usry stated, "I would. I would like to see if he put that bid in and if he had conversation with Mrs. Robottom concerning the number that he submitted."

Natalie Robottom stated, "After speaking before the awards were made, we discussed specifically with the airport what their requirements were, what they were expecting and what the time frame was, what they had previously had and all of those specifications were shared as well. There was a greater range. I think it ranged from \$800.00 to \$7,000.00. That was the range of bids on that one property."

The contractor was not present at the meeting to answer any questions.

Councilman Gauff stated, "I also have a problem with the contract. I know we can't go out and specifically say we only want local businesses to work for us but in keeping with the theme of sales taxes that are supposed to be reducing this year and different issues that we are going to lose money on I would like to see our work stay here in the parish. That would stimulate the economy and keep the fuel prices and money spent in our parish."

Natalie Robottom asked, "So are you all proposing to vote on all the local ones and not the one who is from out of town?"

Councilman Lee stated, "No. There is one motion on the floor and that is to accept all these contracts as was read by the administration. If necessary prior to the vote I will be happy to re-read the motion to make sure that everybody understands. That is how we handled this specific motion and unless the council directs me otherwise that is how this chair is going to handle it."

Councilwoman Cheryl Millet arrived to the meeting at 5:52 PM.

Councilman Julien stated, "For the record, as you said most of them are local. Normally we had grouped the public service contracts together so I was thinking along the lines of the janitorial and grass cutting. Thank you for the information."

MOTION: Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to award the contract for the grass cutting services. The motion failed with 5 yeas (Smith, Hotard, Julien, Gauff, Lewis), 3 yeas (Usry, Cheryl Millet, Danny Millet) and 1 abstaining (Lee).

Brenda Labat – Bid Award – Authorization to award the contracts for Janitorial Services

Brenda Labat stated, "Administration requests authorization to execute a two-year contract with Sparkling Touch, LLC of Paulina for \$73,680.00 per year for Janitorial Services at the P.D. Hebert Complex, the West

Bank Complex and the Community Center. Administration also requests authorization to execute a two-year contract with Enmon Enterprises, LLC of Metairie d/b/a Jani King for \$78,420.00 per year for Janitorial Services at the Service Center Complex and at Garyville and Reserve facilities. These new contracts will result in a savings to the parish of more than \$10,600.00 over 2010 pricing and includes additional sites not previously under contract."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Just that the same procedure was involved. It was a RFP process. The selection committee reviewed all of the proposals, ranked them according to their strengths and experience and also looked at pricing, pricing was a component but it wasn't the only component. Based on the references, experience and work history these two companies were recommended."

There was no motion. Item failed for lack of motion.

Councilwoman Usry asked, "Mrs. Robottom how do you propose to have the grass cut for the remainder of the year?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Actually we have not ceased to cut grass. They have been paid based on their previous pricing on a month to month basis in the hopes that this would be resolved. Until it is they will continue to be paid the overpriced amounts."

Councilwoman Usry asked, "Would it be fitting that we use the supervision part of the proposal where we supervise the grass being cut and people would have to be accountable? Or is it too late to do that?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "That has been started since we came into office. Their signature is required to verify that the actual sites were being cut that were not previously done."

Brenda Labat – Authorization to advertise for 6 control valves for the Ruddock Well System

Brenda Labat stated, "Administration requests authorization to advertise for 6 control valves for the Ruddock Well System. These valves control flow and pressure from the booster pump stations on the well. The current valves are faulty and obsolete and repair would be more costly than purchasing new valves."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "Mr. Savoie, these valves for the Ruddock Plant. Is this a different grade or better grade. I know ours are obsolete. Can you give me a number of what we are looking at dollar wise?"

C.J. Savoie, Parish Engineer, stated, "It is being done through the utility department. I didn't price the valves. I was going to say between \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00 per valve."

MOTION: Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to advertise for 6 control valves for the Ruddock Well System. The motion passed unanimously.

Brenda Labat – Authorization to advertise for an office trailer or the Utilities Department to replace current rental trailer

Brenda Labat stated, "Administration requests authorization to advertise for an office trailer for the Utilities Department to replace the existing trailer on Elm Street. The utilities staff has outgrown their trailer, which will be moved to Station #3 to replace a rental trailer. This purchase and subsequent trailer relocation will result in a savings to the parish of \$1,228.00 per month and \$14,736.00 annually."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Do you know how much the trailer is going to cost us? Do you have an idea? The reason I am asking is because I know that the voters approved a new complex in 2009 and if it is something that we are going to buy and then eventually turn around and not have any value in it or have to sell it. Is that something that we thought about? It may save us more to continue to rent something then it would be to purchase. I just wanted to get clarification."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That was in consideration Ms. Hotard. The entire staff of the utility department will not be relocated in the new building. So we will continue to need a place for them to reside. The estimated cost is between \$40,000.00 and \$50,000.00 but again we are paying twice that amount on rent for one that isn't that size and we could actually own one by purchasing this one."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "So we are not going to consolidate everyone into the new building? We will still have the trailers here?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "The employees will not be in the new building. It is our understanding that once the building where you guys are located now is vacated that will free up some of the space for the directors and staff where we are not going to have all of the trailers lined up behind the building now but on Elm Street that is a prime location for the staff and where they park. So the building that has been there for a long period of time no longer meets their needs."

Councilman Smith asked, "Have we considered instead of buying a trailer to build a permanent structure at that location?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "That has not been a consideration. This is the recommendation of the Utility Department. Obviously there is a building there. There is already an external building behind that which the staff uses and this is a replacement for that and the one there will be moved to station #3. We cannot build one for \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00."

Councilman Smith stated, "My concern then is how long is a trailer like that going to last us? If we pay \$80,000.00, I understand it is twice that cost but if we build a permanent structure that we don't have to worry about in five years from now replacing it again. That is my only concern."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That is a concern Mr. Smith but it is unlikely that we can build the size facility that we need for \$100,000.00. At this time this is the recommendation, we have utilized portables before. This one should last as the other ones have. We have just outgrown them."

Councilman Smith stated, "I will support the recommendation that you made. I was just wondering if it would have just been better to build a permanent structure. Thank you."

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to advertise for an office trailer or the Utilities Department to replace current rental trailer. The motion passed unanimously.

Theresa Rodgers/C.J. Savoie – (Tabled 07-26-11) Authorization to execute change order No. 1 in the amount of \$169,602.00 for the Reserve Drainage Project

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to remove the above mentioned item from the table. The motion passed unanimously.

Theresa Rodgers, CAO, stated, "Administration requests authorization to execute Change Order No. 1 with LA Contracting Enterprises, LLC. for the Reserve Drainage Project. As confirmed by District Attorney Tom Daley, these changes are within the scope of the original project and do not circumvent the bid law. The cost to install additional culverts on West First Street is based on unit pricing from the original low bid. Installation of fire hydrant valves was requested by the Utilities Director during relocation of water lines and hydrants, which were also part of the original project scope, to allow for isolation of water lines during emergencies. The addition of 30 days is required for the added work resulting in a new completion date of October 3. These changes will be funded through the 2009 bond issue, as the project was awarded at \$430,000 less than the original project budget."

Councilman Smith stated, "I am going to be totally honest with you. I don't like approving a change order for almost \$200,000.00. I don't care if it is in the scope of the project or not. I don't like it. It should have been done the right way the first time. I am going to support it because I know that the people in that area need this drainage done. I don't want those people's homes flooding or them having the problems that they are having so I am going to support it. I just want the public to know that I am not in agreement with the way it was done."

Councilman Gauff stated, "In representing District II and the people on W. 1st, I am for it. I think we need to complete this project. We need to get the drainage system in while we are in the area. I think it would be costly to spend time re-bidding this and getting another contractor in that area. I do see the importance of ethically following the rules and laws of the \$150,000.00 to not exceed but at this time I just think it would be more costly. The people need this to happen now. I am in support of it."

Councilman Julien stated, "Well I basically feel the same way Mr. Smith does and Mr. Gauff. I think when we are thinking about fiscal responsibility we have an obligation to spend the tax dollars wisely. I don't think the tax payers want us to come and allow businesses to come into our parish and ask for another \$170,000.00 after they have asked for something but if this is a service that they will provide and the scope of the work. I will support it. I don't want to in all honesty. I

am because the District Attorney has said that this is legal. I have spoken with the council members and they have urged me to do so but I just think Mr. Smith said it well when he said that we should have done it right the first time."

Natalie Robottom stated, "It is actually a clarification. We appreciate the council for bringing it up as a concern. For the record, I do want to clarify that it was neither illegal or unethical. It was done correctly the first time. It was based on the available budget. It was not a request by the contractor or anyone outside of the parish. It was a request from the council members of that district to complete a project because the project came in under bid those funds were available. We did not alter the pricing. We have not attempted to alter it. It is an extension of the existing road project and as an administration we would not bring something before this council that was either illegal or unethical."

Councilman Julien stated, "We may not bring anything intentionally but people make mistakes Mrs. Robottom."

MOTION: Councilman Millet moved and Councilman Gauff seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to execute change order No. 1 in the amount of \$169,602.00 for the Reserve Drainage Project. The motion passed unanimously.

Theresa Rodgers/C.J. Savoie – Authorization to execute revised work authorization No. 13 with Shread-Kuyrkendall & Assoc, Inc. for additional resident inspection services required for the Reserve area drainage improvements project in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00

Theresa Rodgers stated, "Administration requests authorization to execute revised Work Authorization No. 13 for additional resident inspection services in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00. This increase corresponds with the 30 day increase in time for the additional drainage work. Funds are available within the original project budget."

MOTION: Councilman Millet moved and Councilman Gauff seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to execute revised work authorization No. 13 with Shread-Kuyrkendall & Assoc, Inc. for additional resident inspection services required for the Reserve area drainage improvements project in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00. The motion passed unanimously.

Theresa Rodgers/C.J. Savoie – Authorization to execute Work Authorization No. 17 with Shread-Kuyrkendall & Assoc, Inc. for surveying and design services for the Red Bud Pump Station drainage improvements project in an amount not to exceed \$102,183.13

Administration requests that the above item be removed from the agenda.

Theresa Rodgers/C.J. Savoie – Authorization to execute revised work authorization No. 13 with Shread-Kuyrkendall & Assoc, Inc for resident inspection services for the Riverlands Drainage improvements project in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00

Theresa Rodgers stated, "Administration requests authorization to execute Revised Work Authorization No. 13 with Shread-Kuyrkendall & Associates, Inc. for resident inspection services for the Riverlands Drainage improvements. The increase covers part-time inspection services through completion of the project on September 1, and is funded in the original project budget."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "I know they have been doing a lot of work in this area and I want to know how close are we for completion of this particular project?"

Theresa Rodgers stated, "We are very close. We are getting to the end of this project. As noted the anticipated completion date is September 1st. There is just a bit of inspection work needed to be done. The inspector is actually going to rotate from project to project and will not be on site full time on this job."

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to execute revised work authorization No. 13 with Shread-Kuyrkendall & Assoc, Inc for resident inspection services for the Riverlands Drainage improvements project in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00. The motion passed unanimously.

Theresa Rodgers/C.J. Savoie – Authorization to execute change order No. 2 with Sea Level Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$24,099.95 for the Lions Water Plant 2MGD Filter addition & sludge pit expansion, Phase VII

Theresa Rodgers stated, "Administration requests authorization to execute Change Order No. 2 in the amount of \$24,099.95 with Sea Level Construction, Inc for the Lions Water Plant expansion. This change includes installation of a new above ground line connected to the exterior wall of the ground storage tank and an 18" valve to shut off the water. This is the only viable solution for providing sufficient flow to the Backwash pump. Funding is available through Louisiana Government Assistance Program (LGAP) funds dedicated to this project."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "I am asking this because at the last meeting we gave \$103,000.00 for the same project and now we need another \$24,000.00. Is this the end or are we going to need another \$24 or \$50 next time?"

C.J. Savoie stated, "This was unfortunate because as you know it is an existing plant and we have a lot of underground subsurface lines that we know where a lot of them are located but we don't know where they all are. We ran into an obstruction since the last and hopefully we are nearing the completion of this job. We should be done in a month. So I am hoping there is nothing else. I have no crystal ball."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "So in other words there could be another line that we have to do again?"

C.J. Savoie stated, "Well this should complete all the subsurface work. I am saying I don't know if there is anything else that we can come up with in existing facility but I don't know of anything else."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "So the lines that we have, the plans that you have created should finish everything up?"

C.J. Savoie stated, "Yes."

Councilwoman Millet stated, "I am going to hold you to that."

MOTION: Councilman Gauff moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to execute change order No. 2 with Sea Level Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$24,099.95 for the Lions Water Plant 2MGD Filter addition & sludge pit expansion, Phase VII. The motion passed unanimously.

Theresa Rodgers – Authorization to execute Change Order No. 1 with Lanco Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$8,730.19 for additional hardware required to complete the Health and Human Services building renovation

Theresa Rodgers stated, "Administration requests authorization to execute Change Order No. 1 with Lanco Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$8,730.19 to complete the Health and Human Services building renovation. This change includes additional doors, door hardware, cabinetry, and restroom hardware for the break room and restroom. The changes were requested by the parish and are funded by a grant through the Louisiana Government Assistance Program and the parish building maintenance line item."

MOTION: Councilwoman Hotard moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to grant administration Authorization to execute Change Order No. 1 with Lanco Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$8,730.19 for additional hardware required to complete the Health and Human Services building renovation. The motion passed unanimously.

Angelic Sutherland – Authorization to amend the contract with Krebs, LaSalle, LeMieux Consultants, Inc for canal permitting services to list Krebs LaSalle Environmental, LLC as the contracting party

Angelic Sutherland, Assistant to the Parish President, stated, "Administration requests authorization to sign the consent form notification acknowledging the acquisition of Krebs, LaSalle, LeMieux Consultants, Inc. (KLL) by Gulf Engineers & Consultants, Inc. (GEC). Subsequently, GEC requests that the canal permitting contract with the parish be modified to list Krebs LaSalle Environmental L.L.C. as the contracting party with St. John Parish."

MOTION: Councilwoman Hotard moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to amend the contract with Krebs, LaSalle, LeMieux Consultants, Inc for canal permitting services to list Krebs LaSalle Environmental, LLC as the contracting party. The motion passed unanimously.

Angelic Sutherland – Authorization to renew the contract for Code Enforcement Officer Carl Hilt

Angelic Sutherland stated, "Administration requests authorization to renew the Code Enforcement contract with Carl Hilt for one year. The new contract is at a rate of \$1750.00 per month, which is in accordance

with the adopted pay scale from 2007. The contract is effective August 3, 2011 through August 2, 2012."

Councilwoman Millet stated, *"I just think Mr. Hilt is doing a great job and I commend you all for making sure that this contract got renewed. Thank you."*

MOTION: Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to renew the contract for Code Enforcement Officer Carl Hilt. The motion passed unanimously.

Any and all other financial concerns

There were no other financial concerns at this time.

Adjournment

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