

CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM
Special Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 9, 2020

The Special Board Meeting of the Utility Board of Trustees was conducted on the 9th day of June, 2020 at 3:00 P.M. by videoconference via ZOOM.us.

Board Members Present: Michael Garza, Chairman
Kevin Campbell, Vice Chairman
Michael Murphy, Trustee
Curtis Bonner, Trustee
Chris Bartnesky, Trustee

Staff Present: Tim Skoglund, General Manager
Robert Canterbury, System Engineer
Gene McCullough, System Attorney
Ronald De La Garza, Finance & Revenue Director
John McKenna, IT Director
Elizabeth Soto, Human Resources Director
San Juana Garcia, Purchasing Manager

City Staff Present: Carlos Sanchez, Assistant City Manager

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: OPEN MEETING AND WELCOME

Curtis Bonner, Trustee, called the meeting to order at 3:02 P.M. and asked if the Agenda had been posted in accordance with the law; Tim Skoglund, responded affirmatively.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: COMMUNICATION / INPUT FROM CUSTOMERS AND RESIDENTS OF HARLINGEN

None

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: RESOLUTIONS

a) R1920-33: Approving an agreement for credit card payment processing services

Tim Skoglund reported this item had been tabled at the last Board Meeting and requested a motion to bring it off the table for discussion.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Michael Garza

Tim Skoglund briefly overviewed the recent quest to identify an improved credit card processing service and gave the floor to Ron De La Garza, Finance & Revenue Director, to report the results of the Waterworks' research and negotiations. Mr. De La Garza stated that customers who had been paying their bills with a credit card were assessed a \$3.00 convenience fee by Hamer Enterprises, the Waterworks' current processing service

CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM
Special Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 9, 2020

vendor. As a precaution against the spread of COVID-19, the main office lobby had been closed to customers, and a lower payment processing charge was viewed as a way to reduce the financial burden associated with this payment option.

Hamer Enterprises had declined to offer a reduced processing charge when staff first inquired at the onset of the pandemic and closure of the Main Office. Proposals from other vendors were informally solicited. Mr. De La Garza presented a chart comparing the fees, services and terms of vendors' proposals. In consideration of all factors, InvoiceCloud offered the best proposal at the lowest processing fee of \$2.45 per transaction.

The vendors considered offered similar features including autopay, security, and payment portals; however, InvoiceCloud had enhanced features including a more advanced promotion of paperless billing and a more customer-friendly interface allowing customer review of prior billing and consumption history.

Discussion by the Board ensued. Contract terms were discussed in regard to timeliness of deposit of funds in the Waterworks' account and the three-year contract term with no fee changes. Chairman Garza asked IT Director, John McKenna, if the Waterworks' system was capable of handling this new service. Mr. McKenna stated the Waterworks' system was good to go. Other discussion arose as to how the customer would be able to sign in with the new service provider. Mr. De La Garza explained that he and InvoiceCloud would work together and inform our customers of the new set-up and services. InvoiceCloud's main office is from Braintree, MA but it has a local development office in Brownsville, TX.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R1920-33 – approving an agreement for credit card payment processing services

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Michael Murphey

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (5-0).

b) R1920-39: Awarding construction contracts for Main Office Parking Lot Improvements

Tim Skoglund explained a previous sole bid for the project had been rejected at a previous Board Meeting because of excessive price.

Robert Canterbury, System Engineer, explained the re-bid had been solicited in separate packages for the site civil work and for landscaping work. This approach had achieved better results. Mr. Canterbury shared a presentation explaining the details of the parking lot improvements.

Chairman Garza expressed his concerns about sharing the parking lot with the bar next door, noting there had been several instances in the past where bar staff had not cleaned

CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM
Special Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 9, 2020

up the parking lot mess after closing time. Mr. Canterbury explained a plan of action for non-compliance and added that gates on both entrances could be installed to prevent use of the parking lot outside of working hours.

Curtis Bonner, Trustee, reported he was not in favor of this project. He expressed concern that some people could not pay their water bills because they have lost their jobs on account of the pandemic and he didn't think the expense was justified at the present time to make the parking lot pretty.

Mr. Skoglund explained it was a functional issue, that the parking lot did not meet city code and ADA requirements, and that its current condition was hazardous for senior citizens, a customer group more likely to visit the office and most susceptible to unsafe conditions. In regard to aesthetic improvement, he stated the project was consistent with the character and quality found at other City properties.

Discussion by the Board ensued, Trustee Campbell asked if an overlay would be option. Mr. Canterbury explained that was not a safe way to go because the parking lot has cracks in the foundation, and it would be a matter of time before the cracks surface on the new overlay. He added that an overlay would not address the issue of Code compliance. Trustee Bartnesky informed the Board the parking was indeed in need of repair and updating to City Code. He explained the investment now would be better than a law suit later. Trustee Murphy asked if this project had been included in the budget, and Mr. Skoglund replied that it had been. Continued discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R1920-39 – awarding construction contracts for Main Office Parking Lot Improvements

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Michael Murphy

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (4-1). Curtis Bonner, opposed

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, Curtis Bonner, Trustee, called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:09 P.M.

Motion: Chris Bartnesky
Second: Michael Garza

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (5-0).

Attest:



Nilda Sanchez, Board Secretary