

Legislation Text

File #: 15-20077, Version: 1

Water Customer Self-Service Mobile Application and Web Portal Services

Action:

- A. Approve the purchase of a Water Customer Self-Service Mobile Application and Web Portal Solution and other related services from various contracts,**
- B. Approve a contract with Milestone Utility Services to provide, implement, and maintain the Water Customer Self-Service Mobile Application and Web Portal for an initial term of five years,**
- C. Approve an amendment to the existing contract with EMA, Inc. to provide Water Customer Self-Service Solution: Mobile Application and Web Portal Consulting Services for an additional term of one year,**
- D. Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute other contracts or to amend existing city contracts in support of the Water Customer Self-Service Mobile Application and Web Portal Solution, to include configuration, development, other specialized implementation/integration services, maintenance, licensing, or other support services,**
- E. Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to three one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved, and**
- F. Authorize the City Manager to purchase such additional software licenses, services, hardware, maintenance, and support as required to maintain the system for as long as the city uses the system.**

Staff Resource(s):

Angela Charles, Charlotte Water
Markell Storay, Innovation & Technology
Teresa Smith, Finance

Explanation

Actions A-C

- Approval of contracts with Milestone Utility Services and EMA will enable staff to begin implementing a new Customer Self-Service Mobile Application and Web Portal solution, which will replace the city's existing "My Citizen Services" website, providing a centralized self-service portal for water customers that supports the following improvements, including:
 - Enhanced visibility of water consumption activity and presentation of billing information,
 - Improvements to accessibility and inclusivity,
 - Enhanced online and mobile self-service user experience,
 - Addition self-service functions, and
 - More intuitive bill payment processing.
- The Milestone solution will also provide enhanced accessibility through a number of key new customer-facing features, including the mobile application, texting capabilities, and live chat and chatbot functionality.

- On June 9, 2022, the city issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Customer Self-Service Mobile Application and Web Portal Solution; 12 responses were received. Milestone Utility Services was selected as the company that best meets the city's needs in terms of qualifications, experience, cost, and responsiveness to RFP requirements.
- On August 13, 2020, the city issued an RFP for Customer Self-Service Solution: Web Portal and Mobile Application Consulting Services; 15 responses were received. EMA, Inc. was selected as the company that best met the city's needs in terms of qualifications, experience, cost, and responsiveness to RFP requirements.
- The EMA, Inc. contract was approved by the City Manager's office in June 2021 for an initial term of one year with the option to renew for up to two one-year terms. It is currently set to expire in June of 2024.

Actions D and E

- Staff are preemptively seeking authorizations for additional contracts or amendments to existing city contracts needed during implementation to enable an uninterrupted implementation process. Specific additional services include, but are not limited to:
 - Configuration services,
 - Development services,
 - Other specialized implementation services, and/or
 - Maintenance, licensing, or other support services.

All Actions Summary

- The city estimates that initial aggregate expenditures across all contracts, including contingency, for the implementation to be \$3,400,000.
- The city estimates ongoing annual aggregate expenditures across all contracts to be \$295,000.

Background

- The "My Citizen Services" portal implemented more than a decade ago to provide a simple user interface to allow water customers to make payments.
- As technology has matured, and customer expectations have increased, the number of standard features provided by current vendors has increased to meet the demand.
- Charlotte Water conducted an RFP to find a consultant who specializes in utility customer portals to help understand our needs and the expectations of our customers. They presented the state of the market and analyzed the portals of companies that are known for a high degree of customer satisfaction. This vendor, EMA, Inc., has continued to provide consultative advice during the RFP to select the Water Customer Self-Service Mobile Application and Web Portal Solution.

Charlotte Business INclusion

The city negotiates subcontracting participation after the proposal selection process (Part C: Section 2.1(h) of the Charlotte Business INclusion Policy). Milestone Utility Services has identified the following certified firm to be utilized as the project evolves:

- Miles Technology Solutions, LLC (MBE, SBE) (training)

Fiscal Note

Funding: UMS Program Fund