



Legislation Text

File #: 19-1023, **Version:** 1

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the North Port Commission

FROM: Peter D. Lear, CPA, CGMA, City Manager

TITLE: Provide direction for Utilities staff on revisions to the Opt-in Program for the Cross-Connection Control Program.

Recommended Action

Provide direction for Utilities staff on revisions to the Opt-in Program for the Cross-Connection Control Program.

Background Information

Section 78-129 of the City Code requires the Utilities Department to offer all residential customers with a backflow prevention device the option to participate in an "Opt-in" Program which authorizes the City to coordinate required device testing, repairs and installations and place all applicable charges and fees on the customer's utility bill once the work has been completed. Historically, the Department has utilized a pool of plumbers to perform these services, however, Contract 2013-02 expired on September 30, 2015. At that time, the Cross-Connection Control section of the Florida Administrative Code was being revised and subsequently, the City's code was updated to be more consistent with the state regulations.

On February 1, 2019, Request for Bid (RFB) 2019-56 Backflow Installation, Testing, and Repair/Replacement Services was advertised to solicit a pool of plumbers to perform the required services as part of the Opt-in Program. Bids were originally due on February 26, 2019, however, because no submittals were received by that date, the due date was extended by two weeks. On March 12, 2019, one bid was received as well as five Statements of Non-Submittal.

Due to the volume of customers that participate in the Opt-in Program, one firm is not enough to perform the required services; and with the current volume of construction underway within the city, Utilities has been unable to secure the required minimum of three firms that are willing and able to commit to performing these services for the City. In addition, it becomes a quality control issue in that the same company should not test and certify their own repairs.

To continue the existing Opt-in Program as written in the City Code, without a pool of plumbers to perform the work, the work would have to be completed in-house. The staff needed to perform these duties do not exist currently. The Utilities Department would need to reassign existing field staff, taking them away from other critical duties, and, as the budget process permits, request additional field and support personnel to manage the program. This would lead to a significant increase in personnel costs for the Department, which would be transferred on to utility customers through substantial future rate increases.

Due to the difficulty in procuring the services required and the inefficiencies inherent in performing this specific work in-house, Utilities recommends making changes to the City Code to eliminate the Opt-in Program and require all customers to coordinate testing, repair and installation services with their own plumbers.

Strategic Plan

Develop and promote City governance that fosters trust and utilizes departmental strengths and innovative philosophies to facilitate effective and efficient provision of all City services

Financial Impact

Procurement

Attachments:

1. City of North Port Code Section 78-129
2. RFB 2019-56 with Addendum
3. RFB 2019-56 Statements of Non-Submittal

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