

MARIN GENERAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 11, 2014
TO: MGSA Board of Directors
FROM: Paul Berlant, Executive Officer
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM E: Streetlight Maintenance Contract Update

Recommendation

Accept this update regarding the MGSA Streetlight Maintenance Contract. No action is requested at this time.

Background

In May 2012, MGSA approved an extension of the contract with what was then called Republic ITS for county-wide streetlight maintenance. Republic had already been purchased by Siemens, an international company, which has subsequently changed the name of the firm doing Marin County streetlight maintenance to simply "Siemens." The agreement provided for a choice of three levels of service, a rate schedule that does not change during the three year term and which reflects lower rates for LED streetlights which were being installed at the time, and better response and tracking of calls for service, among other changes. The agreement also allows for a four-year extension (2015 – 2019) with mutual agreement. Unrelated to the MGSA contract for streetlight maintenance, several of the MGSA members used Republic (Siemens) for traffic signal maintenance and repair as well.

The transition to a new management team upon takeover by Siemens raised a variety of issues, some of which were addressed to the satisfaction of member Public Works personnel, while others still remain. The management personnel for Siemens have also changed from time to time, often making it difficult to make meaningful contact. Some of the complaints I have received from members have been about the initial billings from Siemens and later about lack of response to requests for services, which were in addition to the routine fixture maintenance, yet addressed in the contract.

I have spoken with public works staff from more than one city who inquired about terminating their participation with Siemens. My response has been to ask staff to document issues sufficiently so that I could formally notify Siemens of a failure to perform. Upon notification, Siemens would have the opportunity to cure the failure within a specified period of time. If a cure were not to be achieved, MGSA would be able to commence the termination process called for in the agreement. I have not received documentation to move forward with such a termination action. I have also informed member staff that termination would take almost as long as waiting out the initial term of the contract (June 2015), at which time we could seek proposals from other firms.

We have reached that point in time where I am beginning the proposal process, with the objective of selecting a firm to perform streetlight maintenance starting on July 1, 2015. To that end, I have engaged Andrew Poster, most recently the Interim Public Works Director for the City of Novato and previously the Regional Manager for Republic, to assist me in preparing a Request for Proposals, including working with me to solicit input from MGSA member staff, review and assess proposals, and reach a contract with a competent firm. Our schedule has us commencing the input process in September, issuing the RFP after the first of the year, receiving proposals by the end of March, and awarding a contract at the May 2015 MGSA Board meeting. The new maintenance contract would go into effect on July 1, 2015.

I will begin an outreach to the Public Works staffs in the next several weeks and will keep the Board informed as we progress through the RFP process.