

## Department of Public Works – Engineering Division

### MEMO

TO: Utilities Committee

FROM: Danielle Block, Director of Public Works  
Ross Buetow, City Engineer  
Pete Neuberger, Staff Engineer

SUBJECT: Award of Unit K-23 Native Landscape Management Contract to NES Ecological Services – A Division of Robert E. Lee & Associates, in an amount not to exceed \$215,000.

DATE: March 1, 2023

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The Department of Public Works is requesting approval of the Unit K-23 Native Landscape Management Contract to NES Ecological Services – A Division of Robert E. Lee & Associates, in an amount not to exceed \$215,000. The 2023 combined capital and maintenance native landscaping budget is \$215,000.

#### CONTRACT SCOPE

The Department of Public Works maintains an inventory of 77 stormwater ponds and biofilters, along with several miles of drainage channels that have native landscaping. The proposed maintenance activities included in this contract are mowing, cutting, controlled burns, invasive species and algae control, and adding vegetation to sparsely established and eroding areas at stormwater practices operated by both DPW and Facilities. Proposed new installation activities include preparation, seeding and planting in emergent, shoreline, and upland zones on new stormwater facilities.

#### CONTRACTOR SELECTION

In January 2022 the Department of Public Works issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) from three firms with significant native landscape management experience in Wisconsin. Three proposals were received. The review team initially evaluated each proposal based on the following Technical Scoring criteria:

Technical Scoring (100 Total Possible Points):

- A. Relevant Experience of Firm (Max 35 Points)
- B. Project Team Members (Max 20 Points)
- C. Project Understanding and Approach (Max 35 Points)
- D. Project Schedule (Max 15 Points)

K-23 Native Landscape Management

March 1, 2023

-Page 2-

The RFP also encouraged respondents to offer alternative approaches and prices to proposed tasks. Where appropriate, incorporated select alternative tasks and prices into the evaluations to maximize cost-effectiveness.

After technical scoring was completed, the review team calculated the Overall Score for each proposal by taking the total bid price of each firm's Cost Proposal and dividing it by its respective Technical Score:

Overall Score (Price Per Point) = Cost Proposal ÷ Technical Score

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Firm</u>	<u>Technical Score</u>	<u>Cost Proposal</u>	<u>Price Per Point</u>
1.	RES	97.5	\$172,052	\$1,765
2.	NES	96.0	\$171,414	\$1,786
3.	Merjent	80.0	\$169,973	\$2,125

As indicated above, RES submitted the highest ranked proposal with the best Price Per Point and was selected for 2022 contracted services under unit K-22. NES was ranked a close second.

Since 2012, DPW's practice has been to issue Unit K RFP's every five years, awarding the first year's contract based on the competitive proposal and with annual contracts for the subsequent four years being negotiated using single-source contracts with the highest ranked contractor, subject to staff recommendation and approvals by Utilities Committee and Council each year. The K-22 award memo dated February 15, 2022 also identified that for 2023 through 2026, DPW staff intended to use the same approach, negotiating a single-source contract for Unit K with the selected contractor each year, subject to committee and council approvals at the appropriate times.

However, in February 2023, RES, which is headquartered in Texas and whose main Midwest office is in Brodhead, WI, notified DPW staff that they are shutting down their northeast Wisconsin office in Brillion, and would no longer be able to service the City's Unit K contracts, effective immediately.

Given the late notification from RES, the need to begin K-23 work as soon as possible, and the excellent proposal submitted previously by NES, DPW staff approached NES to determine their willingness to negotiate a single source contract based on their 2022 proposal.

NES agreed and has provided DPW an updated proposal for 2023 that includes a 5% price increase versus their proposed 2022 unit prices. Given the current inflationary environment, DPW staff consider this a reasonable price increase and look forward to the opportunity to work with this local contractor if approval is granted.