



**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
WESLACO CITY COMMISSION
APRIL 18, 2024**

On Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. the City Commission of the City of Weslaco, Texas convened in a Special Meeting at City Hall in the Legislative Chamber, located at 255 South Kansas Avenue with the following member's present:

PRESENT:	Mayor	Adrian Gonzalez
	Mayor Pro Tem	Adrian Farias
	Commissioner	Letty Lopez
	Commissioner	Josh Pedraza
ABSENT:	Commissioner	Israel Gonzalez Jr.
	Commissioner	Greg Kerr
	Commissioner	JP Rodriguez
STAFF PRESENT:	Martin Garza	City Manager
	Norma A. Cantu	City Secretary
	Juan E. Gonzalez	City Attorney

Also present: Aida Vega, Deputy City Secretary, Rosie Cavazos, Finance Director, Rebekah de la Fuente, Director of Planning and Code Enforcement, Omar Rodriguez, Parks and Recreation Director; Albert Aldana, City Engineer other staff members.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Certification of Public Notice.

Mayor Gonzalez called the meeting to order and certified the public notice of the meeting as properly posted Friday, April 12, 2024.

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor led the "Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Flag."

C. Roll call.

Norma A. Cantu, City Secretary, called the roll noting the absence of Commissioners Kerr, Rodriguez and Gonzalez Jr. and a quorum present.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion and interview firms and possible action on the selection and authorize staff to negotiate a contract with a selected architect for RFQ No.: 2023-24-08 Architectural / Engineering Design Services for Boys & Girls Club of Weslaco Facilities Expansion and authorize the Mayor to execute any related documents. Possible action. (Staffed by Parks and Recreation Department.)

Juan E. Gonzalez, City Attorney, addressed the firms and stated as a professional courtesy those firms not presenting if they would wait outside of the room. There was no objection from the firms.

Diverse Studio, Francisco Velasquez, Project Manager, Kathryn Petrauskas, Project Architect and Wes Thiele, Project Design, individually addressed the commission and presented projects completed by them, went over consulting team that included structural, MEP, Civil engineering services, landscape architecture, technology consultant and a cost estimator; stated their goal was to be responsive and available to the needs of the client; stated they had walked the existing site and went over their proposed scope that included Phase I, Master Plan and Phase 2 Design services; important considerations to the project was connectivity of the existing use to the new use and park use and the flexibility of future growth; work with real-time collaboration throughout the project.

In response to questions from the commission, their availability to the project will be a priority and be present as needed with no travel cost incurred to the taxpayer, no projects done locally, have walked the site, and committed to address the needs of the project; a challenge of the project is the physical constraints of the property and is an active site.

ROFA Architects, Michael Alex, ROFA, presented the firms key personnel, that included Luis Figueroa, Humberto Rodriguez, Cesar Roque, went over their positions and experience, are licensed architects, principals and owners; presented their community involvement; they will propose a programming cost, schematic design, construction documents where all principals are involved, diligent to keep schedules and budgets in place, have extensive experience and partnerships with local consulting engineers; showcased award winning designs done; went over work done in Weslaco, completed Boys and Girls Club of Pharr that had similar programming aspects to the proposed project; stated they have long-term successful relationship with many municipalities.

In response to the commission, they use basic materials for durability and longevity such as concrete, block and brick, value engineering is looked at to help with project cost by breaking down the project into phases before bidding phase begins to have the project withing budget.

ERO Architects, Brian Godinez, a Principal and CEO introduced the team and consultants they work with; went over projects done by them that included public sectors, educational facilities, and athletic recreational facilities; projects done are new and/or renovations, went over ongoing projects and completed projects; presented their process for project cost control and quality control; went over current facility and the expectations of the project.

In response to the commission, value engineering will be done from the design phase to minimize cost according to the needs of the project and budget before the bidding process, a challenge is keeping the flow of individuals from one building to the expansion that is a stand-alone but felt there is adequate space for the expansion and are aware of the RDF project.

Mayor Gonzalez stated upon tabulation, the top ranked firm was ERO and entertained a motion.

Commissioner Lopez seconded by Commissioner Pedraza approved to negotiate contract for Architectural/ Engineering Design Services for Boys & Girls Club of Weslaco Facilities Expansion with ERO as presented. The motion carried unanimously; Mayor Gonzalez was present and voting.

Mayor Gonzalez changed the order of the day and introduced item C. There was no objection.

C. Discussion and interview firms and possible action on the selection and authorize staff to negotiate a contract for RFQ 2023-24-18 for Engineering/Planning Services to Conduct Feasibility Studies for Street and Utility Impact Fees and to update the City's Subdivision, Zoning and Building Ordinances process and authorize the Mayor to execute any related documents. Possible action. (Staffed by Planning & Code Enforcement Department.)

Able.City - Carlos Gallinar, Principal and Planning Director, stated the firm was an architectural urban design and planning firm; 40 plus years of experience, 30 plus employees, have done over 10 code rewrites and over 40 planning and policy projects; went over the team and their professional services and experience they will bring to the project; went over office locations to include McAllen; presented a list of clients as well as the different codes done that are user friendly to staff, the community and public sector; well versed with public outreach.

In response to the commission, a challenge is the resistance from the development community following policy and regulations; they would do a study for impact fees and determine what is the maximum within the law and market and ensure Weslaco is competitive with those fees; they would establish modules with input from staff regarding the different areas of planning such as plats, land use, transportation, and urban design for use.

Trimad Consultants, Ricardo Salazar, P.E., went over team profile, experience of key personnel and consultants that would assist with the different scope of work requested and stated office was in Pharr. Javier Garcia, Consultant, went over team expertise, partnerships formed, presented projects completed and ongoing.

In response to the commission, they have done work with cities doing the scope of work requested in the request of qualifications; they are familiar with the IBC (building codes) and what is needed for improvements to be a resilient city; they have several engineers that have worked as City Engineers on staff that would offer training as necessary.

Mayor Gonzalez stated upon tabulation, the top ranked firm was Able.City and entertained a motion.

Commissioner Pedraza seconded by Commissioner Lopez approved staff to negotiate contract for Engineering/Planning Services to Conduct Feasibility Studies for Street and Utility Impact Fees and to update the City's Subdivision, Zoning and Building Ordinances with Abel. City as presented. The motion carried unanimously; Mayor Gonzalez was present and voting.

B. Discussion and interview firms and possible action on the selection and authorize staff to negotiate a contract for RFQ No.: 2023-24-01 Professional/Consulting Services for the Evaluation/Analysis of Infrastructure related to Water and Wastewater Facilities and Utility Management and authorize the Mayor to execute any related documents. Possible action. (Staffed by Asst. City Manager.)

Carollo - Hani Michel, PE and Principal-in-charge presented the team and key personnel that would be involved; stated the firm is dedicated and specializes in water and wastewater operations; have over 50 offices in North America with 8 in Texas and their office in McAllen; Rene Aguilar stated they would do a detail assessment of the current infrastructure using a digital tool that takes photo and document the conditions to determine useful life of the city's assets for above and underground infrastructure; Ann Casey went over how they will develop a capital improvement plan to determine budgets; will use a rate model for scenario planning of charges; presented list of clients, location and projects done by them to include a recent project for the Seattle Public Utilities assessment of their water treatment facility.

In response to the commission, key personnel are professional engineers that specialize in water and wastewater and are national certified for water and wastewater operations; any field data collected during the assessment of assets will belong to the city.

Halff - Marcus Diaz, Principal-in-Charge stated they were established in 1993; offices in the RGV located in McAllen and Brownsville with over 70 employees in the RGV; presented key personnel and their roles; Kristina Leal, Project Manager, went over the firms capabilities highlighting on staff experience with environmental requirements for water; have MEP Engineers in the McAllen offices; approach to public outreach important and develop a user friendly tool for the community to understand; went over project experiences to include Weslaco projects; understand all TCEQ requirements and also assist with grants and funding applications.

In response to the commission, they are licensed professional engineers on staff, certified to work on federal projects; staff member belongs to professional associations related to water/wastewater operations, any data/plans compiled will belong to the city.

Ambiotec - Carlos Marin, Principal with Ambiotec, presented an overview of how Weslaco can leverage its current utility assets to capture economic opportunities; spoke about advanced manufacturing, population growth and strengths of the RGV, went over five elements to capture industrial investment, stated Phase I would involve a Financial Management Technical review (audit) to identify monetary losses of utility operations and turn them into assets. Phase II would be to capture funding/incentives that would include state/federal, philanthropic, public-private capital and investment incentive programs (time lapsed.)

In response to the commission, an assessment would be done to identify the inefficiency of operations to include financial, administrative, infrastructure, O&M and regulatory compliance and take corrective measures for potential savings, stated key personnel included Carlos Rubinstein has experience in regulatory compliance and public sector management and was the Chairman of the Texas water Development Board and Commissioner of TCEQ, Rob Ori, evaluates water/wastewater utilities and does the financial management preparation, Hank Habicht value to the team is philanthropic funding sources, Gary Deremer experience is bill financing of water/wastewater facilities and experts in operations and maintenance.

Mayor Gonzalez stated upon tabulation, the top ranked firm was Ambiotec and entertained a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Farias seconded by Commissioner Pedraza approved staff to negotiate contract for Professional/Consulting Services for the Evaluation/Analysis of Infrastructure related to Water and Wastewater Facilities and Utility Management with Ambiotec as presented. The motion carried unanimously; Mayor Gonzalez was present and voting.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Farias seconded by Commissioner Pedraza moved to adjourn the special meeting of April 18, 2024, at 8:20 p.m. The motion carried unanimously; Mayor Gonzalez was present and voting.

CITY OF WESLACO

Adrian Gonzalez, **MAYOR**

ATTEST:

Norma A. Cantu, **CITY SECRETARY**