

Agenda Report

March 23, 2009

To: CITY COUNCIL

From: CITY MANAGER

Subject: Authorize the City Manager to Issue a Purchase Order to Geoscience Support Services Inc. for \$200,000 for Consulting Services Related to Determining the Source of Perchlorate Contamination of the City's Sunset Wells

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Authorize the City Manager to issue a purchase order (PO) to Geoscience Support Services Inc. (Geoscience) for \$200,000 for engineering consulting services related to the investigation of the source of perchlorate contamination of the City's Sunset Wells.
2. Grant the proposed Purchase Order an exemption from the competitive selection process of the Competitive Bidding and Purchasing Ordinance pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.049 (B), contracts for which the City's best interest are served.

Competitive bidding is not required pursuant to City Charter Section 1002 (F) professional or unique services.

BACKGROUND:

All water supplied by the City of Pasadena for domestic purposes is required to meet the drinking water standards established by the State Department of Public Health, in accordance with the Water Supply Permit, No. 04-15-99P-10, dated November 9, 1999.

Pasadena Water and Power (PWP) owns 16 groundwater wells. Four wells are located in Monk Hill sub-area of the Raymond Basin. The remaining 12 wells are in the Pasadena Sub-area of which five wells are adjacent to Sunset Reservoir (Sunset Wells) and seven are located on the east side of town (East-side wells).

In 1997, PWP detected perchlorate in the Monk Hill and the Sunset Wells. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) admitted perchlorate contamination in the Monk Hill Wells due to disposal practices in the 1940s and 1950s, associated with research at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) facility. In January 2006 NASA agreed to fund a treatment facility for the Monk Hill Wells and to investigate the source of the perchlorate captured by the Sunset Wells.

On January 31, 2007, NASA submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the EPA Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (RQWCB) a report, concluding that the source of perchlorate at the Sunset wells did not originate from JPL.

PWP requested proposals to evaluate NASA's report from two consultants with extensive experience in groundwater contamination: Carollo Engineers (Carollo) and Geoscience. Carollo declined due to insufficient in-house expertise and recommended Geoscience as the best company for this project. Geoscience submitted a proposal. PWP retained Geoscience under a \$35,000 purchase order (PO) to evaluate the report and to determine if the conclusions are valid. Geoscience reviewed NASA's report, identified errors and incorrect assumptions, and concluded the data does not support NASA's claim that the perchlorate in the Sunset Wells did not originate from JPL. EPA and DTSC also questioned the validity of NASA's conclusion.

On June 30, 2007 the PO expired and a new PO was opened in FY 2008 for \$75,000. The original \$35,000 purchase order was completely exhausted of funds.

PWP, EPA, and DTSC submitted comments to NASA, and in December 2008 NASA responded reiterating the original conclusion that the perchlorate impacting the Sunset Wells does not originate from JPL. EPA requested that NASA provide additional groundwater analyses.

Ongoing services on as-needed basis from Geoscience will be necessary as the investigation moves forward, but the existing PO will expire on June 30, 2009. The \$64,541 remaining in the current PO will be used for these services until the PO expires.

To help PWP with identifying the perchlorate source of origin, Geoscience provided recommendations for additional work to be performed beyond the scope of the current PO. This work will continue into FY 2010 and consists of the following:

- More extensive groundwater modeling to delineate groundwater flow movement between JPL and Sunset Wells
- Further evaluation of the extent of the perchlorate plume originating from JPL
- Perchlorate isotope analysis ("finger printing") which is a special type of forensic engineering

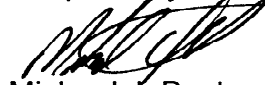
Geoscience's estimate for this additional work including developing a long term action plan is \$200,000. In the past PWP relied on NASA's experts to evaluate the source of contamination in the Sunset Wells. With the approval of the additional work listed above, PWP will pursue the responsible parties for the contamination independently of NASA's investigation, as discussed with Council in the past. Depending on the outcome of the additional work, PWP will evaluate the next steps of the action plan, including possible legal actions. PWP is pursuing separately construction of the second perchlorate treatment plant for the Sunset Wells. This project is to identify the responsible parties for the perchlorate contamination.

Geoscience is an expert in groundwater flow, solute transport modeling, hydrology, geology, well design, water quality, contamination and remediation. The consultant is familiar with the Raymond Basin groundwater flow, dropping water levels and contamination issues. Geoscience has been working with PWP on the Sunset Wells contamination since 2007. Staff is satisfied with the level of services provided by the company, and with the consultant's timely response. Therefore, staff recommends authorizing the City Manager to open a new purchase order with Geoscience for \$200,000.

FISCAL IMPACT:


Sufficient funds are available in the Water Capital Improvement Program Budget, Account 1062 – Sunset Perchlorate Treatment.

Respectfully submitted,



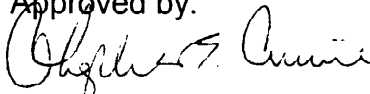
Michael J. Beck
City Manager

Prepared by:



Roumiana M. Voutchkova
Engineer
Water and Power Department

Approved by:



Phyllis E. Currie
General Manager
Water and Power Department

**Disclosure Pursuant to the
City of Pasadena Taxpayer Protection Amendment of 2000
Pasadena City Charter, Article XVII**

Contractor hereby discloses its trustees, directors, partners, officers, and those with more than a 10% equity, participation, or revenue interest in Contractor, as follows:
(If printing, please print legibly. Use additional sheets as necessary.)

1. Contractor Name:

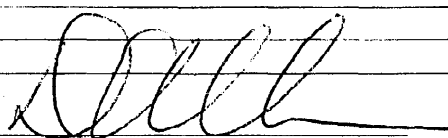
GEOSCIENCE Support Services, Inc.

2. Name(s) of trustees, directors, partners, officers of Contractor:

Dennis E. Williams - President
Virginia M. Williams - Vice President
Meridee Williams - Corporate Secretary

3. Names of those with more than a 10% equity, participation or revenue interest in Contractor:

Dennis E. Williams - 50%
Virginia M. Williams - 50%

Prepared by: 

Title: President

Date: _____

For office use only
Contract No. _____