

Agenda Report

December 14, 2009

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Public Works Department

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE CONTRACT WITH FIRE TRUCKS PLUS TO EXCHANGE A 1999 KOVATCH MOBILE EQUIPMENT (KME) LADDER TRUCK FOR A 1992 SEAGRAVE LADDER TRUCK

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

- 1) Enter into a contract with Fire Trucks Plus for the exchange of a 1999 KME Ladder Truck for a 1992 Seagrave Ladder Truck modified to meet all National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) 1901 standards at no charge to the City of Pasadena; and
- 2) Find that a public purpose is served by exempting the proposed exchange from the provisions of the Surplus Equipment and Goods Ordinance, P.M.C.4.04, pursuant to section 4.04.080; and
- 3) It is further recommended that, to the extent that the acquisition of the 1992 Seagrave Ladder truck might be viewed as a separate procurement transaction, the City Council exempt this transaction from competitive bidding based on impracticality.

BACKGROUND:

In 1999 the City of Pasadena purchased a new KME ladder truck to replace an older ladder truck that had exceeded its useful lifecycle. The KME design incorporates a 100 foot ladder with a 300 gallon water tank. This design allows it to perform as both a pumper and a ladder truck. This design, as well as the heavy duty cycle required to respond to over 900 service calls annually, has caused various mechanical and operational problems leading to excessive downtime for the Fire Department. In addition major component failures have occurred that are a direct result of the vehicle's configuration, design, and duty cycle.

These limitations include the following; due to its size the unit can only travel on certain City streets; due to its weight the stopping power is not adequate and the brakes have overheated several times making the vehicle unsafe. Other problems include unreliable ladder operation due to electrical problems, excessive tire wear, broken axles, and the inability to respond to the mountainous areas of the City. In the last five years, maintenance and repairs have resulted in the vehicle being out of service 37% of the time. In comparison, over the same period, the City's other ladder trucks have been out of service only 15% of the time, even though they are older vehicles. This has forced the City to place the KME in reserve status and use the reserve ladder truck for front line duty. Due to safety issues, reliability, out of service time, unit size, and the issue of major component failure, the KME has not met the needs of the Pasadena Fire Department.

Fire Trucks Plus has offered to accept the KME in trade for an upgraded 1992 Seagrave Ladder Truck. The acquisition of this Seagrave ladder truck will address the Department's need to have a third reliable ladder truck which will be placed into reserve status that will also have the same configuration and operation of the City's current fleet along with the ability to maneuver around city streets in a safer manner than the larger KME.

This vehicle is being outfitted to meet all NFPA 1901 standards required for firefighter safety including a larger front and rear brake package, larger aerial ladder cables for better stability, and an NFPA approved LED lighting package for better visibility. All of these improvements will bring the Seagrave in compliance with all 2010 NFPA 1901 standards.

This ladder will also undergo the latest testing standards issued by Underwriters Laboratories (UL) prior to being delivered to the City of Pasadena.

Acquisition of this replacement ladder truck will compliment the existing fleet of ladder trucks currently in service, placing two in frontline service and this one in reserve. One of the frontline vehicles will be replaced by a new truck scheduled for delivery in April 2010.

Additionally, the Seagrave has very low mileage (56,000 miles), and will be completely refurbished by Fire Trucks Plus and delivered to the City in excellent condition. Comparatively, the KME, although it is seven years younger, has almost 45,000 miles, despite its high incidence of downtime and reserve status. Placing the refurbished, low mileage Seagrave in reserve status will help to extend its lifecycle and ensure that maintenance costs will remain far below the projected costs for the KME if the City were not to trade it. City mechanics have inspected the Seagrave and submitted a list of repairs that will be made as part of the refurbishment. The vehicle will be inspected again before delivery is made and a one year warranty period will be included as part of the contract.

Analysis by both Public Works (Fleet Maintenance) and Fire Department staff has

determined that this will be an equal and fair trade based on the factors mentioned above.

Lastly, the need to have a reserve unit in the City has become a major concern, with the City recently having to borrow a ladder truck from the City of Los Angeles while one of the two front line trucks was down for maintenance. Although many of the cities around Pasadena have reserve ladder trucks they are reluctant to loan them out as they have only one reserve. Acquiring the Seagrave will provide the City with a level of reserve units adequate to fulfill the City's needs.

Exempting the proposed exchange from the provisions of the Surplus Equipment and Goods Ordinance, P.M.C.4.04, pursuant to section 4.04.080 will serve a public benefit by providing the following:

- Providing a ladder truck for the City of Pasadena that is able to meet the rigorous duty cycles required by the numerous service calls received by the Fire Department;
- Based on the City's experience with similar Seagrave vehicles, this will provide a reliable, low maintenance, low mileage alternative for the City to use as a reserve rig;
- Provide a ladder truck that is able to adequately maneuver throughout the entire City, including mountainous areas not accessible by the KME;
- Provide a vehicle that is updated to meet the latest in safety requirements mandated by the NFPA;
- Allow the City to acquire a vehicle whose value has been estimated at approximately \$175,000 at no cost;
- Standardize the fleet of ladder trucks which will reduce training needs and allow personnel to be assigned as needed opposed to having only fire engineers with specialized knowledge work when the rig is assigned to their station.

Additionally, there will be a public benefit realized by removing the KME from service. The benefits realized will be:

- Elimination of excessive downtime which places an undue burden on the rest of the Fleet, especially when the Fire Department is required to respond to mutual aid requests which depletes both equipment and personnel;
- Reducing the cost of maintenance for an essential piece of equipment. The KME has cost almost \$350,000 in maintenance over its lifecycle, an annual average of \$37,500. By comparison, the two other Seagraves in the City fleet have cost an annual average of less than \$20,000 even though they are both older rigs;
- Realizing a dollar value through a trade of vehicles that could not be gained through a public auction or sealed bid. The KME cannot be resold at auction for

reuse by a municipal Fire Department because it does not meet current NFPA standards. It is estimated that it will only bring approximately \$20,000 at a public bid. Parties interested in obtaining the KME through a sealed bid sale are limited and would likely result in a low ball offer due to the work and cost needed to upgrade and repair the unit for resale.

Also, the City Council is asked to approve the acquisition of the 1992 Seagrave ladder truck without competitive bidding on the grounds that it is impractical to bid and that the public interest would not be served by bidding. The impracticality doctrine is recognized and created by the case of Graydon v. Pasadena Redevelopment Agency. It is impractical to bid and the public interest would not be served by bidding for the following reasons:

- The 1992 Seagrave being acquired as a result of this exchange is essentially one of a kind and is not available from other perspective bidders;
- Fire Trucks Plus is the only dealer of refurbished fire equipment on the West Coast; other dealers do exist but are located in the Midwest and on the East Coast. The regional proximity of Fire Trucks Plus allows them to specialize in providing vehicles that meet all the requirements for State of California municipal Fire Departments;
- Fire Department staff spent approximately one year looking for available vehicles that could be refurbished to meet the City of Pasadena needs. The Seagrave was the only such vehicle found during this timeframe;
- Even if another vehicle were found that meets the City's needs, staff time to travel to another vendor, inspect the vehicle, negotiate repairs and refurbishment that meet NFPA and California state standards, prepare an open specification, and conduct a formal bid could add significantly to the cost of acquisition.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

This action supports one of the City Council's three year goals to ensure public safety.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The acquisition of this 1992 Seagrave ladder truck will replace the KME and the contract will be issued as an exchange at no cost to the City. The 1992 Seagrave would continue to follow the replacement schedule of the KME with no impact to the replacement fund. Maintenance costs are also projected to decrease with the acquisition of the Seagrave.

Respectfully submitted,



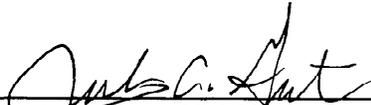
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ANDREW GREEN
Director of Finance

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

Contractor/Organization hereby discloses its trustees, directors, partners, officers, and those with more than 10% equity, participation, or revenue interest in Contractor/Organization, as follows:

(If printing, please print legibly. Use additional sheets as necessary.)

1. Contractor/Organization Name: Fire Trucks Plus, Inc.

2. Type of Entity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> non-government <input type="checkbox"/> nonprofit 501(c)(3), (4), or (6)

3. Name(s) of trustees, directors, partners, officers of Contractor/Organization:
Paul Batista
Pamela Escamilla

4. Names of those with more than a 10% equity, participation or revenue interest in Contractor/Organization:
Paul Batista
Pamela Escamilla

Prepared by: Pamela Escamilla

Title: President

Phone: (877)397-3875

Date: 12/10/09