



Legislation Text

File #: 60005, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

The proposed resolution authorizes a non-competitive purchase from the Ford Meter Box Company, Inc./ Core & Main Inc. for up to \$120,000 for water meter lab testing equipment. The 2020 Adopted Capital Budget for the Water Utility Vehicles and Equipment program includes funding for this purchase (Munis 12339). No additional appropriation is required.

Title

A Resolution to authorize the noncompetitive purchase of goods from Ford Meter Box Company, Inc. / Core & Main Inc. as a sole source provider of water meter lab testing equipment for the Madison Water Utility.

Body

PREAMBLE:

Madison Water Utility owns and maintains over 60,000 water meters which are installed at customer properties and used to bill customers and provide them with their water use data through Madison Water Utility's online conservation tool. To ensure accuracy, water meters are regularly exchanged and tested in Madison Water Utility's lab or "Meter Shop."

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) sets regulatory compliance codes for meter testing operations. Madison Water Utility is modernizing its Meter Shop to bring testing standards of practice up-to-date, allow for electronic record retention, and to perform water audits as required by the PSC.

This resolution is for a noncompetitive purchase of a retrofit kit from Ford Meter Box, Inc. (Ford) to modernize an existing Ford bench in the Meter Shop. This bench currently uses outdated "cubic foot" measurements, volumetric tanks, and sight glasses. The kit from Ford would retrofit this bench to a gravimetric scale and sensor conversion to electronic registration, automate the testing process, and allow digital documentation of the data.

Madison Water Utility has standardized its lab testing procedures and their meter facility's internal infrastructure was designed and built to accommodate Ford equipment. The use of a single manufacturer allows Madison Water Utility staff to test, rebuild and retest meters more efficiently and cost effectively. Lab testing procedures and facility infrastructure were designed and built to accommodate Ford equipment. There is only one distributor for Ford products in the area, and it is not possible to purchase a retrofit kit from another manufacturer.

Switching manufacturers would cost significantly more since Madison Water Utility would have to purchase an entirely new testing bench instead of retrofitting an existing bench. A new bench could require changes to the facility to accommodate different bench dimensions. There would also be additional costs and inefficiencies because the new bench would not be compatible with all of the Ford parts and equipment that the utility has in stock.

The Ford retrofit kit is the most affordable way to modernize the meter shop and accomplish the goals of repeatable, reliable, and efficient testing. Meter accuracy is critical to ensure fair billing, reliable water conservation data, regulatory compliance, and maintaining public trust.

WHEREAS, Madison Water Utility maintains over 60,000 water meters which are used to bill customers and to provide them with their water use data through Madison Water Utility's online conservation tool; and

WHEREAS, water meter accuracy is critical to ensure fair billing, reliable data, regulatory compliance, and maintaining public trust; and

WHEREAS, to ensure accuracy, water meters are regularly exchanged and tested in Madison Water Utility's lab or "Meter Shop;" and

WHEREAS, Madison Water Utility has standardized its lab testing procedures and their meter facility's internal infrastructure was designed and built to accommodate Ford Meter Box testing equipment. The use of a single manufacturer allows for Madison Water Utility staff to test, rebuild and retest meters more efficiently and cost effectively; and

WHEREAS, Madison Water Utility is modernizing its Meter Shop to bring testing standards of practice up-to-date, allow for electronic record retention, and to perform water audits as required by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC), which sets regulatory compliance codes for meter testing operations; and

WHEREAS, a kit from Ford Meter Box Company would allow Madison Water Utility to retrofit an existing Ford bench in the Meter Shop to a gravimetric scale and sensor conversion to electronic registration, automate the testing process, and allow digital documentation of the data; and

WHEREAS, Core & Main Inc. is the sole distributor for Ford Meter Box products in this area; and

WHEREAS, for the reasons explained above and in the attached Noncompetitive Selection Request Form, The Ford Meter Box Company, Inc./Core & Main Inc. is the only vendor that can provide for the specific needs of the Madison Water Utility; and

WHEREAS, MGO 4.26(2) requires goods to be purchased using a competitive process approved by the Finance Director, and under the Finance Director's Purchasing Guidelines, Common Council approval is required to purchase goods of \$50,000 or more without a competitive process; and

WHEREAS, this purchase falls under the exception of MGO 4.26(4)(2) and 4.26(4)(7) that state "The goods are available from only one vendor" and "The vendor has provided goods to the City on a similar or continuing project in the recent past, and it would be economical to the City on the basis of time and money to retain the same vendor";

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Common Council authorizes the purchase of goods as described above.