

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

TO: BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
FROM: Kimberly Zunino, Revenue Manager
Finance Department

SUBJECT: Meter Upgrade Project – Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)
Update

AGENDA ACTION: Study Session

RECOMMENDATION

This item is provided for the Board's information and no action will be taken.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff will present an informational session to the Board on the progress to date on the Meter Upgrade Project – Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), including an overview of the systems that are now integrated, the process of integrations and testing, and the work that will be done to assure the meters are changed out or modified in the current asset management and billing systems, including additional resources needed. Staff will also update the Board on the next steps of physical installation of the antennas and the meter upgrades.

BACKGROUND

In 1993, the City began researching a more efficient water meter reading process and started evaluating automated meter reading (AMR) technology. At that time, there were two meter reading solutions: Touch Read and Radio Read. In 1998, the City initially implemented AMR with radio read meters that used a handheld device to read the meters.

In 2001, the City went through an extensive review and bidding process of available AMR systems before Sensus Metering Systems was selected as the preferred provider. The City embarked on a capital improvement project (CIP) to replace “manual read” meters with AMR water meters as a way to improve customer service and control meter reading cost. Besides improving efficiencies, radio read meters were installed where it was dangerous and difficult to read manual meters such as in median strips where meter readers needed to cross 2 lanes of traffic to obtain a read, hillside neighborhoods,

narrow rural streets and busy commercial zones. Once these areas were converted, the City then focused on converting the most time-consuming meter reading routes to AMR.

In December 2012, the City entered into a contract with SAIC Energy, Environment & Infrastructure, LLC to complete a feasibility study to determine if an Advanced Metering project would be of benefit to the City and began the RFP process, followed by vendor selection and contract negotiations.

In August, 2014 the City hired Utiliworks Consulting to assist the City through the RFP and contract negotiations processes.

In October 2013, the BPU directed staff to proceed with an RFP and contract negotiations for an AMI project. In January 2105, the Water Department advertised the RFP and received eight responses. A selection team consisting of staff from the Water Department, staff from Water Billing and a representative from the Board of Public Utilities reviewed and scored the proposals. After thorough review by the selection team, three vendors were selected to move to the demonstration phase of the selection process. In April 2014, the selection team selected the most qualified vendor and notified the successful and non-successful bidders. Contract negotiations began in July of 2015 and continued over the next year.

In January, 2016 it was determined that an Initial Study/Proposed Mitigation Negative Declaration (IS/MND) should be performed. The draft was completed and released for public comment May 4, 2016. The public comment period closed on May 24, 2016 with 3 public comments submitted. Responses have been sent to the 3 respondents and a final Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was created. On June 2, 2016, staff presented an informational session on the AMI Project, including information on the vendor selection process, contract negotiations and environmental study requirements. On July 21, 2016 the Board adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration and a Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Meter Upgrade Project – Advanced Metering Infrastructure and, by motion, approved contracts with Sensus USA Inc., Utility Partners of America, LLC, N. Harris Computer Corporation, UtiliWorks Consulting, LLC. Planning.

PRIOR BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES REVIEW

On December 20, 2012, August 15, 2013, September 19, 2013, December 9, 2013 the Board conducted study sessions and report items on the AMI project to provide information on the technology, the software, the feasibility study and estimated costs, funding and the rate of return.

On December 9, 2013, the Board directed staff to proceed with RFP and contract negotiations for the AMI project.

On June 2, 2016, the Board conducted a study session to provide an update on all aspects of the project listed above, as well as provide information on the results of the

RFP, contract negotiations and the MND that was completed for the project.

On July 21, 2016 the Board adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration and a Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Meter Upgrade Project – Advanced Metering Infrastructure and, by motion, approved contracts with Sensus USA Inc., Utility Partners of America, LLC, N. Harris Computer Corporation, UtiliWorks Consulting, LLC. Planning.

ANALYSIS

Planning and integration of the Water Meter Upgrade Project began in August of 2016. A base station has been installed at the Utilities Field Office and 39 water meters are currently being read. The backhaul system is being used, creating a file that transfers data from the meters to the meter data management (MDM) system. The MDM is pulling information from the Water Billing system (CIS) and integrating and combining data from the meter reads to create reports and notifications, allowing for two-way communication between the meters and the internal software systems and allowing staff to review and analyze data. The MDM has also been embedded into the CIS system, allowing customer service representatives to open and review all of the MDM data in the CIS program.

The project is in the final stages of software implementation and integration. Based on the integration to date and the importance of producing accurate billing for customer, staff has identified the need for additional limited term assistance to manually enter the meter information. The next step is to reprogram approximately 750+ meters of all different services types and to install the 4 antennas to allow for full integration testing prior to full deployment of the system by the end of 2017.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Study Session is for information only and no action is being taken. Therefore, there is no fiscal impact from the Study Session.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The City adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration and a Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Meter Upgrade Project – Advanced Metering Infrastructure in July 2016.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Board Member Dowd served on the AMI RFP selection committee. The committee met on April 7, 2015 to review the proposals, and on April 15, 2015 held vendor demonstrations and interviews and selected the most qualified vendor.

On July 13, 2016 the Contract Subcommittee of the BPU reviewed and recommended approval of the Sensus USA Inc., Utility Partners of America, LLC, N. Harris Computer Corporation, and UtiliWorks Consulting, LLC contracts.

ATTACHMENTS

- None.

CONTACT

Kimberly Zunino, kzunino@srcity.org, (707) 543-3960