

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-1
March 10, 2015
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason

Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

Commissioner Pat Keon

Commissioner Vince Lago

Commissioner Frank Quesada

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark

City Attorney, Craig E. Leen

City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman

Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Chief Procurement Officer, Mike Pounds

Public Works Director, Glenn Kephart

Public Service Director, Brook Dannemiller

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item H-1 [10:28:38 a.m.]

A Resolution accepting the recommendation of the Chief Procurement Officer to award the Citywide Tree Succession Project contract SFM Services Inc. pursuant to Request for Proposal (RFP) 2015.01.02, and Section 2-828 of the Procurement Code entitled, "Contract Award."

Mayor Cason: Next item is the City Manager Item. H-1 is a Resolution accepting the recommendation of the Chief Procurement Officer to award the Citywide Tree Succession Project contract SFM Services Inc. pursuant to Request for Proposal (RFP) 2015.01.02, and Section 2-828 of the Procurement Code entitled, "Contract Award." Madam City Manager, this is your item.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I'm going to call Mike Pounds up for a presentation and also to answer questions.

Mr. Pounds: As you know, the project involves the installation of almost 3,000 trees and relocation of approximately 518 coconut palms, and 530 diseased trees. We received four (4) proposals; seven (7) that requested those RFP documents. The evaluation committee reviewed those proposals and is now prepared to recommend SFM Services Inc. SFM Services is a company that we are familiar with, they have the mowing contract of the right-of-ways in the City. They had previously had contracts for janitorial services and I believe security.

Commissioner Quesada: We have an existing relationship with them, right?

Mr. Pounds: We have an existing relationship with them as far as the mowing contract is concerned. Those other contracts are past contracts. The landscape architect is recommending the award as well as the Public Works Department.

Commissioner Quesada: On the evaluation and ranking across the board, they were listed as number one, I guess the highest score.

Mr. Pounds: Yes.

Commissioner Quesada: Best score I should say.

Mayor Cason: So we've had a relationship with them for how many years?

Mr. Pounds: Well they've had the current contract for about two years and then prior to that, I believe they had the contract for mowing for ten years.

Mayor Cason: OK. Can you tell us a little bit about the...of the neighborhoods in the whole tree succession, for those that are watching. I think this followed the year-long survey of the 38,000 trees, look at the health and then, I understand we went to at least six neighborhoods and got...

Mr. Pounds: I think I would have to ask the Public Works Department to respond to that question.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: While he's coming up, maybe you could talk to us a little bit about the size of the trees that we are going to be putting in and the condition of the trees. I've gone through some of these projects and sometimes they don't meet up to our specifications and I'm sure that

was one of the key components of what you looked at when you awarded this, maybe you can talk about that or talk about that later.

Mayor Cason: Why don't you talk about that part and then we'll have some more questions.

Mr. Dannemiller: I'll get the overall update as well, but to answer the question about the tree size. It varies on the species. All the proposals had same size trees, the most common ones, the oaks and mahoganies are going to be in the 14 to 16-foot range, that will be average size and that's between 3 and 5 inch caliber depending on the species.

Commissioner Lago: If I could just interject. I think what the Vice Mayor what he's trying to say is, there was a little bit of an issue probably about five years ago in reference to a subcontractor and planting some trees in regards to our expressways, and it was found out later that the palm trees were...

Commissioner Keon: Shrinking.

Commissioner Lago:...were shrinking – were shrinking. So what the Vice Mayor is trying to do, he's trying to ensure that if we are going to be recommending 12 to 14-foot trees and that's what we are paying for, that we get 12 to 14-foot trees, because that was a pretty scandalous situation that occurred in the county and it involved millions and millions of dollars.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: We also have – by the way I was just going to piggyback on that, they have an issue here, a famous issue here. After Hurricane Andrew, before my time, they planted all these trees and they were dwarf oaks and it was way off the radar screen, so we just want to make sure.

Commissioner Lago: I want to be clear. I want to be clear also for the record; this is not the same contractor.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: No, no, no – 100 percent.

Mayor Cason: This is a different area.

Commissioner Lago: Believe me, different contractor. It never happened in the City of Coral Gables, it's something that happened in the County and I want to be clear about that.

Mayor Cason: So where are the trees?- are they coming from various places and you are going to ensure the quality of the trees?- or is it one source?

Mr. Dannemiller: The trees are coming from different locations, it's because different nurseries have different nursery stock. They are all specified before, number one trees, which is good branching structure, quality plants, the root will be big, a lot of attention to the root structure because that's very important for the establishment of the trees. The reason we picked the size of trees we did is because those size of trees establish much quicker than say, if you went with like a 22-foot tree. So that 14 to 16-foot range for the oaks and the mahoganies, they establish much better.

Mayor Cason: And the trees that will be going into the neighborhoods are the ones that by and large the neighbors, you'll never get a total consensus, but the general opinion was...

Mr. Dannemiller: Yes. There were neighborhoods meetings held for each area of the City. We got input from the residents and then the consultant took that into account when they were establishing the needs for the trees.

Mayor Cason: And the trees will be watered for years if they guarantee if they die?

Mr. Dannemiller: Yes – so the contractor – basically the contract will be approximately 10 to 12 months for the installation of the trees, the planting of the trees, the contractor is responsible for watering them and maintaining them for an entire year, then they will also be responsible for removing the bracing and the watering ring around it and basically leaving it tight and sighted. If you include the maintenance period, it will be a two-year project, but the planting will be a 12-month.

Mayor Cason: Do we have a – are we contemplating some kind of a communication strategy to let the neighbors – they are very eager. We've been always receiving all these e-mails, "when are the trees coming?" – "when are the trees coming?" So like on the sidewalks and like we did on the street repaving, let people know coming soon to your neighborhood.

Mr. Dannemiller: Yes. So once we have the contractor on board, which we hope happens today, then we'll be able to – we'll coordinate with Jessica and then we'll add a communications plan for – and that's part of the scope as well.

Commissioner Lago: I think that's incredibly important because simple issues like MOT, individuals who park on the swale sometimes, you want to make sure they are notified before we start actually excavating and planting these trees, that the street and everybody is prepared so that we can get this done as efficiently as possible. You mentioned something about bracing and I was going to bring that up to you, because at yesterday's Arbor Day Foundation event, one of the

main slides that were put forth by the engineer who spoke was the issue of the non-removal of the bracings.

Mr. Dannemiller: Yes – those will only be used the plastic strap – specify the cloth one, its only for the very small trees where we have narrow right-of-ways, and in that there are very few of those, most of them will be with bracing – the sides of the trees will be two by fours.

Commissioner Lago: Do we contemplate doing underground bracing or that wasn't cost-effective?

Mr. Dannemiller: It's not cost-effective given our rock soil and the standard in Miami-Dade County is the...bracing and it's much more efficient and effective.

Commissioner Lago: And we are going to educate the homeowner who has two trees planted in front of their home that they cannot remove that bracing for "X" amount of time or the tree may topple over.

Mr. Dannemiller: Part of the scope – each tree will have a plastic card attached to the bracing that has the information of the tree on it and general information and where to get more information.

Mayor Cason: And will you have some kind of just somebody to drive around over maybe three or four months later see if some of them are not doing so well.

Mr. Dannemiller: Yes, we'll have inspections. The contractor is responsible for replacing any trees that may be damaged or dead, so there will be a quality assurance.

Commissioner Lago: I understand – and I think that's a great provision in regards to the contract and I guess we can have our City Attorney talk about that, but I just want to make sure that we don't make the job even harder than it already is. So we need to make sure that we educate the end user, the homeowner of what their responsibilities are because that's key.

Mr. Dannemiller: Yes – that will be on that card of what to do and not to do. It will have basically a number on the tree and we have an e-mail that we had set up, trees@coralgables.com so any questions in regard to the tree succession plan, there is a designated e-mail for that.

Commissioner Lago: Are we putting it on the App?

Mr. Dannemiller: Once we have the contractor on board we'll be able to roll all this out because we don't want to – you know we have to determine the implementation plan with the contractor and logistically...

Mayor Cason: Are you going to be doing neighborhoods at a time or tree types at a time?

Mr. Dannemiller: Most likely with what the contractor proposed in the proposal was to do it, the same zones that are in the plans...

Mayor Cason: So Zone...

Mr. Dannemiller: That hasn't been determined yet, that's most likely what will happen, but that hasn't been...

Mayor Cason: And the idea that you are going to have is these auger machines that come in and can do them very quickly.

Mr. Dannemiller: We don't use auger because it's not good for the roots because it hacks the soil. Basically, we'll over excavate a hole, it needs to be much larger than root ball and that fill will be removed and fresh clean soil will be placed in. There will be a soil saucer made out of the soil around the tree and that allows them to put the water in the tree, and then the water ponds in there and then it will also have mulch around it.

Commissioner Lago: What are we doing with that rock that's excavated once they make the root ball?

Mayor Cason: Put it in your front yard.

[Laughter]

Commissioner Lago: You never know.

Mr. Dannemiller: That's one of those logistical items we'll work out with the contractor.

Commissioner Lago: I ask you because you know we spend \$150,000 a year from our budget in reference to filling those beautiful trash pits. So if you are going to start excavating live rock, you never know, if again you have to look at their contract and what they stipulated in regards to their bid, but no one is claiming that. I think the City should look into that because that could be potentially used and save us a lot of money.

Mr. Dannemiller: Well we'll talk to them about that once we get them on board.

Commissioner Keon: We went to one of the FDOT (Florida Department of Transportation) meetings and an FDOT meeting that we went to with regard to the highway there was some work that was being done, I think to extend left turn lanes or whatever, so they were going to have to remove some of our Royal Palms that are there. We asked them what do they do with them and they told us, well they replace them. I said, I think that we paid for those initially, didn't we? I think those trees that were when Raul Valdes Fauli was Mayor we installed those trees in the median under FDOT, but I think we paid the cost of those trees.

Mr. Dannemiller: If that's the project that I think you are referring to, those will be relocated in the U.S.-1 corridor, we have a lot of palms that have been...

Commissioner Keon: Are they?- because we asked them where they would be relocated and they told us throughout any other municipalities or other places. I'd like us to keep track of them.

Mr. Dannemiller: The project that you are referring to -- we talked to them about relocating those within the median and the U.S.-1 corridor because we've lost several of them from car accidents.

Commissioner Keon: It looks great. We were just talking. We asked how many street trees do we have in the City?

Mr. Dannemiller: Approximately 38,000.

Commissioner Keon: 38,000 – and how many are we...

Mr. Dannemiller: We are adding 3,000.

Commissioner Keon: We are adding 3,000.

Mr. Dannemiller: Around 41,000 at the end of this.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Let's think about this. In our residential areas – we basically have paved streets; we are in the process of doing sidewalks and now what I think is probably the best of all is we are putting this tree succession plan into place. OK. So we are putting 3,000 trees and that's not any other municipality where a municipality may come out and replace a diseased tree. We are being proactive and actually putting these trees in and taking the initiative to do that. I mean this Commission, the City staff should be commended for bringing in an initiative like this

for the residents of the City of Coral Gables and I've got to tell you, this is as good as it gets for our community and thank you and thank all the Commissioners for doing this, it's fantastic – fantastic for years to come, this is going to be a great thing.

Mayor Cason: Yes. Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: It is a great thing. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Do we have any more discussion on this particular contract? Do we have a motion?

Commissioner Quesada: So moved.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Second.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Quesada makes the motion, Vice Mayor seconds.

City Clerk.

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

[End: 10:41:30 a.m.]