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Waste Pro is chosen over WCA again in Chiefland



Voting in favor of Waste Pro are (from left) City Commissioner Teresa Barron, City Commissioner Rollin Hudson (who made the motion to tell Waste Pro of the city's intent to award the contract to Waste Pro), Mayor Betty Walker, City Commissioner Donald Lawrence (who seconded Hudson's motion) and Vice Mayor Chris Jones. They all raised their hands to make their vote clearly understood.

Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 29, 2016 at 8:17 p.m.

CHIEFLAND – Representatives of Waste Corp. of America (WCA) of Florida, a losing garbage collection company in a bidding competition, complained again Monday night (Nov. 28) when it lost to Waste Pro as being the service provider to the City of Chiefland.



Looking at the two different companies' proposals are City Commissioner Teresa Barron and City Commissioner Rollin Hudson

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and Mayor Betty Walker, City Commissioner Donald Lawrence and Vice Mayor Chris Jones.

In the first go-around with this competitive bid selection Where WCA lost to Waste Pro, the late Mayor Teal Pomeroy was alive.

During that July 25 meeting, the Chiefland City Commission awarded the bid to Waste Pro. On July 28, attorney Patrice Boyes of Gainesville filed a notice of protest on behalf of WCA.

The city went through a process that eventually led to the action – another sealed bid opening and evaluation – on Monday night, where four of the City Commissioners ranked Waste Pro as their first choice to intend to award the bid.

City Commissioner Rollin Hudson ranked WCA over Waste Pro during that process.

Hudson, however, made a motion that was seconded by City Commissioner Donald Lawrence, who was appointed to fill Pomeroy's unexpired term, to let Waste Pro know the city intended to contract for its solid waste disposal services again.

Before the eventual 5-0 vote of approval, which was indicated by a show of hands to assure there was no confusion, attorney Boyes asked to see the scoring sheets and she wanted to see the rates given for the City Commission to consider.

There was a brief recess during the meeting to allow Boyes, WCA North Florida Marketing Manager Skip McCall and WCA Municipal Services Director Brad Avery to review those documents.

After their examination of the documents, Boyes told the City Commission that she believed there was an error in some of the mathematical computations.

City Manager Mary Ellzey explained to the attorney why she thought Boyes may perceive an error, even though the numbers that were shown in the document package are correct -- including what the city would pay either company after the city collected the fees from customers.

City Attorney Norm Fugate advised the City Commission against answering any questions posed by the WCA's attorney as he tried to help the City Commission members select the company they wanted without fear of litigation by a losing bidder.

Before the City Commission members chose whether Waste Pro or WCA would be the company the city intended to contract with, Chiefland City Attorney Fugate mentioned a point in regard to a paragraph that WCA gave that was not sought as part of the pricing proposal.

This other language was that WCA might contribute funds outside of the contract to charitable funds for the city, Fugate said.

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Before they evaluated the proposals, Fugate told the City Commission members that they need not afford any weight to that promise to provide to charitable causes, or they could consider it as something that is favorable, or they can consider it as being something other than favorable.

Fugate said each city commissioner can make his or her choice in regard to how that might or not affect them as they made their choice.

Another point he mentioned is that the financial statement from WCA was based on the whole company, rather than finances just from the Florida subsidiary, which is part of the whole.

One of the WCA representatives responded to that by saying the payment to the IRS is based on profits the company makes as a whole. There are not separate checks sent by to pay taxes the various subsidiaries in the different states where WCA serves people.

There was a point after the proposals and ranking sheets had been reviewed by WCA, when WCA North Florida Marketing Manager McCall spoke.

He said the past six months of this decision-making process has been that – a process.

“One thing that we can all agree is that WCA provided the lowest responsive number for the City of Chiefland,” McCall said, “correct?”

Attorney Fugate again advised the City Commission against answering questions. That part of the meeting, Fugate said, is for public comment. There is no need for the city leaders to respond.

McCall indicated that it was his understanding that the city’s policy for procurement of the bid for solid waste service was that it went to the company that presented the lowest cost.

McCall said he did not mean to show disrespect to the City Commission, but when he looked at how the two companies were ranked, he wondered about what the City Commission members based their evaluations upon.

“I just want to say that for the record that we did submit the lowest and most responsive bid,” McCall said. “We appreciate the process of being able to go through this with you guys. There is no intent for there to be any kind of disrespectfulness to any one of you.

“We appreciate the process,” McCall continued, “and we look forward to hopefully continuing on with that. So thank you.”

Mayor Walker asked if there were any other comments from the audience.

She called the question on the motion. That is when Fugate suggested people raise their hand to vote.