

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT:**       **EMERGENCY PURCHASE FOR LINE CLEARANCE STORM  
DAMAGE**

**BACKGROUND:**

On August 10, 2020, the City experienced widespread, destructive straight-line winds which blew across central Iowa. This derecho event caused many downed trees on and around electrical lines. To restore electrical service to the City's electric customers, crews were immediately needed to remove trees.

City staff directed Weiss Tree Service, Inc., Ames, Iowa, to perform tree clearing work from the City's power lines under emergency procedures. Per the *Purchasing Policies & Procedures* an "emergency situation" occurs suddenly and unexpectedly and demands immediate action to prevent delays which may vitally affect the life, safety, or health of the public or City employees, or the continuation of services to the citizens, or serious loss or injury to the City".

Weiss Tree Service, Inc was selected to perform this service due to the availability of its crews and the complexity of the clean-up needed (equipment capable of reaching the debris without causing further damage). Weiss provided emergency response storm damage removal to 21 different locations, each ranging in price from \$1,500 to \$13,500.

The City's *Purchasing Policies & Procedures* state that "if the cost of purchases related to [an] emergency or rapid need is \$50,000 or more, the using department shall maintain records" of the expenditure. It further states that the using department "shall report the situation and related expenses to the City Manager for presentation to the City Council. The report shall be in a format as directed by the City Manager. No payment shall be made prior to approval of the emergency purchase by the City Council". Typically the report is in written format. Due to the extreme destruction and expedited need for the help, the report was made verbally from Department Head to City Manager.

With the emergency, staff authorized the tree removal work so the electric crews could establish power. Following the authorization of this emergency purchase by the City Manager's office, Staff is seeking Council approval for \$142,898.50, inclusive of sales tax, for the expenses incurred by Weiss Tree Service Inc., Ames, Iowa. As this cost was incurred due to the derecho, staff is planning to submit this expense to FEMA for reimbursement.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the issuance of Purchase Order for the tree removal from the storm damage to Weiss Tree Service, Inc, Ames, Iowa in the amount of \$142,898.50 inclusive of sales tax.
2. Refer this item to staff for further information.

**CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

To restore reliable electric service to the City's customers in the quickest manner possible following the August 10 windstorm, the use of an emergency purchase was required. Repairs have been completed to critical electric infrastructure through this process. This Council Action Form serves as a report to the City Council which is required before the invoice can be paid.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as stated above.