

ITEM #: 30
DATE: 05-14-24
DEPT: Electric

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **AWARD OF CONTRACT TO PROVIDE AND INSTALL A REMOTE RACKING SYSTEM FOR THE ELECTRIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

BACKGROUND:

The Electric Department maintains substations throughout the community that contain breakers, relays, and a variety of other electrical equipment. The process of manually engaging or disengaging a breaker is called "racking." Racking a breaker is a hazardous operation. Specialized equipment, training, and procedures are necessary to protect employees from potential arc flash that may occur during a racking operation. Included among these procedures are the removal of any people from the area who are not involved in performing the procedure.

To reduce these risks, staff intends to install a remote racking system on a total of 24 breakers located in four separate substations within the Ames Electric Services system. This equipment allows the user to rack out substation class breakers at a safe distance, outside of the building where the breaker is located. Ideally, staff would be able to operate the breaker at distances of 100 to 150 feet away.

Bids were solicited for a remote racking system. On April 9, 2024, bids were received as follows:

BIDDER	COST
inoLECT, Baton Rouge, LA	\$48,500.00
Radwell International, Willingboro, NJ	\$99,170.01
Remote Solutions, Tucson, AZ	\$101,552.41

Two main requirements outlined in the bid were:

1. The system works on all breakers in Ames' system without reconfiguration
2. Equipment can easily be transported and used by one person

The two low bidders' systems were either too heavy or would not work at all substations as configured. Staff evaluated the bid from Remote Solutions, and this bid is acceptable. The approved FY 2023/24 budget contains \$115,105.05 for this purchase.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Award contract to Remote Solutions, LLC, of Tucson, AZ to provide and install a remote racking system for the Electric Department's Technical Services Division - Substations in the amount of \$101,552.41.
2. Purchase a system from one of the other bidders.
3. Reject the award and direct staff to re-bid.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Remote Solutions provides a portable racking system that can be utilized across the City's substations and be easily used by one person. This safety equipment allows personnel to be removed from the hazardous energy of a failed breaker during rack out procedures to avoid the risk of injury. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager to approve Alternative #1, as described above.