



# Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

<b>Date:</b>	June 13, 2011
<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	43C
<b>Roll Call No.</b>	<u>11-1010</u>
<b>Communication No.</b>	<u>11-365</u>
<b>Submitted by:</b>	John F. TeKippe, Fire Chief

## AGENDA HEADING:

Approval of awarding protective clothing contract to Sandry Fire Supply, 618 6th Street, DeWitt, IA 52742 (owner: Bob and Mary Sandry, 888-586-2938). Sandry Fire Supply was the low compliant bidder and next to lowest overall bidder in the competitive bidding process. A total of 13 bid packets were mailed, and 4 bids were received.

## SYNOPSIS:

The Des Moines Fire Department recommends awarding the contract for protective clothing to Sandry Fire Supply with Morning Pride turnout gear. Sandry was not the low bidder, but was the low compliant bidder and was compliant in all areas, including the critical areas of thermal protection and breathability.

## FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$100,000 annually

Funding Source: FY12, Operating Budget Organization FIR040700, Account 532260 - Safety and Protective Equipment and Clothing.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The Fire Department has spent a considerable amount of time over the past year evaluating turnout gear, including materials used, construction methods, and various safety features in order to determine what specific characteristics we believe are critical to providing the utmost in safety and protection for our firefighters. Following that evaluation, a performance based specification was written to assure that personnel would be wearing protective gear with the highest levels of thermal protection, as well as, high breathability ratings. Highly breathable garments allow body heat to escape which helps protect firefighters from stress related illness such as heart attack. From a historical perspective, heart attack is the leading cause of line of duty deaths in the fire service. Sandry Fire Supply with Morning Pride turnout gear was not the low bidder, but was the low compliant bidder, and provided the highest level of performance regarding critical components.

Specifications called for features that provide a precise minimum thermal protection value while also maintaining specific breathability requirements. The breathability performance value is important because it reduces the stress on a firefighter by allowing body heat to escape through evaporative cooling. Thermal protection is particularly important in high compression areas such as the shoulders, chest, and arms, where the breathing apparatus presses down and inward on the turnout coat. These are all areas where firefighters are likely to get burned, even through protective clothing. The Morning Pride

coat is constructed using a system within the thermal liner that creates pockets of dead air to provide increased thermal protection in those areas without sacrificing the breathability of the garment itself. The low bidder, Illinois Fire Store, is not able to meet this performance specification.

Due to the large amount of time firefighters spend crawling in high temperature environments, the Fire Department specified a minimum thermal performance standard in the knee area of the pants. Sandry Fire Supply, with Morning Pride turnout gear, was able to provide documentation of construction and performance data establishing their product could provide the wearer for 100 seconds of protection, when directly exposed to a 500 degree Fahrenheit surface, the bid criteria. The low bidder is only able to achieve 73 seconds. The Morning Pride turnout gear gives our firefighters an additional 27 seconds to avoid thermal burns to the knees and retreat, if necessary. During extreme heat conditions, including imminent life-threatening conditions such as back draft explosions or flashover, firefighter escape opportunities are limited to seconds for assessment, reaction time, and escape.

The Fire Chief recommends awarding the protective clothing contract to Sandry Fire Supply, the low compliant bidder. The low compliant bid costs \$65 per set (coat and pant) more than the low overall bid. Even at this slightly higher price, the Fire Department will be purchasing protective gear at a lower cost than during the previous three years without lowering safety factors for firefighters.

#### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):**

Date: May 18, 2009

Roll Call Number: [09-879](#)

Action: [Sandry](#) Fire Supply for an annual contract with two (2) additional one-year renewal options to furnish fire service bunker coats and pants to be used by the Fire Department, \$42,810. (Ten bids mailed, five received). **Moved by Kiernan to adopt. Motion Carried 6-1. Absent: Cownie.**

Date: November 19, 2007

Roll Call Number: [07-2220](#)

Action: [Sandry](#) Fire Supply for an annual contract with two (2) additional one year renewal options to furnish fire service bunker coats and pants to be used by the Fire Department, \$57,190. (Ten bids mailed, five received). ([Council Communication No. 07-686](#)) **Moved by Vlassis to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.**

#### **BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE**

#### **ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE**

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