



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** K-2021-75, **Version:** 1

---

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF CONTRACT K-2021-75, A CONTRACT BY AND BETWEEN THE NORMAN UTILITIES AUTHORITY AND E SOURCE COMPANIES, L.L.C., IN THE AMOUNT OF \$104,156 TO PROVIDE CONSULTING SERVICES FOR A WATER METER REPLACEMENT PROGRAM AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ADVANCED METERING INFRASTRUCTURE (AMI) TO ENSURE A SEAMLESS INTEGRATION OF THE AUTOMATIC WATER METER READS INTO THE BILLING SYSTEM.

**BACKGROUND:** The City of Norman/Norman Utilities Authority water system includes approximately 41,000 water meters that measure water usage for water and sewer billing purposes. The majority of the meters (approximately 39,000) are manually read monthly by meter readers (physically remove the meter lid and read the current usage on the register) and 2,000 meters are read using automated meter reading (AMR) (remote sensor used to collect data while driving by in a truck or walking by without removing the meter lid). As the number of meters increases, staffing levels would have to proportionally increase to ensure that meters are read timely and accurately. Insufficient staffing levels can result in missed or inaccurate reads that impact customer service and billing revenues. Additionally, the majority of the water meters in Norman have aged past their expected useful life and warrant replacement.

The current state of water meter technology is such that advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) has become more common place and is being implemented by more municipal utilities. With AMI, meters would be read remotely using cellular infrastructure on water towers (or additional towers if necessary) multiple times per day.

With this new system, the following benefits will be realized:

1. Meter reads would occur regularly ensuring more accurate billing;
2. Improved customer service since usage data will be more available to the customer and leak or usage alerts could be configured to notify the customer in a timely manner;
3. Aged meters will be replaced with new, more accurate meters; and
4. Staff would no longer be required to manually read each meter and could be used for other work efforts.

City/NUA staff have investigated various technologies and vendors but a consultant is warranted that is an expert in this field to lead the NUA/City through the processes of vendor and equipment selection, utility customer and public education, and implementation. The NUA/City has implemented a new billing system, Harris Advanced Customer Information System (CIS), and a complex component of this project will be to ensure a seamless integration of the automatic meter read data into the billing system. In addition to this system being used for AMI, other technologies will also be investigated that can leverage this new infrastructure as much as possible for pressure and temperature monitoring and data acquisition from water or sewer assets.

**DISCUSSION:** Request for Qualifications 2021-15 (RFQ-2021-15) was issued by NUA staff on March 18, 2021. Six submittals were received on April 15, 2021. Three firms, E Source, Jacobs, and SL-serco, were short-listed and were interviewed on May 12, 2021. Five staff members were included on the review team and the interview panel and included:

1. Information Technology - Tim Powers
2. Finance/Utility Customer Service - Anthony Francisco
3. Geographic Information Systems - Michelle Matthews
4. Water Line Maintenance - Michael Price
5. Utilities Administration - Nathan Madenwald

E Source Companies, LLC was unanimously selected as the best consultant for the project. This firm has completed numerous successful AMI implementations at other municipal utilities.

Funding for the project will be from the Water Fund, Water Meters Advanced Infrastructure, Design (Account 31993361-46201; Project WA0351). The available balance in the account is \$349,959.40.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the NUA approve Contract K-2021-75 in the amount of \$104,156 with E Source Companies, LLC for Consulting Services for Advanced Metering Infrastructure.