



Recommendation for Action

File #: 21-3356, **Agenda Item #:** 22.

11/18/2021

Posting Language

Authorize an amendment to an existing contract with Interment Services, Inc. for continued interment and burial services at city cemeteries, to increase the amount by \$2,222,000 and to extend the term by two years, for a revised total contract amount not to exceed \$8,946,000. Related to Item #38.

(Note: The contract was awarded in compliance with City Code Chapter 2-9C Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program. For the services required for this solicitation, there were no subcontracting opportunities; therefore, no subcontracting goals were established).

Purchasing Office.

Client Department(s)

Parks and Recreation Department.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$1,111,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Operating Budget of the Parks and Recreation Department. Funding for the remaining contract term is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

Purchasing Language:

Contract Amendment.

Prior Council Action:

June 27, 2013 - Council approved initial contract term with request to return to Council for approval of extension options, item 48, on a 7-0 vote.

November 15, 2018 - Council approved an amendment to extend contract for three years, item 36, on an 9-1 vote with Council Member Troxclair voting no and Mayor Pro Tem Tovo off the dais.

For More Information:

Inquiries should be directed to the City Manager's Agenda Office, at 512-974-2991 or AgendaOffice@austintexas.gov <<mailto:AgendaOffice@austintexas.gov>> or to Leyla Mammadova, at 512-978-1519 or Leyla.Mammadova@austintexas.gov <<mailto:Leyla.Mammadova@austintexas.gov>>.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

October 26, 2021 - Recommended by the Parks and Recreation Board on an 9-0 vote with two vacancies.

Additional Backup Information:

The proposed amendment will provide continued interment services at five Austin cemeteries; Oakwood Cemetery, Oakwood Annex Cemetery, Evergreen Cemetery, Austin Memorial Cemetery, and Plummers Cemetery. The contractor has successfully performed these services for the City since 1990 and has a

considerable amount of experience in similar high-volume cemeteries throughout Texas.

This contract with Interment Services, Inc. was approved by Council in 2013 with the direction to return to Council for approval of the contract extension options. Without the extension, the contract for burial and interment services expires November 28, 2021. Staff estimates the need to continue to outsource these services for an additional two years. An extension of the current contract will provide continuity of services and an opportunity for the current contractor to provide services until such time that City staff is able to assume all tasks associated with interment and burial services.

The Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) plans to transition all interment services to City personnel within the next two years. The proposed amendment, to the existing contract, is necessary to allow time to budget for staff and equipment, hire staff and procure equipment, and train newly hired staff to assume these responsibilities. While staff initially prepared to transition the interment services in house, the COVID-19 pandemic and economic conditions prevented and delayed all necessary preparations and action to begin the transition process. Due to the nature of Cemetery Operations and the increased number of deaths due to the pandemic, staff never stopped reporting to the job site and day-to-day operations continued. However, more than 90 percent of staff received the expanded Family and Medical Leave Act benefits, thus Cemetery Operations operated well below normal standards, oftentimes at skeleton crew levels. In addition, the social distancing guidelines prevented most training opportunities from taking place. Finally, the economic conditions resulted in a citywide hiring freeze, which prevented Cemetery Operations from fully hiring the necessary staff to train for the additional interment and burial services.

PARC intends to procure the remaining equipment to perform all future interments as in-house operations. However, the procurement process can take up to one year. Furthermore, Cemetery Operations staff will continue working with the contractor on safe training transition protocols between staff to ensure that both the contractor and City staff are protected.

Contract Detail:

<u>Contract Term</u>	<u>Length of Term</u>	<u>Current Contract Authorization</u>	<u>Requested Authorization</u>	<u>Revised Total Authorization</u>
Initial Term	5 yrs.	\$3,875,000		\$3,875,000
Contract Amendment		\$ 59,000		\$ 59,000
Extension Option 1	3 yrs.	\$2,790,000		\$2,790,000
Proposed Amendment	2 yrs.		\$2,222,000	\$2,222,222
TOTAL	10 yrs.	\$6,724,000	\$2,222,000	\$8,946,000

Note: Contract Authorization amounts are based on the City's estimated annual usage.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Economic Opportunity and Affordability, Health and Environment, Government that Works for All.