

AGENDA ITEM BRIEFING

Commissioners Court – June 30, 2020

AI Number: 76207

Project Number: 2020-309

Information: Requesting authority to engage JOC approved vendors for repair and renovations to two buildings for use as Emergency Management operations and call center in order to facilitate compliance with public health measures addressing the ongoing COVID-19 emergency.

Description of AI: Repair and remodel of two county buildings for Emergency Management.

Funding Source: CARES Act Relief Fund (TBD)

Acct. # 0-1287-441-42-115-096-0-452

Requested by: Ricardo Saldana, EM Coordinator

Department: Emergency Management

Prepared by: Hector A. Garcia, Contract Specialist I

Department: Purchasing Department

BACKGROUND

On March 17, 2020, pursuant to the authority under Texas Government Code Section 418.108, Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency due to the imminent threat arising from the Coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 22, 2020, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 418.108(b), the Commissioners Court of Hidalgo County issued an Order of Continuance of Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency that affirmed the activation of the Hidalgo County Emergency Management Plan and extends the Declaration of Local Disaster.

The Hidalgo Office of Emergency Management in response to the COVID-19 pandemic public health emergency has identified the critical lack of space within its current infrastructure. The Hidalgo County Emergency Operations Center along with the Hidalgo County Information Call Center have previously been located at the Health and Human Services facility; however due to increasing staffing needs related to COVID-19, the facility faced spacing restrictions, and the EOC and the Call Center were forced to relocate. At its current temporary relocation, the EOC nor the Call Center have the sufficient space to properly accommodate both teams/services while maintaining the proper safety protocols such as social distancing, as recommended by the CDC.

The 2010 Census has indicated that Hidalgo County has a low to moderate income level of 54.76% and the Texas Department of State Health Services estimates Hidalgo County's population to be 1,005,539. With this large impoverished population, but limited lab testing capacity, the detection, mitigation, and response to COVID-19 has been largely impacted. Current public health directive emphasizing the importance of preventing and mitigating the spread of COVID-19. With these

repair and/or remodel services, a much needed service will be obtained to house the EOC and the Call Center. As the increase arises of confirmed cases and a possible disaster event a designated facility must be immediately available, while keeping employees safe and avoid delays in providing the needed services and information to County residents as we prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

COMPLIANCE

In compliance with the national preparedness goal under the Presidential Policy Directive (PPD-8), the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Capability 12 and pursuant to the Order of Continuance of Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency that affirmed the activation of the Hidalgo County Emergency Management Plan and extends the Declaration of Local Disaster, requests the courts approval for the contractual staffing services to address the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic public health emergency.

ADMINISTRATION

Approval of the item is consistent with Hidalgo County's intended purpose to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and provide necessary services and information to Hidalgo County residents in a timely fashion.

AGENDA ITEM CAPTION

- A. Discussion, consideration, and action to approve a necessary CARES Act Relief Fund expenditure to cover cost not accounted for in the current budget and cannot be lawfully funded by line item, allotment or allocation, for the Renovation of Buildings for Conversion/Expansion of an Emergency Operations Center in order to assist with County actions to facilitate compliance with public health measures addressing the on-going COVID-19 emergency; the Court having reviewed the Agenda Item Briefing, herein finds that such expenditure is reasonable and necessary for the intended use;
- B. Discussion, consideration and action to engage a Job Order Contractor [JOC] [by seeking proposals through the process established by Purchasing Dept.] for repair and/or renovation of two buildings [located at SW Corner of Mahl & 10th Streets in Edinburg acquired from PlainsCapital] to convert for use as Emergency Operations and Call Centers;

RECOMMENDATIONS

Approval of the item will Hidalgo County proceed with continuing with the current public health directive emphasizing the importance of preventing and mitigating the spread of COVID-19. As previously stated, the repair and remodel of these two buildings, are a reasonable and necessary expenditure related to the County's COVID-19 Public Health Response. Expenditures will be

charged to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and/or other assistance available to address the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Attachments:

- Agenda Item Briefing
