

AGENDA ITEM BRIEFING

Commissioners Court – October 27, 2020

AI Number: 77936

Information: Requesting approval to purchase twelve (12) additional Two Way Electronic Communicators for Hidalgo County Tax Office in order to assist with County functions related to the communication between the staff and constituents.

Description of AI: (A) Discussion, consideration, and action to approve necessary CARES Act Relief Fund expenditure to cover cost of purchase; (B) Exemption from competitive bidding requirements, pursuant to Texas LGC 262.024(a)(1),(2); (C) Requesting approval to purchase two way electronic communicators

Funding Source: CARES Act Relief Fund

Acct. # 0-1287-441-42-115-096-0-660

Requested by: Pablo “Paul” Villarreal

Requesting Department: Tax Office

Prepared by: Damaris Morales, Procurement Specialist II

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.

In coordinating the response to this ongoing public health emergency, the Hidalgo County Tax Office has determined the need of purchasing 12 additional Two Way Electronic Communicators for the new Weslaco office as essential to ensure the safety of the staff and the public.

COMPLIANCE

Discretionary exemptions are authorized by the Texas Local Government Code 262.024 (a) states “a contract for the purchase of any of the following items is exempt from the requirement established by the section 262.023 if the commissioners court by order grants the exemption.” This request is being made under Texas LGC 262.024(a)(2) an item necessary to preserve and protect the public health and safety of the citizens.

ADMINISTRATION

Approval of the item is consistent with Hidalgo County's intended purpose to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The goal is to provide efficient and effective delivery of services in light of change in technology, the public's expectations, and the area's population and economy. Hidalgo County Health is taking the lead in responding to the COVID-19 health emergency for our community as a whole.

AGENDA ITEM CAPTION

- A. Discussion, consideration, and action to approve necessary CARES Act Relief Fund expenditures to cover cost not accounted for in the current budget and cannot be lawfully funded by line item, allotment or allocation, for the purchase of additional Two-Way Electronic Communicators for the new Weslaco Office as a function of government and of the County's efforts in mitigating the on-going COVID-19, the Court having reviewed the Agenda Item Briefing, herein finds that such expenditure is reasonable and necessary for the intended use.
- B. Requesting exemption from competitive bidding requirements, pursuant to Texas LGC 262.024(a)(1): an item that must be purchased in case of a public calamity if it is necessary to make the purchase promptly to relieve the necessity of the citizens; (2) an item necessary to preserve and protect the public health and safety of the citizens.
- C. Requesting approval to purchase 12 Two-Way Electronic Communicators for the new Weslaco Office from REFCO in the amount of \$14,606.00. (Requisition# 00421660)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Approval of the items will allow the Hidalgo County Tax Office to continue to respond to the current public health emergency of COVID-19 and to efficiently continue providing services to the public while ensuring the safety and well-being of the public and staff. As previously stated, with these large impoverished population and continued incurred case search; therefore, this is deemed as a reasonable and necessary expenditure related to the County 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.