

From: ericdchristen@gmail.com
To: [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Vanessa Quiroz](#); [Maria Orozco](#); [Kristal Salcido](#); [Jimmy Dutra](#); [Ari Parker](#); [Casey Clark](#)
Cc: mmurphy@santacruzsentinel.com; [jyork](#); mhartman@santacruzsentinel.com; [cityclerk](#); [citymanager](#); [Public Works](#)
Subject: Here is how to end the PLA nightmare you're experiencing in Watsonville
Date: Tuesday, July 9, 2024 1:55:14 PM



Re: Item 10C - Reject All Bids for Klassen Pressure Reducing Station

Dear Watsonville City Council:

Yet again you have a construction project for which staff is advising you to reject all bids. (We're tracking all of them, going back to the fateful date of August 26, 2014.)

The two lower bidders are from Oakland and San Francisco and have never bid on a Watsonville project before. The third bidder is from San Jose, and its bid was exactly 333% over the estimate.

Any local government with a sense of fiscal responsibility and service for the public would change their bidding practices. You've apparently repelled most of the companies in the Monterey Bay area that perform smaller public works construction jobs — the kind that provide immediate, routine public benefit for the community.

We suggest you ask staff to rebid the job, but without the requirement in the bid specifications that the construction companies on the project have to sign a Project Labor Agreement if the amount is over \$600,000.

The Project Labor Agreement is the problem — again and again and again. (see below)

Sincerely,

Eric Christen
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From: ericdchristen@gmail.com <ericdchristen@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 2:41 PM

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publicworks@watsonville.gov

Subject: Here is how to end the PLA nightmare you're experiencing.

Importance: High



Dear Watsonville City Councilmembers:

Watsonville residents, workers, and visitors are **yet again** deprived of timely construction at the best price from local companies because of your insistence that construction companies with city contracts over \$600,000 sign a Project Labor Agreement with a private special interest group, the Monterey/Santa Cruz Building & Construction Trades Council.

And, as usual, you try to hide the failure on the consent calendar in hopes that the public doesn't find out about the repeated bid failures for your projects.

When will you take back city business from the influence of construction trade unions? Isn't eight years of failure enough to inform you that Project Labor Agreements indeed cut bid competition, raise construction costs, and attract out-of-area contractors? (The city council was warned when the PLA mandate appeared on the August 26, 2014 meeting agenda.)

You need to take this item off the consent calendar and direct staff to **rebid the project WITHOUT the language in the bid specifications mandating a Project Labor Agreement.**

Reject Bids for the Water Well No. 4 Pump Station, Project No. WA-22-005 (Recommended by Public Works & Utilities Director Lindberg)

Resolution Rejecting All Bids for the Plans & Specifications for the Water Well No. 4 Pump Station, Project No. WA-22-005; & Authorizing the Re-advertising for Bids for the Same Project.

At the April 26, 2022, meeting, City Council adopted Resolution No. 73-22 (CM) approving the plans, specifications, and calling for bids for the Water Well No. 4 Pump Station, Project No. WA-22-005. Bids were opened on February 9, 2023 at 2:00pm. Only one bid was received and the results are summarized below:

Contractor: Mountain Cascade, Inc. (based in Livermore, in Alameda County)

Total Base Bid: \$6,050,950

Engineer's Estimate: \$4,000,000

Staff reviewed the proposal and determined that the bid received was approximately 51% higher than the engineer's estimate and budget planned for the project. Staff will re-evaluate the project scope and rebid the project. It is recommended that Council reject the bid received and authorize staff to rebid the project.

The Coalition for Fair Employment will warn you once again of our plan to mail a glossy, full-color report to all voters in your district outlining exactly how city contracting practices work against their interests. Research for the report is completed and the tables are prepared showing the inflated bid results and listing the out-of-area bidders.

If this PLA policy disaster is not repealed, the days of getting away with it are over and accountability is coming.

Sincerely,

Eric Christen

Executive Director

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