City of Prince Albert

RPT 2024-269

TITLE: Upgrades to the Existing Bulk Water Dispensing System

DATE: August 22, 2024

TO: Executive Committee Regular Meeting

PUBLIC: X **INCAMERA:**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the upgrades to the existing Bulk Water Dispensing System (Water Crane) be included in the 2025 Budget deliberations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report proposes essential upgrades to City's Bulk Water Dispensing system, better known as the Water Crane, to ensure continued service. The existing software and hardware control panel from EleMech, Inc., which operates the Bulk Water Dispensing System off the Marquis Road Reservoir is obsolete and outdated. These upgrades will enhance the system's overall reliability, improve the user experience, and simplify administrative duties. The project, estimated to cost $26,000, will improve service delivery and align the facility with modern standards. Approval and budget allocation are requested to proceed.

BACKGROUND:

Before 2015, the City operated a coin-based bulk water fill station near the City Yards area, adjacent to Sewage Lift Station #5. In 2015, during the pump house upgrades project, this station was relocated to the Marquis Road pump house building, and the coin-based system was upgraded to a card-based system managed and administered by the City. Since then, there has been a steady growth in revenue generated by the bulk water fill station, with sales increasing from $32,260 in 2015 to $122,070 in 2023.

PROPOSED APPROACH AND RATIONALE:

Upgrading the existing Bulk Water Dispensing Station would:

- Make City water more accessible and convenient for residents in and around the community with bulk water requirements. This includes but is not limited to residential, recreational, commercial and agricultural users.

- Allow the usage of credit cards which simplifies overall transactions to get City water. This can lead to increased sales by increase in the customer base.

- Introduce new features or optimizations that improve the efficiency of crane operations. This will include better automation, smoother control mechanisms, or integration with other systems for streamlined workflows.

- Enable better integration with digital systems sensors and data analytics platforms. This integration can provide valuable insights into crane performance and maintenance needs facilitating better decision-making and planning.

- Ensures that the water crane remains compatible with emerging technologies and industry trends.

- Include improvements to the reliability of the water crane to reduce the likelihood of unexpected breakdowns or malfunctions, minimizing disruptions to operations and project schedules.

- Allow users to self-register for their operating accounts, manage their own accounts online which will free up considerable time for the staff in the water department and financial services at City Hall.

CONSULTATIONS:

Over the years, many customers have provided feedback requesting an improved system that supports modern payment options and online account management, prompting us to explore, research, and compare products and services from multiple vendors, such as FLOWPOINT Environmental Systems, ConXwireless, and EleMech, Inc. Various parameters were considered such as pricing, safety, user access process, hardware quality, user-friendliness, and administration and reporting capabilities, with consultations from Financial Services and the Information and Technology division.

After a thorough review of all three systems and doing reference checks on similar setups these suppliers have installed in Saskatchewan, FLOWPOINT Environmental Systems is recommended for the proposed project.

COMMUNICATION AND/OR ANNOUNCEMENT PLAN:

Public Works will work with City's Communication and Finance departments to ensure our existing customers have an easy and seamless transition to a newer system. Further, step by step information regarding 1) how to use water filling station 2) how to set up an account 2) how to top-up account balance will be posted on the City of Prince Albert's website and the Bulk fill Station.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The quotation received for this project from the FLOWPOINT Environmental Systems is $ 20,962.97 + taxes.

The requested budget for the proposed project is $26,000, to be sourced from the operating budget allocated to the Water Crane under the Water Treatment Plant. This amount includes inflation adjustments and the installation cost of the system. The revenue generated by the Water Crane will cover the budget expenditure. For reference, the revenue in 2023 was $122,070, and as of July 31st, 2024, it stands at $92,483.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS:

Administration will complete a Pre-Privacy Impact Assessment with the City Clerk as the Water Crane System will have customer account information.

There are no policy, legal, safety or environmental implications.

OPTIONS TO RECOMMENDATION:

There are no options to the Recommendation.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The upgrades to City's bulk water dispensing system supports the City's Strategic Plan Priority of Delivering Professional Governance by adopting a digital governance strategy to simplify service delivery and create a seamless customer experience.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN:

There are no Official Community Plan Strategies or Plans to this report.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Public Notice pursuant to the Public Notice Bylaw No. 24 of 2015 is not required.

PRESENTATION:

PowerPoint Presentation by Rinkesh Patil, Water Treatment Plant Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

Proposed Upgrades to the Bulk Water Dispensing System Presentation

Written by: Rinkesh Patil, Water Treatment Plant Manager

Approved by: Director of Public Works & City Manager