



Legislation Text

File #: 050659, Version: 0

Breathing Air Compressor (B)

Request to purchase a breathing air compressor for the Fire Rescue Department

The Gainesville Fire Rescue (GFR) Department has owned, operated, and maintained a breathing air system to refill emergency breathing devices. The systems in place have allowed us to provide immediate refill capability to meet our needs as well as the breathing air needs of other community response partners. Our compressors are routinely certified for their air quality and are given regular preventative maintenance from a certified repair agency. The compressor was originally purchased in May of 1975 and has exceeded its life expectancy. Over the last 30 years, this compressor has been rebuilt twice. The maintenance company recently noted an increase in metal levels in the compressor oil that may indicate major repairs will be needed. As of November 13, 2005, the compressor started making an unusual noise and was shut off. The compressor has been placed "out-of-service".

In October of 2004, GFR was awarded the 2004 Assistance to Firefighter Grant in the amount of \$297,042 for self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). Staff currently uses 30-minute low-pressure systems for structural firefighting and 60 minute high-pressure systems for hazardous materials response. Due to the realities facing emergency responders as a requirement of our grant provided funding source, staff recommend SCBA's that are approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Low-pressure SCBA's are being phased out. High-pressure SCBA's are becoming the standard and provide 30-60 minutes of breathing air in a tank that can be worn with relative comfort and maneuverability. Because of the smaller size and lower profile, the high-pressure tanks provide a greater degree of safety when working in confined spaces.

In 2005, staff decided to forgo our routine replacement of other protective gear to make the purchase, and identified a system that we believe meets our needs for under \$29,000. We pride ourselves on our ability to partner with other agencies to provide quality protection of our citizens and community workers. GFR refills tanks for Gainesville Regional Utilities for use in the water and wastewater treatment facilities, as well as for other service providers in the community. GFR has asked these agencies that are supported for breathing air needs if they would help us by defraying the cost of this replacement. We intend to continue supporting the other agencies' breathing air needs regardless of their ability to assist us with this purchase. Gainesville Regional Utilities Water/Wastewater Department has committed \$2,500 towards the purchase. Donations in the amount of \$900 have also been received from a local business, Clariant, that uses the compressor. The current compressor may be traded in for a value of \$800.

The City Manager approved the transfer of year-end operating funds to a capital account for the replacement of a breathing air system so that staff may issue an invitation to bid, and subsequent purchase order to the appropriate vendor. On September 27, 2005, the GFR Department solicited bids from 4 potential vendors. All vendors responded with one being a no bid. After evaluation of the bids, staff recommends awarding the purchase to Channel Innovations Corporation.

The total amount of the purchase price is \$28,805 less \$3,400 in donations for a purchase order not to exceed \$25,405. The purchase price includes a trade-in for the existing compressor and storage cylinders in the amount of \$800.

Recommended Motion: The City Commission authorize the City Manager to: 1) execute the purchase order to Channel Innovations Corporation for the purchase of a breathing air compressor system in the amount not to exceed \$28,805; 2) establish a capital account for transfer of the donations received and FY 2005 year-end operating funds; and 3) execute any other necessary documents, pending review by the City Attorney as to form and legality.

Alternative Recommendation A: The City Commission request staff consider the model without the drain valve. In an effort to look for a less expensive unit, staff received a quote for \$27,000. This model does not have a drain valve, is harder to use, and has a smaller pump volume requiring the compressor to work harder and longer to accomplish the same system refill.