Memorandum 12-024 Steamer Equipment Replacement

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Memorandum Status: No Status

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MEMORANDUM 12-024

TO: Walt Wrede, City Manager

FROM: Carey Meyer, Public Works Director

DATE: February 7, 2012

RE: Steamer Equipment Replacement

In January, the equipment inside the steamer truck malfunctioned and melted down. The accident occurred on an unusually bitter cold morning; an autopsy concluded that the probable cause of death was a frozen water/fuel regulator that allowed the boiler to continue to be heated even though there was no longer any water in the boiler.

The availability of this equipment is critical to providing thawing service to the community. The equipment is used to steam hydrants (several times a winter to minimize frost heaving and hydrant failure), open frozen sewer lines, thaw blocked culverts and open frozen ditches. It is especially vital during breakup. Although Public Works was able to borrow a steamer from ADOT for one day, our hydrant steaming, ditch opening and culvert thawing operations have come to a standstill. Significant damage to public infrastructure and private property could result if thawing capabilities are not available.

Public Works has contacted vendors that supply new skid mounted steaming equipment. The delivery of new equipment is 8-10 weeks out, and will require significant research to determine which one best meets our needs. The expected cost of a new steamer unit is $40,000 – $50,000

A reconditioned steam unit is available in Alberta Canada; the only one Public Works has been able to locate. The cost of this unit is $24,775.01 (plus $2,500 shipping).

Public Works mechanics have attempted to repair the steamer utilizing parts from the steamer unit surplused in 2003. This attempt has failed.

At this time, Public Works believes that purchasing the used steamer unit is the only way to acquire the critical equipment necessary to meet our immediate needs. Based on the implications of not having thawing capacities, Public Works will evaluate and make future recommendations regarding the purchase of a new steamer unit, so that the community has redundant thawing capabilities.

Recommendations: The City Council pass an ordinance approving the purchase of a used steamer unit and authorizing the City manager to execute all necessary documents. The cost should be split equally between the PW Reserve, Water Reserve and Sewer Reserve accounts.

Related Ordinances**Memorandum - Related Ordinances:** Ordinance 12-09 Budget Amendment to Purchase Skid-Mounted Steamer Equipment Unit

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