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City of North Pole
Director of City Services

Memo

To: North Pole City Council
From: Bill Butler
Date: July 27, 2016
Subject: Recommendation to approve purchase of a wood chipper by the Public Works Department

Recommendation

Approve the Public Works Department request to purchase a wood chipper for \$18,990.00 (See attached quote.) Funds for the purchase will be from Street Maintenance, the major function that the chipper will support. (Current balance as of 7/27 equals \$65,051.90.)

Background

The Public Works Department has increasingly taken responsibility for brush clearing along city streets and other brush clearing projects that in the past have been performed by private contractors. Public Works has a brush cutting attachment for its Bobcat that can clear moderate sized brush in ditches and road rights of way (ROW). The size of the brush that this attachment can clear safely is approximately one to two inches in diameter. This attachment effectively mulches the brush so the organic material can be left in place. Larger brush must be cleared with chain saws and other hand-held equipment. Brush cleared by hand must be loaded on to a truck, hauled to the City's dump site, unloaded and the staff then returns to the work site to gather more brush. This approach is inefficient. In addition, the site where we dispose of brush is rapidly filling. The brush disposed at the site is not compacted, it consumes significant space and Public Works must periodically hire a contractor with a bulldozer or large loader to level the site and compact the accumulated brush. This contracted work can cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000 depending upon the time to complete the work and can exceed \$2,000.

Brush chipped at the site where the brush is cut can often be left on site with no need to haul it to a disposal site. Should the volume or composition of chipped brush not be suitable for leaving on site, a chipper will automatically load the chipped brush onto a vehicle for hauling; the volume of the chipped brush is more compact so transporting it requires fewer trips to the dump site; the compacted volume of chipped brush will fill the dump site more slowly; and chipped brush at the dump site can be leveled with the Public Works' equipment and chipped brush can be driven upon, therefore; requiring less frequent need for leveling of the dump site by a private contractor.

The accumulated brush in some cases represents a wasted resource. Brush, tree limbs, and logs if chipped by Public Works can be used for landscaping, for example; the dog park has a bed of chipped brush. Chipped brush can also be used in planting beds or to line walking trails.

Public Works contacted local vendors and was only able to find a single local vendor that provides commercial grade wood chippers. The recommended wood chipper will chip material up to eight inches in diameter. It can blow the chips into our dump truck for hauling. We did investigate wood chippers that can function as an attachment to Bobcats; however, these units have limited power and the maximum size of items that can be chipped is four inches. Using a wood chipper attached to the Bobcat also limits the use of the Bobcat—when chipping wood, Public Works cannot use the Bobcat to clear brush, making the department less efficient.

Rental of equipment was also considered. Rental equipment is only available if no one else has the equipment rented. The Department's productivity is restrained trying to use rental equipment—staff time is required to collect and return the equipment to the vendor each time the equipment is rented. Rental of commercial-grade chippers can exceed several hundred dollars for a single day's rental (not counting staff time to collect and return the unit). Longer-term rentals can exceed \$1,000 or more depending upon the length of the rental. An important use for the chipper will be in "emergency" situations; for example, when trees fall across roads and they must be removed quickly. Chipping downed trees immediately is a service to our residents and using a chipper can make the process more efficient—less time is spent loading and unloading brush that must be hauled to the dump so more work can be done in less time resulting in roads being cleared more quickly.

The Woodway
1830 RJ Loop
Fairbanks, AK 99709
(907) 452-4002
Fax (907) 452-5332

Quote No: 17265
Date: 07/12/16
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Sold To: CODY LOUGEE
CITY OF NORTH POLE
125 SNOWMAN LN.
NORTH POLE, AK 99705

Customer No: 11408
Phone No: 907-488-2281

Ship To: 125 SNOWMAN LN.
NORTH POLE, AK 99705

Cust. Order #:

Salesperson: #29 - JON

Product Code	Item Description	Qty	Unit Price	Amount
BCCH8993H	CHIPPER 8" 993cc/ AUTO FEED	1	18990.00	18990.00
MISC SAW SHOP	MISC SAW SHOP	1	0.00	0.00
	INCLUDE SHIPPING TO THE WOODWAY, ASSEMBLED AND TEST RUN ALLOW 10 DAYS 2 WEEKS			

Sub-Total: 18990.00

Shipping: 0.00

Tax [0]: EXEMPT *

Total: 18990.00

Amount Paid: 0.00

Amount Due: 0.00

Change: 0.00

Thank you for your order!
No returns or exchanges without receipt.
Visit us online at www.TheWoodway.com