

SPECIAL CALL MEETING MARCH 14, 2019

Be it remembered that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ocean Springs met in a Regular meeting at City Hall in the City of Ocean Springs at 5:30 p.m. on March 14, 2019. The Mayor presiding, Aldermen Cox, Gill, Authement, Bellman, Papania, Blackman and Impey were present. Also present were City Clerk Patty Gaston and City Attorney Kevin Melchi.

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

The Special Call Meeting is for the purpose of any and all matters pertaining to the discussion of the City Engineering contract.

The Mayor started the meeting by addressing the board with his concerns of the engineering firm negotiations. He requested that the board open up discussions with multiple firms so that the committee can perform their due diligence. Alderman Gill responded that the motion was to open up negotiations with Overstreet and Associates and discuss the fees. The motion was passed on March 6, 2019, "Motion was made by Alderman Gill and seconded by Alderman Papania to hire engineering firm Overstreet and Associates pending acceptable rate schedule negotiations." Mr. Overstreet stated that he submitted fees for review. Alderman Impey said that the board ignored the process for ranking firms. Mayor Dobson explained that he would like to expand negotiations due to concerns over capacity. Mr. Overstreet responded that one engineer would be assigned to the City. Alderman Authement said there are two parties to a contract, and if the engineer cannot fulfill the contract to the city's satisfaction they would be released from the contract. Alderman Blackman stated that the board ignored the ranking system by ranking six firms and then not picking one of the top three. However, Alderman Bellman replied that the City Attorney told them to not do the ranking system. The City Attorney responded that the ranking system was not necessary for day to day engineering but was mandatory for grants and other external funded sources. The Planning/Grants Administrator informed the board that if the ranking system was used it would save time for finding an engineer for grants since a documented competitive ranking process is required. Alderman Papania replied that it sounds like a convenience for her as opposed to a mandatory issue. Alderman Papania said the Mayor could give the board the fees from Overstreet and Associates and let them decide or turn the motion down and veto. Alderman Cox was concerned that the City may miss out on reimbursable funds if they do not pick an engineering firm that the various external funding agencies approve. Alderman Gill said we are not doing federal grants right now, we are deciding a day to day operation engineer. He said Overstreet and Associates have been the engineers for the City of Long Beach and are qualified. The Mayor reiterated that the City has a lot of development and would like to interview multiple firms to give the citizens the best possible services. The Mayor asked if vetoed the motion, would Overstreet and Associates still be able to participate in the bid process; the City Attorney assured him Overstreet and Associates could still be included. Alderman Impey stated that there is much more to be concerned about with than just initial costs; scheduling, experience and infrastructure knowledge are crucial components of the bid.

Motion was made by Alderman Cox and seconded by Alderman Blackman to rescind the vote to hire Overstreet and Associates for engineering services and to go into negotiations with all firms. The motion failed with Aldermen Gill, Authement, Bellman and Papania voting nay and Aldermen Cox, Impey and Blackman voting aye.

The Mayor responded that the veto will be given to the City Clerk on Friday, March 15, 2019.

Greg Denyer spoke from experience of being on the board for 14 years. He said engineering is a service provided to the city but over the years Public Works has given more and more responsibility from their department to the engineers, which is costly. He said there are three ways to reduce price spent on engineering. The first is for the board and department heads to not ask for a price from an engineer that goes beyond the scope of day to day operations but rather get a general idea from Public Works. Second, would be to require board approval of estimated cost if beyond the scope of day to day operations. He also stated that engineering fees are incurred for projects related to grants which are always outside of the scope of contract. He also suggested that the board does not bid hourly but choose a monthly price due to the city being hurt in the past by a slow working company. He said he feels that the Compton Engineering Firm has been a good family member to this city. Finally, not relying on the engineers as much and to relying more on in-house Public Works and being conservative on what is asked for from engineers.

Alderman Blackman agreed that much of the costs were self-inflicted by the board due to the board approving and the department heads going straight to the engineers asking for things beyond day to day scope.

The Building Official told the board that a smaller firm was not necessarily bad however he wanted to be sure that the engineer that the board chose would have the resources and manpower to place the City first.

The Public Works Director informed the board that while on the committee to negotiate the fees, he had difficulty with knowing if Overstreet's fees were good or not without a comparison. He was informed that since it was an RFQ, the City could only choose based on qualifications and not on fees. He felt it was necessary to have a comparison to make a decision.

Motion was made by Alderman Impey, seconded by Alderman Bellman and unanimously carried to adjourn the Special Call meeting.

The meeting ended at 6:20 p.m.

Betty Maston

City Clerk

4/2/19

Date

Greg Denyer

Mayor

4/2/19

Date

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS
COUNTY OF JACKSON
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI**

Call for a Special Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ocean Springs, Mississippi.

From: Mayor Dobson

To: Aldermen Cox, Gill, Authement, Bellman, Papania, Blackman, and Impey

You are hereby notified that a Special Call Meeting is called to meet at City Hall at **5:30 p.m., Thursday, March 14, 2019.**

THE OBJECT OF THE MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

Any and all matters pertaining to:

- a) Discussion of City Engineering Contract



Shea Dobson

Shea Dobson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Patty Gaston

Patty Gaston, City Clerk