



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Water Meter Replacement and Automated Meter Reading System – Project Information and Status Update

Date:	December 17, 2009
To:	Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
From:	General Manager, Toronto Water Treasurer
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:/2009/Internal Services/pw09003treasurer (AFS#8153)

SUMMARY

This report outlines the staff training plan for the new automated meter reading system being installed under the Water Meter Replacement and Automated Meter Reading System project and provides an update on the status of the project.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council Decision

At its meeting held on June 23 and 24, 2008 City Council awarded Request for Proposal 0713-08-0001 “Water Meter Replacement and Automated Meter Reading System” to the preferred proponent, Neptune Technology Group (Canada) Limited, and authorized staff to negotiate and enter into an agreement with the preferred proponent. In its consideration of this matter City Council also requested that:

1. The General Manager, Toronto Water, and the Treasurer report to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, in 2009, on the approved staff training plan for the new meter system being installed under the Water Meter Replacement and Automated Meter Reading System project, including the role that City staff will play in

operating, maintaining and servicing the City's water meter infrastructure in the future; and,

2. The General Manager, Toronto Water, and/or his representatives meet quarterly with the affected Unions during the implementation of the Water Meter Replacement and Automated Meter Reading System project.

Background Information (City Council)

Following are the links to the Council decision and staff report on the Water Meter Replacement and Automated Meter Reading Project.

2008-06-18-pw16.12a-Supplementary report from the General Manager, Toronto Water
(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/cc/bgrd/backgroundfile-14208.pdf>)

2008-06-04-pw16.12-Staff Report

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-13476.pdf>)

2008-06-04-pw16.12-Attachment 1

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-13477.pdf>)

2008-06-04-pw16.12-Attachment 2

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-13478.pdf>)

2008-06-04-pw16.12-Attachment 3

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-13481.pdf>)

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Following detailed negotiations between the two parties, and in keeping with Council's authority of June 2008, the City and Neptune Technology Group (Canada) have entered into an agreement for the supply and delivery of water meters and an automated meter reading system as specified in RFP 0713-08-0001. The agreement was signed in late December 2009 and the installation of the water meters and the automated meter reading system will begin early in 2010.

As requested by Council, this report outlines the staff training plan for the new meter system being installed under the Water Meter Replacement and Automated Meter Reading System project, including the role that City staff will play in operating, maintaining and servicing the City's water meter infrastructure in the future.

COMMENTS

Following the Council decision to enter into negotiations with Neptune Technology Group (Canada) Limited, staff began negotiating the agreement for this project. The agreement includes a schedule that sets out detailed requirements for staff training, and summarizes both the City's and the vendor's responsibilities with respect to training.

Staff Training Plan

The plan identifies training on various aspects of the project that will be provided during the first year of the project following the initial launch. Additional training will be undertaken as necessary, during the six-year term of the project, to accommodate City personnel turnover, and to provide retraining to all personnel as needed to accommodate new technologies.

During the first year of the project, training is to be provided to 440 city staff in the following areas:

- 50 Revenue Services staff in Water Billing and Meter Services;
- 100 Revenue Services staff in Customer service (Call Centre, Correspondence and Counter Service);
- 250 City Call Centre staff (including Revenue Services, Toronto Water and 3-1-1 Call Centres);
- 15 City IT staff in computer support; and
- 25 Toronto Water staff in meter maintenance.

Training sessions for City staff will cover all aspects of the delivery, coordination, public relations and management of the meter reading replacement and automated meter reading project. Manuals, training materials and course content for each of the training sessions will be developed and delivered by the vendor, following the City's review and acceptance of the proposed training material, under the terms of the agreement.

The training plan will utilize a variety of teaching methods from classroom sessions with practical demonstrations and hands-on training to on-site, situational training for field staff with training specific to job functions. For example, training for customer service-related personnel (call centres, billings staff and front-line enquiries for installations) will provide education and training in general customer service protocols, detailed information on the public education program, appointment scheduling process, typical installation descriptions, complaint process, protocols for transferring inquiries and the damage claim processes.

For staff involved in installations and maintenance, on-the-job training of City personnel will focus on the proper operation and maintenance of the equipment and systems installed under the project, and will include general safety training, meter installation training, curb stop operation training and IT application and software training. This training will be conducted by qualified, experienced, trained representatives of the applicable equipment and software suppliers.

In terms of the future role of City staff presently involved in meter reading, the project roll-out involves the installation of new meters and equipment on a Ward-by-Ward basis. The future role of meter reading staff cannot be evaluated until after the vendor completes installation and the City is satisfied that the equipment is fully functional, thus allowing automated meter reading. Toronto Water will utilize the provisions of the Water Supply By-law, where new meters are not yet installed, to ensure that manual

meter readings are kept to a minimum. Where meters are not installed at all properties within a ward, those properties will have to be included on a manual meter reading list and will continue to be read manually by Meter Reading staff. Manual reading routes are most efficient when read on a house by house basis by staff walking along a street. However, under this program properties where meters and equipment are not installed are unlikely to be geographically proximate, thus leaving the potential for a more labour-intensive requirement to read the meters in these areas.

Quarterly Meetings with Unions

Toronto Water and Revenue Services representatives have met three times with executives of Local 416 and Local 79 during the negotiations with Neptune for implementation of the Water Meter Replacement and Automated Meter Reading System project and will continue to meet quarterly during the project implementation, and to date no substantial issues have been raised by either Unions.

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