



Commission Meeting

May 16, 2023

Utilities Purchase of Itron Endpoints and Data Configuration

Department: Utilities

Presenter: Wes Byne, Director

Caption: Motion to **approve** Augusta Utilities Purchase of Itron Cellular Endpoints and Data Configuration for AMI Testing. (**Approved by Engineering Services Committee May 9, 2023**)

Background: Itron is AUD's current provider of approximately 55,000 first and second generation electronic radio read endpoints that allows AUD to remotely read a large portion of our existing meter population. AUD plans to use ARPA funds and other funding sources to start converting all our meters to AMI (Advanced Metering Infrastructure) which will eventually enable all of our meters to be read by a system of remote meter data retrieval that will no longer require staff to physically drive to the site of the meter to access the reading data. This can be achieved by transmitting data through cellular signals, or by installing a system of fixed data collectors throughout our area located on existing structures.

Analysis: Augusta Utilities is in the process of considering various options and types of equipment to enable us to meet our goal of beginning the process of AMI. Our current remote read vendor, Itron, has a solution that uses cellular technology, so no added infrastructure is required, only the devices themselves, the data collection software, the vendor's IT related services and cellular service charges. In order to effectively test this technology, we have purchased 100 of these units, but need an additional 400 of these units to have a large enough sample size to monitor their performance for approximately the next six months and make an informed decision. If we decide not to implement this system, these units can still be toggled into traditional drive-by mode and the software being installed is just an upgrade of our meter reading software to the required version but will also provide us with the best software option available as we continue to read the current Itron technology over the next several years while we transition to whichever technology and vendor we ultimately decide is best. Itron is the only vendor who can supply us these particular devices as they are brand new and are not available through any distributors. We are specifically wanting to test their product since we already will have their software in place, and Itron is going to be the lowest price AMI option due to the existing relationship and

existing infrastructure and special discounts being offered. This is a very affordable way to test and evaluate this technology with very little sunk costs should we decide not to proceed with this technology throughout our system.

Financial Impact: The total cost to purchase 400 units, mounting kits, cellular subscription fees and professional services to properly set up the software and data collection protocols is \$80,196.

Alternatives: None

Recommendation: Approve Augusta purchase of Itron Cellular Endpoints for AMI testing

Funds are available in 506043210/5315111 \$39,188.00

the following accounts: 506043110/5212999 \$36,448.00

506043210/5213110 \$4,560.00

REVIEWED AND
APPROVED BY: N/A