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TOWN OF JEROME

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STAFF SUMMARY REPORT

FROM: Brett Klein, Town Manager/Clerk

ITEM: **Item: Consideration of Bids in Response to the Town's Issuance of a RFP for Water Meters**

MEETING DATE: December 15, 2025

Summary:

In June, 2025, the Town received a grant from the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA) for water meters with the overarching goals of conserving water and having real-time accurate data. The grant was highly competitive with none of our neighboring jurisdictions being approved, but our grant application was based on the significant need the Town has to upgrade its meters and attempt to account for infrastructure leaks.

The Town subsequently issued a RFP to receive proposals from eligible vendors and to obtain more information regarding the automated meters. The Town received seven (7) bids, all of which could be purchased utilizing the Town's FY 2026 budgeted funds and the WIFA grant. At the December 9th regular meeting the Town Council narrowed it down to four that would be invited to attend a special meeting in order to learn more about their product and process and determine if there is a good match for the Town.

There will be vendors providing a presentation at the special meeting on December 15th. Staff highly recommend that Council chose a viable option to utilize the grant funding. If not done now, it will likely need to be completed in the next ten years with higher prices and no guarantee of a funding partner. Plus, we are or could / should be replacing ten meters a year anyway and to continue replacing them with the older style meters seems an unwise financial investment in the Town.

Staff have researched extensively and not identified a single private or public water utility; water conservation organization; water engineer or public grant authority that would choose the old-style meter over the contemporary "smart" meters. I'm sure there are some opponents but considerably fewer than the many proponents who extol its virtue of conservation through leak detection.

Jerome has other considerations. Beyond the real-time data and leak detection, we place our staff in peril every month by having to utilize outdated practices for reading meters, which require climbing and balancing just to access. At the meeting we will show a video and photographs of a couple of the more difficult to access meters and an actual hike to a more difficult meter read location through body cam footage.

Moreover, staff are against any type of meter replacement opt out as there is no scientific argument for remaining with the old style meters, but understand that is a Council prerogative and are happy to oblige should the Council vote for this as a stipulation.

Fiscal Impact:

The Town has received an 80% grant from WIFA for \$206,000~. The impact to the Town would be the remaining 20% which was budgeted for in line item 20-50-6230 that with 42% of the budget year elapsed has expended only \$7,860 out of \$175,000.

Recommendation:

Staff highly recommend Council identify a vendor they feel most comfortable with fitting our needs for full-scale meter replacement and authorizing staff pursue a contract with the specified vendor.