



**Village of Rycroft  
Request for Decision**

**Council Meeting Date: March 21, 2023**

**TOPIC:** Awarding of the Village Water Operator Contract

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** That Council award the Water Operator contract to Aquacor Water & Environmental Inc. for the period of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2028 in the amount of \$149,615 plus GST per annum.

**BACKGROUND:** The Village currently has an "Operational Assistance" agreement with Aquacor Water & Environmental Inc. (formerly GWST) until June 30, 2023. Under the current contract, the Water Operator (Aquacor) looks after the water treatment plant and compliance with all legislative requirements. The Village looks after the water distribution and wastewater systems.

After Council directed Administration to advertise for a contractor at the January 17, 2023 Regular Council meeting, we advertised the contract on the Alberta Purchasing Connection website, in the Central Peace Signal newspaper, social media, and bulletin boards. The posting closed February 24.

The Village requested proposals from independent contractors to provide all daily operations and maintenance for compliance with Federal and Provincial approvals and standards pertaining to the water and wastewater treatment facilities. The term of the agreement will be for 5 years starting July 1, 2023.

We had two interested bidders for the whole job:

Aquacor Water and Environmental Inc., Rycroft, AB:	\$149,615 +GST for years 1-5
Aquatech Canadian Water Services Inc., Cochrane, AB:	\$230,000 +GST + annual CPI+

Bids were judged on presentation, pricing, availability, experience, and references.

The advantage to having a contractor look after the water system is they are responsible for the system 24 hours a day/7 days a week. As certain levels of accreditation are required, they have a number of staff to manage the system. They are responsible for their staff wages, benefits, training, vehicles, etc. Birch Hills County recently went through the same evaluation of service and decided to hire a contractor (Aquacor) instead of recruiting new Water Operators, based mainly on the operational cost.

The Village has a limited budget and staff complement, so if we were to hire a certified Water Operator and they decided to leave, we would have to find another operator with the minimum qualifications (Level 2). Previously the Village has personnel vacancy issues, the Village hired a

contractor (Aquaterra) at an over inflated cost as they needed qualified personnel in place immediately. Contracting this service out removes this liability from the Village operations.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** We spent ~\$130,000 for the Water Operator contract annually for the past 6 years with Aquacor, there was no annual increase during the previous contact. The bid this time increases ~13%, with no other increase during the 5 year contract period.

**POLICY AND/OR LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS:** None

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:**

1. Council could hire and train more staff to run the Water Treatment Plant.

**ATTACHMENTS:** None

Peter Thomas

Chief Administrative Officer

March 13, 2023

Date