



City of Racine, Wisconsin AGENDA BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

AGENDA DATE:	August 27, 2018
SUBJECT:	Fire Department Turnout Gear Procurement
PREPARED BY:	Brian Phillips, Administrative Lieutenant
SUMMARY: Requesting permission to purchase Fire Dex firefighting turnout gear through a sole sourced distributor, WS Darley.	
PROJECT BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS:	
Due to changes in the Local 321 collective bargaining agreement effective January 1, 2018, the City is responsible to replace the turnout gear of 20% of its firefighters per year. In 2018-2020 this will equate to 74 sets (coat and bunker pants). Prior to January 1, 2018, the City purchased turnout gear for only its new hires and subsequent sets of turnout gear were purchased by the firefighters through their annual clothing allowance.	
In the beginning of 2018, we asked representatives from three manufacturers to meet with us and demonstrate the value of their turnout gear. In reviewing the turnout gear options, consideration was given for the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality and durability of the gear• Past experience with the manufacturer• Cost of maintenance and repair• Current and forecasted pricing• Ease and experience of working with the distributor	
After meeting with the manufacturers and distributors, we obtained cost estimates for the products that they represented. We also compared these prices with the results of a local consortium bid for the same type of product. Fire Dex pricing is the lowest of all the manufacturers we looked at when comparing similar fabrics and options.	
Based upon our experience and examination of options we determined Fire Dex to be the best fit for the Racine Fire Department for the following reasons:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The turnout gear is of high quality. The fabric used to assemble the turnout gear is similar or the same from manufacturer to manufacturer, the difference lies in the assembly process. Fire Dex turnout gear is assembled well and has better reinforcement in the seams, cuffs, and knees.• We have purchased Fire Dex gear in the past and have had no issues with it. We have had quality and customer service issues with other manufacturers.• Fire Dex carries the same warranty as all other gear manufacturers. Due to its construction and durability we believe the cost of repair and maintenance will be lower than that of other manufacturers. There are no unique features that will increase the cost of repair or maintenance.• Fire Dex pricing is the lowest of all the manufacturers we looked at when comparing similar fabrics and options. Fire Dex has standard options that exceed the standard of other manufacturers. They will hold their pricing for 3 years (2018, 2019, 2020), other manufacturers anticipate a 3-5% price increase every year.• The sole distributor for this area, W.S. Darley, has been easy to work with in the past and they	

employ a local representative.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

I am requesting to be authorized to purchase 74 sets of Fire Dex firefighting turnout gear over a 3 year period from WS Darley as a sole sourced vendor.

FISCAL NOTE:

Funds for this purchase are available in account 13001 53240. Cost for a 3 year contract to replace 74 sets of turnout gear is \$127,965.40.

I took this out:

Quality turnout gear is an important component in the safety of firefighters. By purchasing the gear in larger quantities the City will be able to secure gear that meets acceptable standards and minimizes liability. Through the experience of purchasing turnout gear for new hires, the Fire Department has gained familiarity with numerous gear manufacturers along with the quality of their products.

I changed vendor to distributor