

TO: Board of Commissioners

FROM: Josh Estey, Director of Compliance and Hazardous Waste

DATE: December 13, 2023

RE: RFB No. 20211119/20230224 Skid Steer for Materials Recycling Facility - Procurement

---

CSWD Staff issued a Request for Bid (RFB) for the procurement of one skid steer per RFB No. 20211119, dated November 19, 2021. This procurement was a scheduled rolling stock replacement, per our operating contract with Casella. The skid steer that was approved by the Board for purchase from that RFB was a John Deere 324G. Since taking receipt of that machine, it has been plagued with an ongoing issue of a snapping drive chain (every 200-400 hours or so). United Construction and John Deere corporate have been involved and critical in trying to address this issue. The last fix they suggested was removing the counterweight as requested in the RFB and switching the tires from solid rubber to air-filled tires. This swap, as they suggested, did result in a longer time between issues but ultimately just delayed the inevitable as just a few weeks ago the drive chain snapped again. United Construction has been out to see the machine since and is working with John Deere corporate to identify a solution, which would be to buy back this machine.

In the meantime, RFB 20230224 (second skid steer for the MRF, also a scheduled replacement) was sent out but ultimately put on hold to allow time to resolve the situation with John Deere if possible. The hold on the RFP meant that we needed to rent skid steers to ensure day-to-day continuation of service due to the unreliability of the Deere unit. Rental skid steers have been in place since and are still onsite today. Rather than rebid, CSWD staff are recommending an exemption from bidding for two skid steers from Milton Cat for a variety of reasons:

- The current skid steers onsite are Cat machines and Casella operations/maintenance staff are keenly aware of their abilities, their operations, and their maintenance and feel comfortable in all aspects of the units.
- The current MRF, as well as the new MRF, is/will be limited in process floor accessibility. By purchasing units, we know will fit everywhere with our current operation, we know we will not run into any operational limitations.
- Cat has a stellar track record for maintenance and seemingly the most robust service infrastructure which will result in less downtime when there is an issue and when preventative maintenance is needed. In addition, if a machine is down for an extended period of time, Milton Rents is prompt with an identical machine meaning no learning curve with a new brand of machine.
- While the response for maintenance has been professional and prompt by John Deere/United, at this point we cannot trust their skid steer in this application.
- The other bidders from the 2021 RFB offered Kubota and Bobcat units – while these are tried and true brands, the maintenance availability is an unknown and for units getting so many hours put on them that is a significant factor to consider.

The proposed equipment has an identified useful life as a skid steer for a minimum of five years' timeframe and come with a three-year warranty. Given that the new MRF should have less of reliance on the use of skid steers, the useful life should be extended beyond five years. Final purchase price to be determined based on available/needed options.

**BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners authorizes the Executive Director to enter into a contractual agreement for the purchase of two Caterpillar 242D3 skid steers from Milton Cat, in Milford, MA, for an amount not to exceed \$150,000.00.**