

MIAMI BEACH

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee Members

FROM: Rickelle Williams, Interim City Manager

DATE: June 28, 2024

TITLE: DISCUSSION TO FUND AN INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY STUDY ON ELECTROMAGNETIC FREQUENCY (EMF) READINGS AT THE FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT (FPL) SUBSTATION LOCATED AT 1031 4TH STREET.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

At its January 31, 2024 meeting, the City Commission approved a referral (C4 Y) to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee (FERC) to consider funding an independent third-party study on electromagnetic frequency (EMF) readings at the Florida Power and Light (FPL) substation located at 1031 4th Street.

The referral stems from concerns raised by parents of South Pointe Elementary School, which is located approximately 70 feet from the substation. They have expressed worries about potential health risks associated with the new substation.

While FPL provides its own EMF studies, sponsoring Commissioner Suárez, would like to have the City conduct its own study to address the community's concerns objectively.

This item was included on the May 24, 2024 FERC meeting agenda but was not reached.

ANALYSIS

Public Works has been in discussions with FPL representatives with regards to any EMF studies conducted at the substation. To conduct an objective study with a third-party consultant, Public Works would need to have all the criteria used by FPL for their study and compare findings.

The City's Procurement Department has provided Public Works staff a list of pre-approved consultants from the A&E pool whose disciplines include Geotechnical Engineering and Material Testing and can potentially conduct the study. The firms are: GFA International Inc, NV5, Inc., Professional Service Industries (PSI/Intertek), Inc., Radise International, LLC and Universal Engineering Sciences, LLC.).

Thus far, consultants provided by Procurement who were contacted for initial study inquiry, were not familiar with EMF studies done through their local offices. However, the firms have been asked to query other offices within their respective organizations to determine if they have the necessary expertise to conduct the studies. Depending on the feedback, there is a possibility that the City may need to go outside of the pre-approved A&E consultant pool to have this study done.

As means of providing an initial estimated cost of an EMF reading to Committee members, City Staff reached out to an independent consultant, ScanTech Technical Consulting, based in Dallas, Texas. The estimated cost for a first visit in Miami Beach for an EMF reading on a non-energized substation is \$4,700. The estimated cost for a second visit to conduct an EMF reading on an energized substation is \$3,300, for a total estimated cost of \$8,000.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The approximate cost for two (2) visits to conduct an EMF reading on an energized and non-energized substation is \$8,000.

CONCLUSION

The Public Works Department has been in discussions with FPL representatives and is pending from FPL additional information regarding EMF at the substation. This includes a copy of the narrative from the EMF compliance filing with FDEP, a pre and post EMF survey conducted outside the substation, and other pertinent information. This also includes procedures applied throughout the study, criteria used to test items such as electrical components inside the FPL substation. Once received, Public Works will reach out to City pre-approved consultants or outside the pool of pre-approved consultants, should these consultants not conduct this type of testing, to obtain an official service quote for the study and provide an update to Committee members.

Applicable Area

South Beach

Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?

Yes

Is this item related to a G.O. Bond Project?

No

Department

Public Works

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner David Suarez