

**Indian River County, Florida  
Department of Utility Services  
Board Memorandum**

**Date:** March 9, 2023  
**To:** Michael C. Zito, Interim County Administrator  
**From:** Sean C. Lieske, Director of Utility Services  
**Prepared by:** Cindy Corrente, Utilities Finance Manager  
**Subject:** Final Payment to National Metering Services, Inc.

**Background**

On July 16, 2019, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) authorized the endorsement of the Agreement for Meter Deployment Services between Indian River County and National Metering Services, Inc. (NMS) to perform meter deployment services. The objective of the deployment was to replace any manual read meters that were in the utility distribution system to automated meter reading (AMR) meters.

**Analysis:**

The meter deployment process itself went very well. However, the complications caused by the total shut down of work due to restrictions affiliated with COVID-19 and related material supply shortages caused the project duration to extended much longer than originally planned. However, together the staff from NMS and Indian River County Department of Utility Services (IRCDUS) worked through the delays and finally have successfully completed the project. During the project, 31,662 manual read meters were replaced with AMR meters. In addition, 5,661 meter boxes and 6,482 meter box lids were replaced. An added benefit of the project included the obtainment of Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates for each meter.

The project has drastically improved efficiencies in the system in several ways. First, the reading of meters for billing purposes is no longer a manual process wherein a meter reader had to travel to each meter box, lift the meter box lid, often times remove sand or dirt or water that had accumulated in the box to obtain the read, record that read in a hand-held instrument, and later electronically transmit that read into the billing system. Now, a meter reader travels by auto in the vicinity of the meters and using a laptop they obtain the meter reads electronically. Second, manual style meters that had been in the system beyond their useful life and had stopped recording usage, or slowed down mechanically and were no longer recording all usage, were replaced so that all meters are now recording usage accurately. Third, system alarms or messages are triggered whenever a meter transmits a read that is out of the typical usage range for that location. This feature leads to identifying dead meters in a timely manner (those that are not recording consumption) as well as identifying leaks on the customer side of the meters.

As mentioned, COVID 19 led to the shut down of work for the contractor as did a shortage of materials after work reconvened. As a result, the contractor incurred several months of additional warehouse rental for the space that was used for their project headquarters in Vero Beach. Staff believes it is fair to share in

the cost of two months of that rental expense since delays in material shipments were unavoidable and were not the result of any inefficiencies on the part of the contractor.

**Funding:**

Funds in the amount of \$22,263.32 for the two months' rent reimbursement will be recorded in the Utilities/WIP/Countywide Meter Replacement account, number 471-169000-16506, and funds in the amount of \$126,269.23 will be recorded in the Utilities/Retainage/Countywide Meter Replacement account, number 471-206000-16506. Since this is a Utilities operating fund project, the funds will come from fund balance. Utilities operating funds are generated from water and sewer sales.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Account Number</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Utilities/WIP/Countywide Meter Replacement	471-169000-16506	\$ 22,263.32
Utilities/Retainage/Countywide Meter Replacement	471-206000-16506	\$126,269.23
	Total Disbursement	\$148,532.55

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners approve the payment in the amount of \$148,532.55, which represents reimbursement of two months' rent in the amount of \$22,263.32 and release of retainage in the amount of \$126,269.23 to National Metering Services, Inc.

**Attachments:**

- Invoice IRC 2022-09
- Retainage Spreadsheet