



# TULSA WORLD

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## City workers win first of competitive bids

by: World's Editorial Writers

Monday, June 06, 2011

6/6/2011 2:47:12 AM

In the first bidding process pitting city employees against the private sector, the city employees won.

While it's early in the process, the first try offers some interesting possibilities.

Up for bid was the contract for City Hall maintenance. The current City Hall maintenance staff won the contract with a bid of \$977,190, which was lower than the most qualified private bid of \$984,000 from a New York City firm. That bid was one of four private bids submitted.

The work will include all of the electrical, mechanical, plumbing and carpentry needs of City Hall. More than \$1 million is set aside in the budget for those needs, so the city workers' bid will save the city about \$116,000.

About 200 government services could ultimately be handled through this "managed competition" process recommended in the KPMG efficiency review of Tulsa's government, such as horticulture, animal welfare and equipment management.

The employees were given some training before submitting a bid so they could compete effectively against the private firms.

So in the end, some dedicated city workers managed to beat out four private firms to keep the work inhouse, and save the city some money at the same time. Maybe the private sector isn't always cheaper and more efficient after all.


The employees apparently really sharpened their pencils when they went to work on the bid. They managed to bring their bid down to the winning level by eliminating a vacant position, giving up two vehicles and upgrading software to streamline processes.

If the employees can continue bringing down the cost of the work, they'll be the first to participate in a gain-sharing agreement that splits up saved sums between the employee group and the city.

The process worked well, and the employees are to be commended for rising to the challenge. Let's hope there's more of the same on the city's horizon.

**Original Print Headline: Good job**

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