



Published September 20th, 2017

Higher costs and protracted completion date for MOFD Station 43

By Nick Marnell

After the absence of construction activity over the lost summer of 2017, the projected costs to rebuild Moraga-Orinda Fire District Station 43 jumped more than \$1 million and completion of the station has been delayed until late 2018.

At a Sept. 6 special meeting, the district terminated its agreement with Pacific Mountain Contractors, the company originally chosen to rebuild Fire Station 43, and awarded a new construction contract to Federal Solutions Group, a San Ramon-based minority-owned federal contractor.

Pacific pulled out of its agreement with MOFD over what it cited were significant errors in the plans and specifications for the rebuilt fire station. Rather than litigate, the district attempted to renegotiate, but MOFD determined that Pacific was unwilling to build the station at any price, demanding release from the contract in June.

According to the separation agreement, Pacific paid MOFD \$54,000 to walk away and agreed to assign \$110,000 of preparatory work owed to its subcontractors. The district absorbed the subcontractor charges and built them into the terms of its \$3.34 million contract with Federal.

Adding costs incurred by Pacific, legal charges and the projected increases for labor and materials, the estimate for the rebuilt fire station rose from \$4 million to \$5.4 million, though the district has not approved \$500,000 of the recommended architectural, construction manager and contingency costs.

Things could have been worse.

The district was able to quickly secure the agreement with Federal, one of the original bidders on the station project, which resubmitted the lowest revised pricing to complete the fire station. That saved MOFD from another round of competitive bidding to select a contractor, likely pushing the project completion into mid-2019.

"It's a very unfortunate situation," said Kathleen Famulener, MOFD board president. "The original contractor underbid the project, and we couldn't continue. We are lucky to have worked out a deal and the new contractor is ready to go to work within weeks."

Louis Parsons, who signed the Pacific termination agreement, did not return calls seeking further explanation for the company's action.

Reach the reporter at: nick@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA