

HOUSTON FIREFIGHTERS Continued from Front Page

the City of Houston to spread the financial burden over decades. However, there were no specific details about how the plan will work, as well as what impact it will have on the city’s financial future, which are things that prompted a letter from two Houston city councilmembers who are asking key questions and seeking to get a better understanding.

On Monday, March 18th, Houston City Councilmembers Edward Pollard (District J) and Tiffany Thomas (District F) sent a joint letter to Mayor Whitmire with ten (10) questions, seeking clarity and transparency about this massive settlement agreement that will have a major impact on the financial future of the City of Houston. The ten (10) thought-provoking questions asked in the letter by Councilmembers Pollard and Thomas were:

1. After the 18% pay raise (6% consecutively for the previous three years), where does the firefighters’ salary currently compare to other major cities in Texas?
2. After the voters initially passed Proposition B, before it was later struck down as unconstitutional, the city paid fire fighters \$17M. Was this allocation factored into the negotiation? If so, how?
3. Under state law, Houston is the only city in Texas that overtime for firefighters starts at 46.7 hours opposed to 53 hours for all other municipalities. As such, Houston taxpayers pay millions in overtime wages before the standard threshold for other cities is met. How was this factored into negotiations?
4. We have been informed that you proposed a judgment bond as a tool to secure the \$650 million dollars for back pay. Over what length of time will the bond be for? At what interest do you anticipate taxpayers paying on the bond?
5. Will this bond also include payments for any pension obligations? Are you open to putting the bond as a measure on the upcoming November election for the voters to have a voice in the decision?
6. Is the administration considering asking the voters to raise the revenue cap so that our cap is consistent with the state-imposed cap?
7. What is the justification for touting such a sizeable increase to firefighter pay while at the same time asking every other city department to find reductions by 5% across the board?
8. With both the Houston Police Officers Union contract and the Municipal Employees contract expiring soon, how will the proposed agreement with the firefighters

impact the city’s ability to have funding to satisfy their needs?

9. What role did the Fire Chief have in the formal negotiations?

10. Is it accurate to state the proposed agreement must be signed off by the presiding judge, approved by the Office of the Attorney General, and by a vote of city council?

Councilmembers Pollard and Thomas also encouraged Mayor Whitmire to answer their questions, because as of the date of their letter, they claim to have been given “no formal briefings” that included the mayor’s office, along with “the city attorney, the finance director, and the fire chief to have a comprehensive understanding of how these figures were established.”

Back in December of last year, 234th Civil District Court Judge Lauren Reeder ordered the City of Houston to sit at the table with Houston firefighters to bring their nearly eight-year impasse on contract negotiations and legal challenges to some finality.

Judge Reeder has presided over this issue since its inception and was tasked with the important responsibility of signing off on the agreed upon settlement agreement that came before her court on Monday, March 18th. Once signed off by Judge Reeder, the 90-day deadline begins and it will eventually come to the Houston City Controller, who must certify the settlement agreement.

The *Forward Times* reached out to Houston City Controller Chris Hollins, who told us that his office is still reviewing everything, but that the process would be that his office would simply certify that the funding is available, and not whether his office agrees with the decision.

Hollins tells the *Forward Times* that there are a lot of things that must happen with several entities, between now and when it would become official, such as:

- TBD: Houston City Controller must certify agreement.
- TBD: Houston City Council must approve agreement.
- TBD: Texas Attorney General’s Office must approve judgement bond issuance.
- TBD: Houston City Controller’s Office and Houston Mayor’s Office must approve bond issuance.
- TBD: Houston City Council must approve bond issuance.

Stay tuned, because the *Forward Times* will stay abreast of the latest happenings concerning this historic proposed settlement agreement between the City of Houston and the Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association.

BUN B Continued from Front Page



E-40 performs at the Houton Livestock Show & Rodeo (Photo by Medron White for Forward Times)



Bun B performs at the Houton Livestock Show & Rodeo (Photo by Medron White for Forward Times)

CLASSIFIEDS

BID OPPORTUNITY

Bound to Stay Bound Books, Inc.
1880 West Morton Avenue
Jacksonville, IL 62650

We are bidding on Project #24-02-07 Fully Processed & Cataloged Library Books for the Houston Independent School District. Our company is looking for possible M/WBE subcontractors for the following:

Publishing companies who sell children’s books to be rebound by us.

Our company will be looking for M/WBE subcontractors for the next 5 business days. If you are interested in providing the above-listed request, please contact Lori Smith at sales@btsb.com by March 26, 2024.

NOTICE TO PROPOSERS

The Houston Independent School District Purchasing Services Department, located at 4400 West 18th Street, Houston, TX 77092, is soliciting Request for Proposals (RFP) via the District’s electronic bidding portal. Proposers may login to view specifications and submit their responses at the following link <https://houstonisd.ionwave.net/Login.aspx> until 2:00 p.m. (CST) Tuesday, April 9, 2024, for the following solicitation:

RFP 24-01-06 Actuarial Services

Pre-proposal conferences via Microsoft Teams will be held in conjunction with this RFP. Information regarding dates, times, and instructions to receive a link to join the meeting can be located within the electronic bidding portal under the “Event Details” tab specific to this solicitation.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Manhattan Construction is soliciting subcontractor competitive proposals for the MD Anderson Consolidated Services Center (CSC) project. Scopes include: Building Concrete, Structural Steel, Fire Protection, Plumbing, Mechanical, & Electrical.

The 250K SF tilt-wall distribution center will relocate much of the hospital system’s back-of-house operations away from the medical center making way for expanded patient operations. The new distribution center, and supporting parking and detention, sits on 26 acres northwest of the 610/288 interchange in Houston, TX. The construction project will start in June 2024 and run through May 2026.

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the instructions to bidders to Manhattan Construction via BuildingConnected before **2pm 3/28/2024**. This project has a 21.1% HUB participation goal and HUB firms are strongly encouraged to submit, and non-HUB firms are encouraged to include and identify HUB participation included in their bids. For more info or to obtain access to the documents, email pbain@manhattanconstruction.com or call 713-529-0000. Manhattan Construction is an equal opportunity employer.

LEGAL NOTICE

Choice Partners (CP), a national purchasing cooperative and division of the Harris County Department of Education, has issued the following Requests for Proposals (RFPs):

- **RFP 24/032MR – Tree Trimming, Landscaping, Debris Removal and Related Services (Due Friday, April 5, 2024 at 2:00 PM CT)**
- **RFP 24/033MR – Cleaning of Parking Lots, Exterior Buildings, Environmental Solutions, and Related Services (Due Monday, April 8, 2024 at 2:00 PM CT)**
- **CSP 24/034MR – Fire, Safety, Security, and Surveillance Equipment/ Installation/ Inspection Services (JOC) (Due Friday, April 26, 2024 at 2:00 PM CT)**
- **CSP 24/036TC – Maintenance (All Trades) and Job Order Contracting (JOC-IDIQ) Single Trade Component (Due Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 2:00 PM CT)**

All proposals must be submitted via the HCDE online eBid System at <https://hcdeebid.ionwave.net>. Interested proposers may go to www.choicepartners.org and/ or call 877-696-2122 for more information.

who delivered a brief but high-energy four-song medley of his biggest hits: “E.I.,” “Country Grammar,” the country-tinged ballad “Over and Over,” and his No. 1 smash “Hot in Herre.”

The Roots showed up onscreen to introduce fellow Philadelphia native Eve, who took the stage in head-to-toe black leather, topped by a black cowboy hat. Like Nelly, she thrilled the crowd with live versions of some of her biggest singles: “Tambourine,” “Who’s That Girl?” and her hit collab with singer Gwen Stefani, “Let Me Blow Ya Mind” — the first song ever to win the Grammy for Best Rap/Sung Collaboration.

‘Lil Jon (who else?) intro’d the Atlanta section of the takeover with the Ying Yang Twins, who ran through a quick-fire tour of club bangers like “Get Low” and “Whistle While You Twerk.” DJ Khaled introduced Florida native and rapper Rick Ross, who drew a huge crowd response with his anthemic hit “Hustlin’.”

Soon, the Gulf Coast part of the takeover began. Scarface introduced a Bay City, TX native known as That Mexican OT (Outta Texas), who paid homage to Tejano rodeo roots in all-white cowboy attire while performing “Cowboy Killer” and “Johnny Dang.” Soon, all eyes were on the field outside the stage as a caravan of slab cars (complete wit “swangas”) emerged. Inside one vehicle was Houston rap legend Slim Thug; Lil’ Keke got out of a black Cadillac as Bun B took the mic for his song “Get Throwned.”

The mood shifted dramatically afterward. *Yellowstone* star Ryan Bingham played acoustic guitar on the pensive, mournful tune “One Day.”

“Houston, we dedicate this song to all of our fallen legends and fallen soldiers — and not just the people I love, but the people that love you. If you got somebody you wish was in NRG with you tonight, I want you to light this arena up.” “Somebody put the light up one time for Pimp C for me.” Thousands of cell phone flashlights illuminated the darkness inside NRG, shining like a hundred stars as Bun B paid tribute to those gone too soon.

“Houston, make sure you enjoy yourself to the fullest tonight,” he said, “because one day you here — *one day you here* — and believe me: the next day you’re gone.”

In 10 seconds, things went from reflective to raucous when Bun introduced Drake. In a burnt orange leather vest with glittery fringe, Drake turned the event into a mini-concert, working a crowd that sang along to every word of “Sicko Mode,” “God’s Plan,” and “Hotline Bling.”

Bun surprised the crowd when he brought out the legendary Darryl McDaniels from Run-DMC for “Bun’s House.” And the takeover ended with everybody back on stage for “International Players Anthem (I Choose You).”

IF I AM TO BE JUDGED BY THE
CONTENT OF MY CHARACTER I WILL
HAVE TO STOP IDENTIFYING MY SELF
BY SKIN COLOR

Haywood Shakir Talib
A.A.C.C.E.

HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL

Request for Proposal – Houston-Galveston Area Council – Public Services – Fleet Services Equipment – FL10-24

H-GAC is soliciting responses for selecting qualified manufacturers, dealers, distributors, and service providers for fleet services equipment and related services to make these types of products and services available to Customers of the HGACBuy Cooperative Purchasing Program under blanket type contracts.

To view the solicitation documents, visit <https://www.hgacbuy.org/bid-notice>.

Response Deadline: May 2, 2024 @ 12:00 P.M. CST

LEGAL NOTICE for RFP 24-13

The Houston Housing Authority (HHA), is soliciting sealed proposals with the intent to establish a contract for Security Guard Services in accordance with the requirements and terms and conditions specified in RFP 24-13 Security Guard Services.

Interested parties who wish to respond to this solicitation must submit the required documents in a sealed envelope by 2 P.M. CDT, April 18, 2024 to the Houston Housing Authority Attn: Katrina Heard Subject: RFP 24-13 Security Guard Services - DO NOT OPEN 2640 Fountain View Drive Houston, Texas 77057.

RFP 24-13 can be obtained by going to the doing business with HHA section of HHA’s website at www.housingforhouston.com, or by sending an e-mail to HHA’s Procurement Dept. at Purchasing@housingforhouston.com with RFP 24-13 in the subject line.

☞ A Fair and Equal Employment Opportunity Agency. For assistance: Individuals with disabilities may contact the 504/ADA Administrator at 713-260-0528, TTY 713-260-0574 or 504ADA@housingforhouston.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Tillman Infrastructure, LLC proposes to build a 140 foot Monopole Communications Tower at the approx. vicinity of 16217 N. Freeway, Houston, Harris Co., TX 77090 [Lat: 30-0-1.564 N, Lo: 95-25-50.008 W]. Public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: Trileaf Corp, Arjun Pai, a.pai@trileaf.com, 2550 South IH 35, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78704 – 512.519.9388.