

**Public Notice:**

NOTICE PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SEC. 2254.1036

WHEREAS, the City of Bellville will consider approving a contingent fee contract with the law firm of Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, L.L.P. ("Firm") and hereby posts this notice pursuant to Sec. 2254.1036 of the Government Code.

WHEREAS, this notice shall be posted before or at the time of giving the written notice required by Government Code Sec. 551.041 for a meeting described by Sec. 2254.1036(2) of the Government Code and shall announce the following:

A. The City of Bellville is pursuing a contract with the Firm for the collection of delinquent utility accounts owed to the City of Bellville. Through this contract the City of Bellville seeks to increase recovery of its delinquent debts in as expeditious a manner as possible. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(A).

B. The City of Bellville believes the Firm has the competency, qualifications, and experience necessary to fulfill this contract. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(B). The Firm has collected delinquent government receivables for over 50 years, including the collection of delinquent utility accounts. The Firm currently has 14 primary offices and multiple satellite offices throughout Texas, Oklahoma and Florida. It employs over 425 individuals, including 60 attorneys. It uses a multi-office, fully integrated team approach allowing the City of Bellville access to all its offices and resources. Its collection team consists of long-term Firm employees, including attorneys, call center associates, paralegals, law clerks, legal secretaries, collection support personnel and information technology experts. The Firm utilizes a proprietary collection software that can be tailored to meet any special need the City of Bellville may have. This proprietary software also automates many aspects of the collection process, such as: account/debtor research, mailings and phone calls, return mail and address updates, payment notification and processing and workflow.

C. The nature of any relationship between City of Bellville and the Firm is as follows. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(C). The Firm currently represents the City of Bellville in the collection of delinquent ad valorem property taxes and municipal court collections.

D. The City of Bellville is unable to collect its own delinquent utility accounts. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(D). The City of Bellville currently does not have adequate support staff, computer software/programming, or experience to internally conduct these collection services and acquiring these will result in substantial expense to the City of Bellville.

E. These collection services cannot be provided for an hourly fee. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(E). The Texas Local Government Code allows the assessment of a percentage-based fee to recover the costs of collecting delinquent utility accounts. This percentage-based fee is assessed only against the debtor and not the City of Bellville or taxpayers of the City of Bellville. The collection of delinquent utility accounts is a high-volume practice, requiring a significant amount of research, mailing, and handling of outbound/inbound calls. An hourly fee for such work will likely exceed amount of the delinquent utility accounts due. Moreover, the City of Bellville will bear the cost of these hourly fees and not the debtor, because Texas law does not expressly authorize the City of Bellville to pay for collection services based on an hourly fee.

F. The City of Bellville believes this contingent fee contract is in its best interest. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(F). Under the contingent fee contract, the Firm will be paid the amount of the percentage-based collection fee, regardless of the number of hours the Firm spends researching, contacting and mailing to collect the delinquent utility account. Additionally, the percentage-based collection penalty is a pass-through expense to the debtor and not an expense to the City of Bellville or its taxpayers.