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Tuesday, August 30, 2016

CITY STAFF TO RECOMMEND 'SPECTRA' TO MANAGE MPEC

With Wichita Falls city leaders' blessing next week, a new company will be put in place to take over the day to day operations of managing the Multi-Purpose Event Center.

City staff will recommend "Spectra" at a city council meeting next Tuesday. The company is headquartered in Philadelphia, but with venue management experience which the company claims hosts more than 15,000 events and more than 23 million guests annually company wide.

Spectra was recommended out of four companies that had originally submitted proposals.

"You know, they just really seemed hungry for our business and they have already taken such a vested interest in the community," Lindsay Greer, MPEC Interim Executive Director, said. "Throughout the entire process -- from the minute they knew, even before they submitted their proposal -- they came in and they did their homework about Wichita Falls."

Another positive according to city officials -- staff retention.

"That was one of the things we were concerned about obviously -- was our staff -- first and foremost. They have a really good track record. They typically retain anywhere from 85 to 95 percent of existing staff," she said.

The ultimate goal is increasing the amount of events hosted at the center.

"They can do promotions that have worked in other markets. They have a marketing budget that we currently don't have for MPEC. They have tools and software that makes us operate a little bit more efficiently than we have now," Greer said.

Also on Tuesday, Gatehouse Capital will present their study on a possible downtown hotel for the MPEC to members of city staff. Proponents say it is needed to help attract even more events at the facility.