



MONROE COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY

P.O. Box 10999 • 475 Norris Drive • Rochester, N.Y. 14610-0999

Phone: (585) 442-2000 Fax (585) 442-0220

September 9, 2024

**ADDENDUM NO. 1
TO THE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR**

THIRD PARTY PAYMENT PROCESSING RFP

This contains the above-referenced Addendum.

You must acknowledge receipt of this Addendum by signing below and faxing or e-mailing this sheet to the Authority by **12:00 p.m. ET on Friday, September 20, 2024.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT:

Signature

Name and Title *(Please Print)*

Company Name *(Please Print)*

Return by e-mail to:

alane.mammينو@mcwa.com

Or by Fax to:

Monroe County Water Authority
Attention: Alane Mannino
(585) 442-2907

1. Is it acceptable to include other types of technology not included in the RFP?

Additional technology beyond what we require can be included. Any additional technology included in the Proposal should be clearly separated from MCWA's requirements.

2. How many bills per month and total meters do you currently have?

We bill an average of 15,000 customer accounts each week. We have 190,168 quarterly accounts and approximately 820 monthly accounts.

3. What is the current cap on the \$1.30 charge?

The maximum ATM/debit/credit card payment allowed is \$1,200 and the maximum ACH payment is \$99,999.00. There is a limit of 5 payments per 30 days for ATM/Debit/Credit card payments.

4. What is your current CIS software?

Custom oracle forms applications and a web based customer portal.

5. Who is currently your depository bank?

Manufacture and Trust Company (M&T Bank)

6. Will the Authority please confirm that the scope of the RFP is limited to "Online/phone payments through a third party payment processor via credit card/debit card, ACH with an assessed transaction/convenience fee per occurrence" (RFP p. 3, E)?

Confirmed.

7. Of the 197,556 payments processed in 2023, approximately how many were paid by credit card? Debit card? ACH? Other?

<u>Payment Type</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>AVG Payment</u>
Discover	3,959	\$ 317,321.93	\$ 80.15
Master Card	23,953	2,709,352.43	113.11
Visa	<u>49,839</u>	<u>4,843,377.64</u>	97.18
Total	77,751	\$ 7,870,052.00	96.81
ACH	71,619	\$ 7,253,984.03	\$101.28
ATM	44,861	4,149,721.09	92.50
PayPal	3,115	260,768.27	83.71
VENMO	<u>210</u>	<u>17,528.83</u>	83.47
Total	119,805	\$ 11,682,002.22	90.24

- 8. Of the \$19 million processed in 2023, approximately how many dollars were paid by credit card? Debit card? ACH? Other?**

Please see answer to question #7.

- 9. We understand the Authority is interested in exploring kiosk options. How many kiosks would the Authority require?**

One (1)

- 10. Does the Authority currently process credit/debit card payments in office via traditional credit card terminals? If not, is the Authority interested in adding this as an option? How many terminals would be required?**

MCWA only accepts cash and checks at the office. All other payments go directly to the third party payment processor. MCWA's Customer Service does not take payments over the phone. All calls are transferred to the IVR system for payments.

- 11. What is the Authority's current fee structure? Do customers pay a convenience fee, does the Authority absorb the fee, or is it a combination of both?**

MCWA passes the cost of using our current third party payment processor on to the customer.

- 12. In the pricing table on RFP p.5, debit/credit card payments are on the same line. Can vendors charge different rates for credit vs. debit, if supported by our system?**

Vendors can offer their best offer.

- 13. Will the Authority accept scanned copies of original ink signatures, and/or electronic signatures such as DocuSign, on proposal forms requiring signatures?**

We will accept DocuSign to sign documents.

- 14. Who is the incumbent provider of lockbox services for the Authority?**

Currently we are using Manufacture and Trust Company (M&T Bank).

- 15. Can the Authority please provide details on their collections by payment type (credit card, debit card, ACH, etc.)?**

Please see answer to question #7.

16. Does the Authority have a maximum payment amount?

Please see answer to question #3.

17. What third party applications does the Authority use? On page 6, requirement F3 indicates "the system must be able to integrate with the Authority's third party applications..."

Primarily, the web based customer portal. More importantly is not what the third party applications are but the capability for secure API or web service calls to "pass through" associated with MCWA customer account information between systems for payment purposes.

18. What software product(s) will the vendor be required to integrate with?

Secure API (SAPI) and Secure FTP (SFTP).

19. Who is the current vendor for these services?

ACI/Speedpay

20. Who is the current bill print provider for these services and will an API be required for integration with this provider (assuming a 3rd-party provider is used for printing bills)?

Not part of this Request for Proposal.

21. Does the current payment processor support enrolled users, and, if so, how many have enrolled?

We have 85,000 customers enrolled in our customer portal.

22. For the 126,240 transactions processed in 2024, how many were ACH?

Through July of 2024, 45,587 transactions were ACH. The average payment amount is \$96.94.

23. What is the target project start date, and will it include all services in the implementation, or will it be rolled out in phases? In other words, will the initial implementation include payments through web, IVR and Kiosks? When is POS required?

Start date would be no later than 2/13/25 (for all except Kiosk).

24. Do ACH payments incur the \$1.30 convenience fee? Is this for all channels (Web/IVR) and methods (on demand, scheduled, and recurring)?

Currently all payments are subject to the \$1.30 charge.

25. Who is your portal provider?

ACI/Speedpay

26. Are customers re-directed to the ACI payment site or are payments collected within the portal via APIs?

Customers are seamlessly redirected to the payment site via our customer portal or a one-time payment tab.

27. Is the integration the same for Autopay?

Currently our Autopay option is done through a program with a regional bank. This option only deducts from a checking or savings account. We are open to other options.

28. Does MCWA receive the VISA utility rate?

We do not participate in this program.

29. Please provide the average number of credit card payments per month

There were 47,511 payments through July 31, 2024 with an average payment amount of \$106.22. The average monthly total is 6,787 payments.

30. Please provide the average number of ACH payments per month.

There were 45,587 payments through July 31, 2024 with an average payment amount of \$96.94. The average monthly total is 6,512 payments.

30. What is the average payment amount for commercial customers?

MCWA restricts a portion of our commercial users from using the third party payment processor.

In 2023, there were 511 payments over \$1,200 for a total amount of \$731,941.82. There were 4 payments over \$10,000.00.

Through July 31, 2024, there were 429 payments over \$1,200 for a total of \$776,878.18. There were 3 payments over \$10,000.00.

The average payment per month for commercial payments for 2024 is \$1,821.55.

31. Please provide the average number of commercial debit card payments per month

We do not have the ability to separate payments between credit and debit card.

32. Please provide the average number of commercial credit card payments per month

Please see answer to question #31.

33. Are Commercial customers charged the same \$1.30 flat fee?

All payments are charged the same \$1.30 fee.

34. Is MCWA interested in a single fee convenience fee model for all customer payments, a convenience fee by customer type, or a surcharge pricing model for commercial?

MCWA is interested in the best option a company can offer.

35. Please share your three most important pain points with your current payment environment.

The portal that MCWA uses to look up payments times out, causing Customer Service to have to continually sign into the portal.

36. What are the long-term goals and expectations for the future of bill payment at MCWA?

A good partnership between MCWA and the provider.

37. Is there a specific format for kiosk pricing MCWA would prefer?

MCWA is exploring this option and is interested in the best options for its customers.

38. Please share your average monthly recurring ACH volume for the past 12 months.

Currently, our recurring ACH is handled in house. However, MCWA is open to options available. Below are the number of monthly accounts that utilize our current Autopay process.

<u>2024</u>	<u>Accounts</u>
January	8,100
February	14,456
March	6,645
April	8,199
May	14,601
June	6,674
July	8,356
August	14,788

39. Please provide additional payment data about items other than water bills, including payment volume, average payment, maximum expected payment amount, and payment methods you would like to support. Please include information for the past 12 months.

Some of these options could include new services with an average payment of \$2,200. We could also offer this to our summer hydrant meter customers. In 2023, income was \$182,000. Through July of 2024 income was \$71,000.

40. May we add columns to the pricing table to accommodate additional pricing models?

MCWA requests that Proposers do not change the columns for pricing on page 5 of the RFP.

41. Is MCWA open to any options for the contract term that would be longer than a one-year contract followed by four one-year renewals?

No

42. Would you consider accepting electronic submission of the proposal instead of the six hard copies?

No

43. Can you share a list of the vendors who are responding to this bid?

Unknown

44. How does the Authority define Value when evaluating an RFP?

MCWA's evaluation method is defined in Section 2.5 Method of RFP Evaluation in the RFP.

45. Is the Authority looking for a single vendor to provide software and merchant needs?

Yes, only one (1) vendor will be awarded the contract.

46. How would the Authority define the ideal vendor/partner for this RFP?

A vendor that gives MCWA customers a cost effective way to pay their water bills.

47. Outside of the requirements listed, are there any other key items that a responding vendor should be aware of?

All requirements are outlined in the RFP.

48. Can you expand on potential issues that the current environment has been causing staff?

MCWA has no issues with our current provider.

49. Has there been constituent feedback provided to you expressing discontent with the current environment?

No

50. Have you had issues regarding the responsiveness of your current vendors when reaching out for service or support?

No

51. Can you provide the titles for the individuals that are serving on the evaluation committee?

MCWA's evaluation method is defined in Section 2.5 Method of RFP Evaluation in the RFP.

52. Can you share the titles of the individuals who will be assigned to your implementation project?

Applicable MCWA staff will be communicated to the awarded vendor.

53. Can you list all host system integration requirements aside from the web-based customer portal? I.e. – what is the host billing system for account lookups and payment posting?

The integration is with a file transfer nightly, hosted on the third party system. This file transfer is done through SFTP. We require standard NACHA file format for payments. Comma delimited file for data.

54. Can you separate out the provided card/ach transaction and volume totals to show volumes and transactional totals for card, and separately for ACH?

Please see answer to question #7.

55. Can you provide the current fees being passed on to payors for both card payments and ACH payments? And/Or confirm it is \$1.30 for both card and ach payments.

All third party transactions pay the \$1.30 fee.

56. Is the Authority incurring any fees from the incumbent vendor?

No

57. For the January – July 2024 transactional data listed in the RFP, will the Authority provide the following details:

a. Of the 126,420 transactions

i. How many transactions were card (debit/credit)

Please see answer to question #7.

ii. How many transactions were ACH?

Please see answer to question #7.

iii. How many of the transactions were recurring ACH?

We do not offer reoccurring ACH payment through the 3rd party payment processor at this time. We are open to options.

iv. How many transactions were digital wallet (PayPal/Venmo)?

Please see answer to question #7.

v. Do these transactions include residential and commercial customers?

Yes

b. The customer payments authorizing the Authority to ACH the amount form their bank account one week before the due date, are these ACH payments included in the 126,420 transactions?

No, this is done through a program not associated with our third party provider. Please see answer to question #38.

c. Of the \$12.3M in transactions, what is the dollar amount of card payments, ACH payments, and digital wallets PayPal & Venmo?

Please see answer to question #7.

d. What is the average transaction for card, ACH, and digital wallets PayPal & Venmo?

Please see answer to question #7.

e. Is there a maximum dollar limit per transaction?

Please see answer to question #3.

58. For calendar year 2023, the Authority received 197,556 payments via third party vendor representing \$19M. Since water bill amounts can fluctuate in summer months versus winter months, will the Authority please provide the following details for 2023?

- a. Will the Authority please provide the overall average transaction and total dollars billed for each of the 12 months?

<u>2023</u>	<u>Avg Payment</u>	<u>Residential Billing</u>	<u>Commercial Billing</u>
January	89.24	6,528,240.91	637,796.94
February	94.41	4,973,806.38	579,153.76
March	86.78	4,594,953.43	539,249.90
April	90.60	5,226,028.51	563,406.01
May	93.21	6,604,480.04	676,857.14
June	97.06	5,522,393.95	586,773.47
July	98.21	6,394,927.09	625,403.33
August	108.44	8,402,409.22	736,598.31
September	108.59	6,012,021.24	606,719.88
October	107.29	7,164,711.87	705,964.42
November	108.78	5,414,306.63	501,987.44
December	97.27	1,937,259.72	546,378.47

- b. Will the Authority please provide the average transaction amount for card, ACH, and digital wallets PayPal & Venmo for each of the 12 months of 2023?

<u>2023</u>	<u>Card</u>	<u>ACH</u>	<u>PayPal</u>	<u>Venmo</u>
January	89.99	96.91	79.49	66.00
February	84.83	93.76	77.55	51.32
March	89.33	90.10	75.53	57.51
April	84.77	98.89	80.06	72.44
May	90.10	93.92	72.24	79.15
June	90.73	104.95	87.85	73.89
July	93.19	104.02	90.58	83.25
August	103.40	112.89	93.38	88.12
September	107.33	108.98	91.71	102.79
October	105.47	108.85	86.49	86.21
November	108.54	105.94	83.44	92.75
December	95.43	96.05	89.48	73.32

59. Will there be a convenience fee on recurring (Autopay) credit card transactions if cards are allowed for this type of transaction?

We currently do not have an Autopay on credit card transactions. We are looking into adding this option with the RFP.

60. Who hosts the existing customer portal?

MCWA hosts the website on its servers, and it is cloud based.

61. Where will the non-water bill payments (ex. new service, temporary hydrant meter) be made, existing portal?

Please see answer to question #39.

62. What CIS billing system and/or ERP billing system does the Authority use?

MCWA uses custom oracle forms application, and its customer portal is web based application.

63. Do we need to register on the Authority's website or vendor portal to participate in this RFP?

No

64. Will questions and answers be distributed to bidders via email, or will bidders download the information from the Authority's website?

An Addenda will be issued via email to all Proposers who have received the RFP. This Addenda will list all questions MCWA has received and answers. The Addenda will also be posted on MCWA's website.

65. In Section 2.2 of the RFP, it says questions can be submitted by September 9th, will the Authority continue to accept questions after September 4th but no later than September 9th?

Yes, MCWA will accept questions through September 9 until the Addenda is distributed. MCWA will not accept any additional questions after the Addenda is distributed.

66. Section 2.1, Page 8 Please advise if the 50 page limit includes appendices.

Yes

67. How do you distribute bills/invoices, i.e. print & mail, e-Bill / e-Mail, Online?

MCWA distributes through both e-billing and print bills.

68. What is your bill frequency, i.e. monthly, quarterly?

MCWA bills an average of 15,000 customers each week, which includes quarterly and monthly accounts.

69. Section 1.6 A.1 - Does MCWA take payments over the phone through a service rep as well as IVR or just through the IVR?

MCWA Customer Service does not take payments onsite. Customer calls are transferred to the IVR line.

70. Section 1.6 F.1 - The Authority indicates that Files must be in a standard NACHA format - does that include the end of day posting file from JPMC to MCWA?

Yes, all payment files must be standard NACHA file.

71. Are there any other fees that are currently being charged to either the user or to the Authority other than the \$1.30 currently charged to the user?

No

72. Please disclose all fees including technology fees and ACH fees being charged.

Please see answer to question #71.

73. How does MCWA currently integrate with your current provider? Do they fully host a web portal or does MCWA host and use API or iFrame to integrate to a payment page?

We currently send daily files back and forth to our current provider. We use secure FTP for files and secure API for data flow on the customer portal. MCWA hosts the portal on its servers.

74. Section 1.5.F - Please provide a breakdown of the volumes listed as follows:

- a. # of eCheck/Ach payments via the web 2023 65,056 2024 through 7/31/24 41,527
- b. # of Credit Card payments via the web 2023 64,056 2024 through 7/31/24 39,995
- c. # of eCheck/ACH payments via IVR 2023 6,006 2024 through 7/31/24 3,670
- d. # of Credit card payments via IVR 2023 – 12,099 2024- through 7/31/24 6,633

75. Does MCWA wish to have their customer service representatives take payments over the phone?

No, MCWA will continue to transfer calls to an IVR line or live operator.

76. How many Kiosks does MCWA require?

One (1)

a. What payment options do you need for the Kiosk?

Please provide all options available.