

High-speed rail board authorizes first contract for construction

Tim Sheehan, Fresno Bee, 6-7-13

The California High-Speed Rail Authority has agreed to negotiate and sign a \$985 million contract for the first stage of construction for a statewide bullet-train system in the Fresno-Madera area.

By a 6-0 vote Thursday, the agency's board authorized CEO Jeffrey Morales to finalize a deal with a consortium comprised of Tutor Perini Corp. of Sylmar, Zachry Construction of Texas and Parsons Corp. of Pasadena. The Tutor Perini/Zachry/Parsons team was the lowest of five bidders for the contract to design and build the 30-mile segment from northeast of Madera to the south end of Fresno.

Thomas Fellenz, the rail authority's chief counsel, said he believes it will take about a month before the contract is signed as the agency and representatives of the construction consortium hammer out the details of the agreement.

Consultants and engineers for the rail authority have done about 30 percent of the design work for the section. The contracting team will be expected to finish up the design work and then fulfill construction of their design. Engineers and consultants for the rail authority originally estimated that the Madera-Fresno work would cost between \$1.5 billion and \$2 billion. Those projections were later reduced to \$1.2 billion to \$1.8 billion.

The Tutor Perini/Zachry/Parsons consortium submitted the only one of the five bids to come in at less than \$1 billion when the bids were opened earlier this year.

These were the other four bids:

- \$1,085,111,111 by Dragados/Samsung/Pulice, a joint venture of Dragados SA of Spain; Samsung C&T America, a subsidiary of South Korean multinational Samsung Group; and Pulice Construction Inc. of Arizona.
- \$1,263,309,632 by California High-Speed Rail Partners, composed of Fluor Corp. of Texas, Swedish-based Skanska and PCL Constructors of Canada.
- \$1,365,770,098 by California Backbone Builders, a consortium of two Spanish construction firms: Ferrovial Agroman and Acciona.
- \$1,537,049,000 by California High-Speed Ventures, made up of Kiewit Corp. of Nebraska, Granite Construction of Watsonville and Comsa EMTE of Spain.