

FIRST-READ BRIEF

Elizabethtown Area Water Authority / Water Treatment Plant Improvements, Contract 1: General Construction

Section references throughout point back to the source RFP. Items are graded by whether they bar bidders, drive responsiveness, or shape pricing.

DECISION**CLARIFY FIRST**

Two pre-priced items consume roughly \$1.3M of the bid envelope before competition starts. Subsurface and hazmat risk transfer to the bidder. Pre-bid attendance on May 27 is the gate; everything else follows from what gets clarified there.

OWNER

Elizabethtown Area Water Authority, Lancaster County, PA

SCOPE

Membrane filtration retrofit + send-out pump replacement (Contract 1 of 3)

BID DUE (RECEIPT DEADLINE)

Wed Jun 24, 2026, 2:00 PM ET

BID ENVELOPE

Lump sum + \$1.24M pre-priced equipment + \$50K allowance

ON THE GROUND

Mandatory pre-bid meeting and site walk at 211 W. Hummelstown St, Wed May 27, 10:00 AM. Apex Frame Systems is attending.

SOURCES

648-page Project Manual and 28-sheet drawing set (GHD, May 2026), PennBid listing including the Membrane Filtration Equipment proposal dated April 27, 2026.

Prepared by Apex Frame Systems LLC. This brief is a structured first read of a public Request for Proposals and does not constitute legal, contractual, or engineering advice. Section references point to the cited source documents. Bidders are responsible for verifying all requirements against the official bid documents.

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HIGHEST-LEVERAGE PRICING RISKS

Three risks worth pricing now

Each affects either total bid price or the firm's ability to deliver. Tied to its section in the source document.

Of the three, the bonding capacity question moves first because surety lead time runs out before the question deadline does.

01 Bonding capacity at full-contract scale.

Per Advertisement and § 8.01 of the Instructions to Bidders. Bid Bond at 10% of maximum bid, Performance + Payment Bonds at award. With Bid Item 2 fixed at \$1,241,502 and Bid Item 3 at \$50,000, a base bid in the \$4M to \$8M range puts total contract value at \$5.5M to \$9.5M and aggregate bonding at \$11M to \$19M. Call your surety this week. If single-project or aggregate is thin, line up a co-surety before pricing time goes in.

02 Schedule float against 360-day timeline with \$1,000/day LDs.

Per § Agreement 4.02 and 4.03. Substantial completion 360 days from NTP. \$1,000/day past substantial, \$1,000/day past final completion at 390 days (not additive), \$250/day per missed milestone. The 14-step WTP construction sequence in § 01010 1.05.B has hard shutdown caps of 4 hours, 6 hours, and 1 hour that cannot slip. Membrane manufacturer delivery is the critical path; any schedule without all major shutdown equipment pre-staged on-site is exposed.

03 Coordination overhead between three prime contracts.

Per § 01010 1.04.A.1. The General Contractor prepares and updates the Progress Schedule with input from Contracts 2 (Electrical) and 3 (HVAC), coordinates work between all three contractors, and furnishes and installs equipment pads for equipment that Contracts 2 and 3 will install on those pads. This is not a flat-rate-PM project. Build coordination cost into general conditions, not into project management overhead.

BEFORE PRICING

Six checks before estimating time goes in

Yellow check means resolve before the bid goes to estimating. Green means clear as written.

Note: the 5-year, 10-project requirement in the Advertisement is the responsibility filter on this scope. It is doing more work than any other gate in the package.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| RESOLVE | <p>Bidder qualifications?</p> <p>Minimum 5 years experience + 10 completed projects of similar nature.</p> <p>Per Advertisement. Pull your project list. If you cannot credibly point at ten WTP, wastewater treatment, or comparable municipal process-mechanical projects in the last five years, the bid is non-responsible regardless of price.</p> |
| RESOLVE | <p>Bonding capacity for \$5M to \$10M contract?</p> <p>10% Bid Bond at submission, 100% Performance + 100% Payment Bonds at award.</p> <p>Per Advertisement and § 8.01 of the Instructions to Bidders. Aggregate exposure \$11M to \$19M depending on your base bid. Confirm single-project and aggregate capacity with your surety this week. Treasury-listed surety licensed in PA.</p> |
| RESOLVE | <p>Membrane manufacturer coordination capacity?</p> <p>Pre-selected Section 13201 equipment at \$1,241,502 fixed.</p> <p>Per § Bid Form 5.03 and § 12.03 IB. Bid Item 2 is locked at the April 27, 2026 manufacturer proposal amount. Your firm carries the equipment, coordinates factory inspections, manages a long-lead delivery, and runs field commissioning. Internal lead needed who can manage all of it.</p> |
| RESOLVE | <p>Subsurface and hazmat risk acceptance?</p> <p>Owner declares no subsurface reports and no hazmat reports exist.</p> <p>Per § SC 5.03 and SC 5.06. Forcemain trench along Hummelstown Street, electrical ductbank work, and Clearwell building work adjacent to Conoy Creek all proceed without documented data. The lump sum carries the contingency. Price it.</p> |
| RESOLVE | <p>PA Prevailing Wage compliance?</p> <p>Act 442 applies. Wage determination posted in bid package.</p> <p>Per § Bid Form 5.02.A and § SC Article 2. Certified payroll required, weekly. If your back-office cannot deliver certified payroll on a 360-day project across multiple subs, fix the process or partner with a payroll service before bidding.</p> |

CLEAR

Owner-furnished utilities during construction?

Owner pays reasonable utility use, GC provides temporary meters.

Per § 01010 1.04.A.1.e. Real cost saving on a 360-day project. GC furnishes the meters and a portable toilet. Use shall not impact ongoing plant operations.

SUBMISSION

Submission checklist

Miss any of these and the bid is non-responsive on receipt. Walk this list back-to-front before upload.

- 01 Bid submitted via PennBid only.** Per § 15.02 IB. Paper bids will not be accepted. Server-side timestamp at 2:00 PM ET, Jun 24 controls. Test the upload path the day before with a placeholder file.
- 02 Bid Form Contract 1 completed with Base Bid + total.** Per § Bid Form 5.05. Bid Item 2 (\$1,241,502) and Bid Item 3 (\$50,000) are pre-filled. You enter Item 1 Base Bid Lump Sum, then the total. Total written in words and figures.
- 03 Bid Bond at 10% of maximum bid price.** Per § 8.01 IB. Treasury-listed surety licensed in PA. Certified check or bank money order also acceptable. Original sent within 3 business days of Owner request, per § 15.04 IB.
- 04 Non-Collusion Affidavit signed and notarized.** Per § 15.03 IB and Document 00320. Signed by an authorized representative. Notary acknowledgement required.
- 05 Steel Products Procurement Act Affidavit.** Per § 15.03 IB and Document 00330. Certifies all steel products used or supplied are US-made steel. Applies to rebar, structural steel, piping, valves, equipment with steel components.
- 06 Public Works Employment Verification Form (Act 127).** Per § 15.03 IB and Document 00340. Certifies E-Verify enrollment under Act 127 of 2012. Required for all PA public works contracts.
- 07 Statement of Bidder's Qualifications.** Per § 15.04 IB and Document 00451. Document the 5-year experience and 10 completed similar projects from the Advertisement. Include most recent fiscal year financial statement. Front-load the strongest WTP and process-mechanical references.
- 08 Evidence of authority to do business in Pennsylvania.** Per § 13.07 IB. PA corporations: state of incorporation on bid form. Foreign corporations: must be registered with PA Department of Labor and Industry as a Foreign Corporation authorized to conduct business in the Commonwealth.
- 09 List of Proposed Subcontractors.** Per § 12.03 IB and Bid Form Article 7. Must include the Membrane Filtration Equipment supplier under Section 13201. Coordinate with the manufacturer before bid to confirm naming and the package they will deliver.

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- 10 List of Proposed Suppliers.** Per Bid Form Article 7. Material suppliers for the major work items. Owner reserves the right to object.
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- 11 All Addenda acknowledged on the Bid Form.** Per § Bid Form Article 3.A. The Bid Form has a receipt-of-addenda table. Every addendum number must be entered. Set a calendar reminder for the morning of Jun 23 to confirm no late addendum slipped in.
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- 12 Bidder Acknowledgement Questionnaire completed in PennBid.** Per the PennBid Requested Information section. Bidders complete a questionnaire in the portal alongside the uploaded bid documents. Cannot be left blank.
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SCHEDULE

The dates that matter

Six dates between now and award. The receipt deadline is the hard cutoff.

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|---------------------------------|---|
| Wed May 27 | Mandatory pre-bid meeting + site visit. 10:00 AM at the Water Treatment Plant, 211 W. Hummelstown St, Elizabethtown. Site visit immediately following. Both buildings (WTP and Clearwell) are walked. Send a representative with authority. Advertisement |
| ~Mon Jun 8 | Surety briefed and bond requested. Internal target. A clean bid bond from a new project relationship typically needs 5 to 10 business days. Get surety the project information by this date to avoid bid-week scrambles. § 8.01 IB |
| Wed Jun 17 | Last day to submit written questions via PennBid Q&A. 5:00 PM ET. Questions received less than seven days prior to bid opening may not be answered. Only Addenda responses are binding. § 7.01 IB |
| ~Fri Jun 19 | Anticipated final Addendum window closes. Set a calendar reminder for Jun 23 morning to verify no late addendum slipped in. Bidding off a superseded document is non-responsive. § 7.02 IB |
| Wed Jun 24 2:00 PM ET | Bid receipt deadline. PennBid upload only. Paper bids will not be accepted. Server-side timestamp controls. Upload by 1:30 PM ET to allow margin. Late submissions are rejected by the system. § 15.01, 15.02 IB |
| ~Mon Aug 25 | End of standard 60-day bid hold. Bids remain open 60 calendar days from opening, with an additional 60 days if award is delayed by required approval from another government agency, sale of bonds, or award of a grant. § 16.03 IB; 62 Pa.C.S. § 3911 |

AWARD BASIS

How they're scoring this

This is a low-bid procurement among responsible and responsive bidders, with a real responsibility bar built into the Advertisement. Lump sum bid, not unit price.

The Authority awards to the lowest responsible bidder whose Bid is responsive to the bid documents. "Responsible" and "responsive" are separate hurdles. Either one can disqualify you regardless of price. The 5-yr / 10-project minimum in the Advertisement is the responsibility filter, and it is a real filter on this scope.

01 Responsive bid (pass/fail).

Your submission includes everything required, signed and notarized correctly, on the right PennBid forms, with no unauthorized changes. The submission checklist above is the responsiveness test.

Lever: don't lose on a paperwork miss. Run the checklist back-to-front before upload on Jun 24.

02 Responsible bidder (pass/fail).

Per Advertisement, the Authority evaluates 5+ years of experience, 10+ completed similar projects, plus bonding capacity, references, and financial standing (Document 00451). The Authority can reject a low bid for being non-responsible.

Lever: front-load your WTP, wastewater plant, and process-mechanical projects in the Qualifications Statement. The reviewer should not have to hunt for the relevant 10.

03 Total bid price (lump sum, Bid Items 1 + 2 + 3).

Bid Item 2 (\$1,241,502 Membrane Filtration Equipment) and Bid Item 3 (\$50,000 unforeseen conditions allowance) are fixed. Bid Item 1 (Base Bid Lump Sum) is where you actually compete. Mathematically lowest total that clears responsiveness and responsibility wins.

Lever: get your means-and-methods estimate right on the long-pole items: concrete pads (including for Contracts 2 & 3), process piping, structural openings, electrical coordination overhead, and the coordination cost of running three primes.

04 Reserved right to reject.

Per Article 17 of the General Conditions (standard EJCDC reserved rights). The Authority may reject any or all bids and waive informalities. In practice, GHD's recommendation drives the award decision.

Lever: be the bid GHD wants to recommend. Clean package, credible project history, no red flags at the May 27 site walk.

BID PACKAGE CONTENTS

What goes in the bid

Order does not matter to the portal but it matters to the engineer reading it.

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- 01 **Bid Form Contract 1**, completed electronically on PennBid with Base Bid + total. Document 00410

 - 02 **Bid Bond at 10% of maximum bid price**, Treasury-listed surety licensed in PA. Cashier's check also acceptable. § 8.01IB, Document 00435

 - 03 **Non-Collusion Affidavit**, signed and notarized. Document 00320

 - 04 **Steel Products Procurement Act Affidavit**. US-made steel for all steel products. Document 00330

 - 05 **Public Works Employment Verification Form (Act 127 of 2012)**. E-Verify enrollment statement. Document 00340

 - 06 **Statement of Bidder's Qualifications** with 5-yr experience and 10 similar projects documented. Financial statement attached. Document 00451

 - 07 **Evidence of authority to do business in PA**. Foreign corporations must be PA Foreign Corp registered with Department of Labor and Industry. §13.07IB

 - 08 **List of Proposed Subcontractors**, including Membrane Filtration Equipment supplier under Section 13201. §12.03IB, Bid Form Art. 7

 - 09 **List of Proposed Suppliers** for major material items. Bid Form Art. 7

 - 10 **Acknowledgement of all Addenda** received on the Bid Form's receipt-of-addenda table. Bid Form Art. 3.A

 - 11 **Bidder Acknowledgement Questionnaire**, completed in PennBid Requested Information. PennBid portal
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BETWEEN NOW AND BID DAY

What can derail a clean submission

Process risks beyond the paperwork checklist. The kind of issues that go wrong even when the qualifications are in order.

Pre-bid attendance on May 27. Per Advertisement and § 6.01 of the Instructions to Bidders. The Advertisement and PennBid listing call the May 27 pre-bid mandatory. Send a representative with authority to ask questions. The site walk immediately after the meeting is the only chance to see the existing membrane skid layout, the Clearwell building condition, and the corridor where forcemain and electrical service work will happen. Confirm a name now. **Late or missed addenda.** Per § 7.02 of the Instructions to Bidders. Addenda may issue any time before bid opening, posted to PennBid. Set a calendar reminder for the morning of Jun 23 to verify no late addendum slipped in. Bidding off a superseded document is non-responsive.

PennBid upload mechanics on bid day. Per § 15.01 and § 15.02 of the Instructions to Bidders. Server-side timestamp at 2:00 PM ET, Jun 24 controls. File size limits and naming conventions can reject uploads silently. Test the upload path with a placeholder file on Jun 23. Upload by 1:30 PM ET to allow margin. The portal's clock is the one that matters. **Bid bond surety timing.** Per § 8.01 of the Instructions to Bidders. A clean bid bond from a new project relationship typically needs 5 to 10 business days. Get your surety the project information by Jun 10 at the latest. Treasury-listed surety licensed in Pennsylvania.

Membrane manufacturer pre-bid coordination. Per § 12.03 of the Instructions to Bidders and § Bid Form 5.03. The Section 13201 Membrane Filtration Equipment supplier is the named subcontractor, must be disclosed within 5 days of award request. Contact the manufacturer before bid to confirm their willingness to be named, their qualifications, the package scope, and their delivery lead time. The \$1,241,502 amount points to a specific manufacturer proposal dated April 27, 2026. **Existing operating permit transfer.** Per § Bid Form 5.01.F. All existing DEP and E&S permits must be transferred from Owner to Contractor before construction starts. Only the DEP Public Water Supply Construction Permit No. 3625511 is held by Owner (§ SC Article 5). Street cut permits, additional E&S permits, and any other local permits are on Contractor. Plan the transfer time into post-award mobilization, not into general conditions.

INTERNAL PREP

What you still need before pricing

Items the bid requires that are not in the documents themselves. Track these down before estimating starts.

Confirm bonding capacity for \$5M to \$10M contract.

Call your surety this week. Single-project and aggregate capacity both matter. If thin, line up a co-surety now, not in week three of pricing.

Audit qualifications against the 5-yr / 10-project bar.

Pull project list. If marginal, identify the ten strongest references with WTP, wastewater plant, or process-mechanical content. Document owner contacts and dollar values now.

Identify the Membrane Filtration Equipment vendor.

The \$1,241,502 amount points to a specific manufacturer proposal dated April 27, 2026. Submit a PennBid question to GHD to confirm which manufacturer was pre-selected and establish coordination expectations before bid.

Walk the corridor before May 27.

Look at pavement condition along Hummelstown Street, sidewalk, driveways, tree canopy, and stream proximity at the Clearwell building on W. High Street. The site walk is at the pre-bid but you want your own first impression.

Pre-bid your concrete pad work and structural openings.

Per § 01010 1.04.A.1.c, the GC furnishes and installs equipment pads for equipment furnished or installed by Contracts 2 and 3. Concrete is on the critical path for multiple equipment items. Get a subcontractor lined up early.

Pull recent PA prevailing wage rates for Lancaster County.

The wage determination posted in the bid package controls, but cross-check against the latest L&I posting before pricing labor. Confirm the certified payroll workflow is operational for a 360-day project with multiple subs.

TO SEND VIA PENNBID Q&A

Questions to send before Jun 17

Submit through the PennBid Q&A portal via the "Ask a Question" button. GHD's answers will be posted as Addenda. Questions received less than seven days before bid opening may not be answered. Review and prioritize before sending.

Submit through the PennBid portal under Messages / Vendor Discussions. Only answers issued as Addenda are binding under § 7.01 of the Instructions to Bidders.

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- A** Section 01010 1.04.A.1.c states the General Contractor furnishes and installs equipment pads for equipment furnished or installed by Contracts 2 (Electrical) and 3 (HVAC). Please confirm whether the pad dimensions and reinforcement details for Contracts 2 and 3 equipment will be issued in an addendum before bid, or whether bidders are to size pads from the existing drawings (ST-03101, ST-03601 et al.) alone.
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- B** Section 01010 1.05.B step 2.j states the WTP will run on the standby generator while DP-1 is reconnected. Please confirm whether the existing 600 kW generator has sufficient fuel capacity for the worst-case duration of the DP-1 swap, including any extended fault-recovery period, and clarify which party provides emergency refueling if needed.
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- C** Section 13201 names Membrane Filtration Equipment as a pre-selected package at \$1,241,502 per a manufacturer proposal dated April 27, 2026. Please confirm the membrane manufacturer's identity, the included scope of supply (CIP skid, neutralization skid, air compressors, sodium bisulfite feed system), and the manufacturer's lead time from approved shop drawings to delivery on-site.
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- D** SC 5.03 states no reports of explorations or tests of subsurface conditions are known to Owner. Please confirm whether any geotechnical, boring, or test pit data exists in EAWA's records for either the Water Treatment Plant site or the Clearwell building site that bidders may review, even if not Technical Data under the Contract.
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- E** Section 01010 1.05.B step 9 limits the major plant shutdown to 4 hours for the filtered and raw water tie-in. Please confirm whether a bidder may propose alternative tie-in sequencing or temporary bypass arrangements that would extend the shutdown window in exchange for reduced overall construction duration, and clarify the approval process if so.

F Section 01010 1.04.A.1.b requires the General Contractor to coordinate work between all three Contractors and to update the Progress Schedule with input from Contracts 2 and 3. Please confirm the mechanism for resolving schedule conflicts between primes and clarify whether the GC has any contractual authority to direct Contracts 2 or 3 to accelerate or re-sequence work, or whether such direction is reserved to the Owner and Engineer.
