SKILLING

From page B1

trading platform – rekindles memories of the Enron drama, including Skilling's two-month high-profile federal trial; the sudden death of co-defendant Enron chairman Kenneth Lay; the succession of guilty pleas of other Enron executives; and the anguish of the suicide of another.

Houston was already an oil and gas town, but Enron was the magic elixir, creating new trading markets for electricity, broadband and water, rising to No. 7 on the Fortune 500 list and salving an inferiority complex of a city long overshadowed by the smaller Dallas. The Enron crowd had the glamour Houston was missing, too.

Enron executives were big spenders, buying lavish homes such as Skilling's $5 million River Oaks mansion, renting racetracks and race cars for customer entertainment and owning a fleet of jets. Car dealers salivated at annual bonus time when executives would place their orders for expensive new sports cars.

"Skilling was a hero, the golden boy, the brilliant mastermind," said Stephen Klineberg, sociology professor at Rice University and founding director of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research. "He was the businessman's businessman."

Skilling was convicted in 2006 of 12 counts of securities fraud, five counts of making false statements to auditors, one count of insider trading and one count of conspiracy for his role in hiding debt and orchestrating a web of financial fraud that ended in the Houston company's bankruptcy.

He was sentenced to 24 years in prison and fined $45 million, the harshest sentence of any Enron executive, before it was reduced to 14 years in 2013 as part of a deal in which Skilling dropped his appeals and released the money to pay the fine. Skilling also was permanently barred from serving as an officer or director of a public company.

Skilling could not be reached for comment.

If you asked, most people in the Houston business community would invest again with Skilling, said John Zavitsanos, the Houston lawyer whose firm represented Enron whistleblower Margaret Ceconi.

Chalk it up to the same reasons that made Skilling a success the first time around: a quick mind that operates in the fast lane; confidence that can chew up competitors across the negotiating table; and a visionary who can look at a lump of clay and see exactly what the statue will look like, said Zavitsanos, who represented several clients against Enron.

"They had a swagger to them unlike any other company who we went up against," he said. And that attitude likely came from the top.

What Skilling might do next is part of the local fascination. He has a similar personality to another famous financier who also took greed too far, said Zavitsanos, Michael Milken.

Milken, known as the junk bond king during the go-go 1980s, went to prison for securities fraud, but today is a respected philanthropist and founder of the Milken Institute, a public policy think tank. He was pardoned earlier this year by President Donald Trump.

"I think Skilling will be the next Milken," Zavitsanos said.

Second act

Does Skilling have a second act? It's possible, according to one expert who has written extensively on financial crimes.

People who lose money

Ex-Enron CEO Jeff Skilling was released from prison last year.

in fraudulent investment deals often cling to the hope they'll get their money back, said Anne Wilkins, associate professor of accounting at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. In studies of victims of Ponzi schemes, investors tell interviewers they believe if the perpetrator was just let out of prison then he or she would be able to get the money back for them as promised.

"People do not want to admit to themselves that they trusted the wrong person," she said.

Details of Skilling's new venture are sketchy, but they appear to be capitalizing on increased investor interest in commodities, said Ed Hirs, an energy economist at the University of Houston who was on the Enron Task Force led by the Department of Justice. United States Oil, an exchange traded fund that invests in soon-to-expire oil futures contracts, was among the most frequently traded stocks in April on investing platforms used by individual investors.

Hirs, who heard a description of Skilling's pitch to investors, said Skilling's idea is to bundle up to 10 wells and sell ownership slices to investors, much as banks bundle mortgages and sell slices to investors. The commodities product would be sold to and traded among institutional investors through an online platform, essentially a newer version of the Enron model of taking advantage of technology to create a new trading platform, Hirs said.

Commodity trading is notoriously risky; the United States Oil Fund has lost nearly 73 percent of its value this year. But, Hirs said, investors may likely come out to see what Skilling is pitching because they're curious.

After all, Andrew Fastow, the former Enron chief financial officer who spent six years in prison after admitting to two counts of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and securities fraud, has turned his Enron experience into a professional speaking career. His fee is between $10,000 and $20,000 per presentation, according to the Speaker Booking Agency of Florida.

'Culture of excess'

For all its impact on Houston, the Enron story had broader ramifications around the nation. It led to passage of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act that required more corporate financial disclosure, created an accounting oversight board and strengthened whistleblower protections. The law also imposed greater accountability of corporate executives and the accountants and auditors they hire.

The massive accounting fraud uncovered at Enron was followed by a wave of similar corporate fraud prosecutions, such as the accounting scandals at the telephone company WorldCom; rehabilitation hospital owner HealthSouth; and cable television company Adelphia Communications. In each case, top executives went to prison.

"Rightly or wrongly, in the minds of many Jeffrey Skilling came to epitomize a culture of excess and greed that plagued a large segment of corporate America in the late 1990's and early 2000's," said Robert Mintz, a former federal prosecutor who followed the case.

Skilling will always be fascinating because his rise and fall affected so many people in Houston who lost their retirement savings, arts groups that lost their funding and civic leaders who were counting on the success of Enron, said Philip Hilder, a white-collar criminal defense lawyer. Hilder represented former Enron executive Sherron Watkins, the whistleblower who took her concerns about accounting shenanigans to Lay, the Enron chairman.

Skilling, Hilder said, was viewed as smart and talented – for a while.

"He was admired," said Hilder, "until he was exposed."

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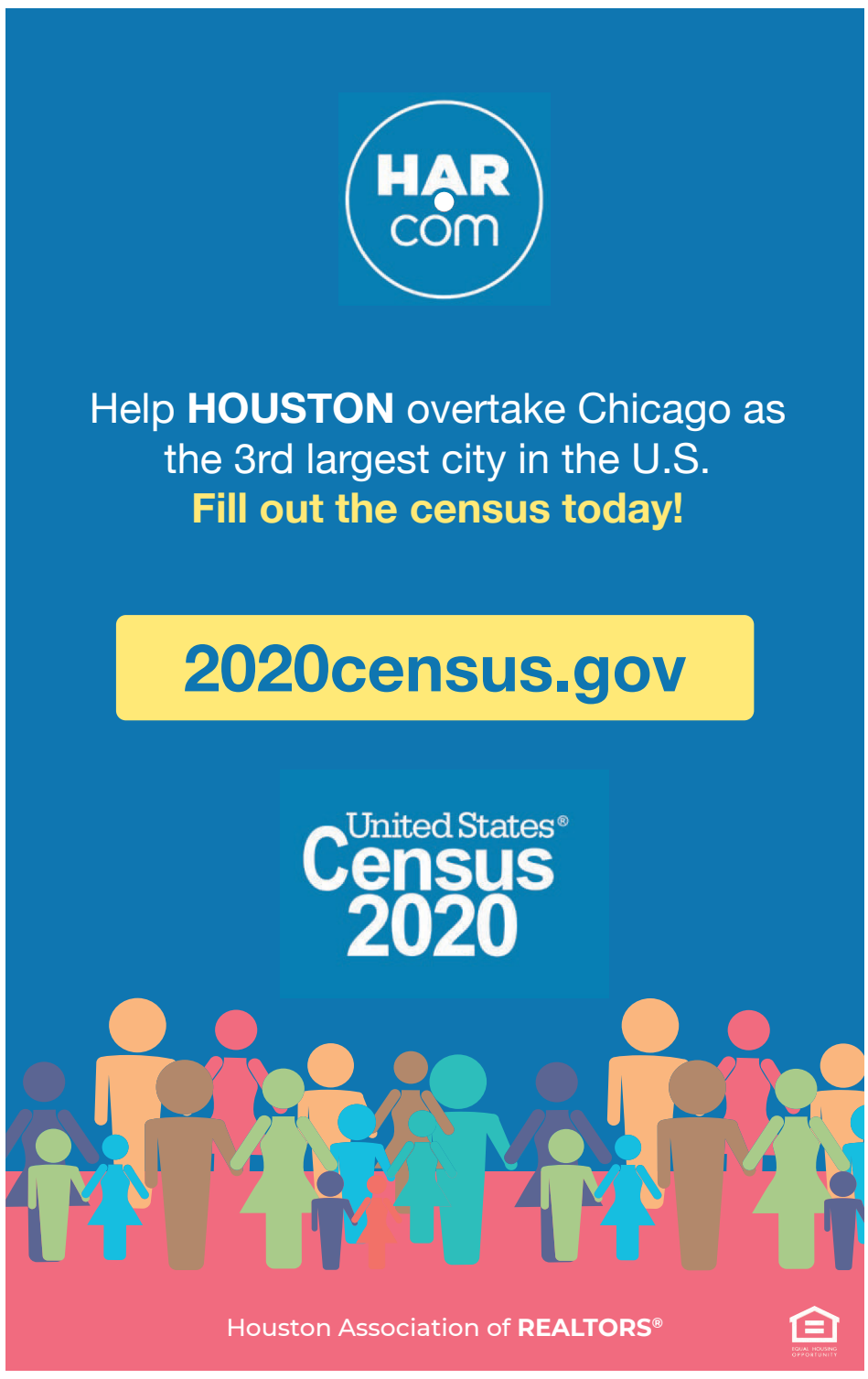

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Sealed Bid Solicitation #CM02-21
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Cooperative Purchasing Program
Portable Constructions & Maintenance Equipment
Pre-Bid Conference: 7/20/20 @ 9am
Response Deadline: 9/17/2020@ 1pm
Public Opening: 9/17/2020 @ 2pm
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX.
Per ADA, reasonable accommodation provided with 24 hour prior notice.
713-993-2466 or www.hgacbuy.org for info.

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LEGAL NOTICE FOR RFQ 19-01 Retirement Plan
Collaborative for Children is seeking to retain a firm to act as our Financial Advisor on an ongoing advisory basis, while providing full scope Financial Advisory Services.
Please submit all responses electronically to skennedy@collabforchildren.org. Responses are due by July 17, 2020.
For more information, please find the proposal at https://collabforchildren.org/RFQ

Legal Bids & Proposals

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas (METRO) is planning to issue the procurement documents listed in this advertisement.
RFP No. 4020000169: Audit Tracking Software. Solicitation will be available on or about 06/18/2020.
RFQ No. 4020000167: IH-10 Inner Katy Bus Rapid Transit Engineering Consultant Services. Solicitation will be available on or about 06/25/2020.
Prospective bidders/proposers can view and download these solicitations by visiting METRO's website at https://www.ridemetroapp.org/procurement/
If you are unable to download the documents or are having difficulty, please contact METRO Plan and Bid Room at (713) 739-4881.

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CITY OF HOUSTON
Invitation to propose for Medicare Advantage, Medicare Supplement and Medicare Part D Plans (Solicitation **#S76-T29422**) for eligible retirees of the City of Houston and their eligible dependents.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) can be found on the city's website at http://purchasing.houstontx.gov/bid_download.aspx. You will be directed to a secure website with ProposalTech, from which you will electronically complete your proposal, pose questions, and submit requests for clarification or additional information. Questions may also be submitted via email to:
- Bridget Cormier at Bridget.Cormier@houstontx.gov

Any addenda or other information regarding the RFP will be posted to the ProposalTech website. Proposers should check the website daily for information in the forms of formal addenda and Letters of Clarification to the RFP.

A Virtual Pre-proposal Conference will be held on **Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 11:30 a.m. CT.**
Conference number: +1- 936-755-1521
Conference ID: 659 217 00#
(Please mute your phone for the duration of the call)

Ten (10) sealed printed copies of proposals responding to the RFP, plus one original signed in blue ink, and eleven (11) electronic copies of the entire technical proposal plus exhibits on NON-PASSWORD PROTECTED flash drives shall be delivered to the Office of City Secretary, 900 Bagby, Rm. P101, Houston, TX 77002.

Proposal deadlines and specific instructions are included on the first page of the RFP. **Proposals are due Thursday, July 30, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. CT. Proposal(s) will not be accepted after the due date and time.**

All proposals will be required to comply with City Ordinances: No. 78-1538, passed August 9, 1978 referring to Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance, No. 94-1309 relating to participation goals for Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises, No. 2007-534 Pay or Play, requiring contractors to offer their employees a minimum level of health benefits and No. 2011-766 relating to Hire Houston First, allowing the city to consider a vendor's principal place of business in awarding certain contracts. The MWBE goal will be 3% of the total value of the administrative services fee paid to the administrator. Minority/Women-owned businesses and companies that may propose to provide services for the listed plans are encouraged to attend the Virtual Pre-Proposal Conference. The City reserves the right to reject or accept any or all proposals, or any part thereof, deemed to be in the best interest of the City.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
CONSTRUCTION MANAGER-AT-RISK
Klein ISD Central Office Renovations

Klein ISD

Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Inc. as Construction Manager-at-Risk for Klein ISD, in accordance with Texas Government Code 2269, will receive bids or proposals from all qualified subcontractors for the Klein ISD – Central Office Renovations project.

There will be a Pre-Proposal Conference 2:00 PM July 2, 2020 at the existing Klein ISD Central Office, **7200 Spring Cypress Road, Spring, TX 77379**. Attendance of the Pre-Proposal Conference is not mandatory, but if do show please be prepared with mask.

Bids or proposals are due July 15, 2020 at 2pm, bids or proposals should be emailed to houstonbids@satpon.com, faxed to 713-996-1400, or mailed/delivered to the Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Inc., 11750 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX 77079. Late bids will **not** be accepted.

There will be no public opening of bids or proposals. All bids or proposals shall be available after award of contract, or the 7th day after final selection of bids or proposals, whichever is later. After receipt of bids or proposals, Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Inc. will conduct its evaluation of the subcontractor bids or proposals in relation to the project requirements and will select the bid(s) or proposal(s) that offers the best value to Klein ISD.

Klein ISD, the Owner, reserves the right to waive any informality and/or to reject any, or all bids, or proposals.

Contact Charles D. Reagan at creagan@satpon.com for additional information on this project. Please forward all questions to Charles with S&P, deadline for submitting questions is five (5) days prior to bid day

Drawings and specifications will be available June 29, 2020 on **www.satpon.com** and in the Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Inc. office located at 11750 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX 77079.

Drawings and Specifications may also be reviewed at:

Associated General Contractors
McGraw Hill Construction/Dodge, www.construction.com
Virtual Builders Exchange, 3910 Kirby, #131, Houston, TX 77098, (832) 613-0201

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas (METRO) is planning to issue the procurement documents listed in this advertisement.
IFB No. 4020000156: Cleaning and Disinfecting of In-Service Buses at METRO Transit Centers. Solicitation will be available on or about 7/7/2020.
IFB No. 4020000135: For Kelley Street Rail Repairs. Solicitation will be available on or about 6/29/2020.
Prospective bidders/proposers can view and download these solicitations by visiting METRO's website at https://www.ridemetroapp.org/procurement/
If you are unable to download the documents or are having difficulty, please contact METRO Plan and Bid Room at (713) 739-4881.

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INVITATION TO BID
The Bridge Over Troubled Waters (TBOTW) is soliciting sealed bids for The Children's Center at The Bridge Over Troubled Waters, located on Fairmont Parkway between existing facility for TBOTW and Destiny Village. The scope of work consists of but is not limited to: a 2-story 25,000 sf building.

TBOTW will receive sealed bids for the proposed work until 2:00pm Tuesday July 14, 2020 at Texas-IBI Group office, 455 E Medical Center Blvd, #500 Webster TX 77598 at which time and place all bids will be opened. For bids to be considered, responsible contractors must attend a mandatory Pre-Proposal and job-site walk at 10:00am Tuesday, June 30, 2020 located at TBOTW 3811 Allen Genoa, Pasadena TX 77504.

Contract documents, including specifications, will be available online, Monday, June 22, at www.active.ibigrouptexas.com. Bids shall be accompanied by a bid guarantee in the form of a money order, cashier's check, certified check or bank draft payable to the Sponsor, U.S. Government bonds, or a satisfactory bid bond executed by the bidder and acceptable sureties in an amount equal to five (5%) of the highest bid. No bid may be withdrawn for a period of thirty (30) days after bid opening.

All bidders will be required to certify that they are not on the federal Consolidated List of Debarred, Suspended and Negligible Contractors. The contract documents required to accompany all bids (Certifications, bid bond, form of bid, etc.) shall be in an envelope which shall be clearly labeled with the words "Contract Bid Documents" and show the project identifications, name of bidder, name of project and date and time of opening.

All labor is required to be paid at a rate not less than the greater of the current Federal Davis-Bacon Prevailing wage or the State of Texas Prevailing Wage Determination (published with bid documents).

Contracts awarded under these contract documents in excess of $150,000 shall be required to post a performance bond or equivalent security and a Payment bond for contracts over $25,000. The successful bidder will be required to furnish evidence of Worker's Compensation and Liability Insurance in the favor and amount as required by these contract documents.

The successful bidder will be required to comply with all nondiscrimination laws and regulations pursuant to the provisions of these contract documents.

TBOTW reserves the right to postpone, accept or reject any all bids as TBOTW deems in its own best interest, subject to the terms and provisions of the contract documents.

For any additional information please contact The Bridge Over Troubled Waters 713-472-0753 or Texas-IBI Group 281-286-6605

Publish Date: Sunday, 21 June 2020 and Sunday, 28 June 2020

Sealed Proposal Solicitation #OM03-21
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Cooperative Purchasing Program
Office Management Software Solutions
Pre-Proposal Conference: 07/02/20 @ 9 am
Response Deadline: 09/08/20 @ 1pm
Public Opening: 09/08/20 @ 2pm
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX.
Per ADA, reasonable accommodation provided with 24 hour prior notice.
832-681-2604 or www.hgacbuy.org for info.

The Chambers County Commissioners Court is seeking Proposals (RFP) for qualified firms to provide standby contracts to employ pre-, active, and post- emergency preparedness, response and supplies and services for County Departments and Cities who are signatory to the County's Emergency Management Plan. These firms may be activated to provide qualified personnel to provide such services as: Emergency and Non-Emergency Food Services for a duration of three (3) – five (5) years. Chambers County will make selections based on qualifications, capabilities, costs and experience. For a copy of the RFP, please contact George Barrera, Purchasing Agent, (409) 267-2448 or email to gbarrera@chamberstx.gov

RFP needs to be MAILED to: Chambers County Purchasing Department, P.O. Box 1380, Anahuac, TX 77514-1380 (409) 267-2448

RFP'S DUE: 2:00 PM, Thursday July 9th, 2020

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LEGAL NOTICE
BakerRipley, a non-profit human services organization, announces a Request for Proposal (RFP) #20-13 for **School Leader Coaching Consultant.**
The RFP will be posted on our website at http://www.bakerripley.org/about/vendors on **July 07, 2020.**
Interested Vendors can submit a proposal for School Leader Coaching Consultant to abrown@bakerripley.org.
The deadline for submitting a proposal is **Tuesday, August 11, 2020 by 2:00 PM (CT).**
BAKERRIPLEY ENCOURAGES SMALL AND HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES TO APPLY.

Stay legal and get noticed by emailing our team at legals@chron.com or calling 713.224.6868
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