

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: KATE GOLDFINE, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES OFFICER  
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH  
LEGAL AID OF SONOMA COUNTY

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Housing & Community Services Department that the Council, by Resolution, approve a Professional Services Agreement with Legal Aid of Sonoma County to provide tenant advocacy and legal representation services for a term of one year, commencing on July 1, 2019, in an amount not to exceed \$87,000.00.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council has provided funding for two agreements with Legal Aid of Sonoma County ("Legal Aid") to provide tenant advocacy and legal representation services for the period of October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018 and the period of October 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019. There is \$87,000 in the Housing & Community Services FY 2019/20 budget for a third agreement with Legal Aid for the period of July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. Council approval is now necessary to execute the agreement.

BACKGROUND

On February 28, 2017, the Council, by motion, approved \$20,000 in one-time funding to Legal Aid to provide renter advocacy and legal representation services, requested Legal Aid report back on how the funds were spent and the outcomes, and requested staff seek proposals for Renter/Property Owner education and mediation, eviction defense, Section 8 terminations, and habitability retaliation.

During the FY 2017/18 Budget Study Sessions in May 2017, the Council allocated \$75,000 of General Fund funding for renter legal services.

In June 2017, staff issued a Request for Information for a contractor to provide renter advocacy and legal representation to prepare for the possible passage of Ordinance

4072 regarding Rent Stabilization. Legal Aid was the only respondent with a scope of services to include tenant education; habitability, retaliation, and discrimination claim defense; Section 8 assistance; eviction defense; eviction assistance for qualified landlords; and mobile home park resident advocacy at a cost of \$87,000 annually.

On September 26, 2017, the Council, by resolution RES-2017-198, entered into an agreement with Legal Aid to provide these services at a cost of \$87,000 annually. Staff established an agreement with Legal Aid for the period of October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018.

At the FY 2018/19 Budget Study Sessions in May 2018, Council directed that funding be continued for this agreement in FY 2018/19. Staff recommended that the agreement run concurrent with the fiscal year, recommended funding of \$62,250 for the period of October 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019 and recommended that this agreement be reviewed as part of the annual budget process each fiscal year. The Council approved funding to continue the agreement with Legal Aid in the amount of \$62,250 as part of the FY 2018/19 budget. On October 16, 2018, the Council, by resolution RES-2018-179, entered into an agreement with Legal Aid to provide these services at a cost of \$62,250 for a period of nine-months. Staff established an agreement with Legal Aid for the period of October 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019.

There is \$87,000.00 in the Housing & Community Services FY 2019/20 budget for a third agreement with Legal Aid for the period of July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020.

#### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On February 28, 2017, the Council, by motion, awarded \$20,000 to Legal Aid to provide renter advocacy and legal representation services, and directed Legal Aid to return to Council with a report on their activities at a later date.

On September 26, 2017, the Council, by resolution RES-2017-198, entered into an agreement with Legal Aid to provide these services at a cost of \$87,000 annually. Staff established an agreement with Legal Aid for the period of October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018.

On October 16, 2018, the Council, by resolution RES-2018-179, entered into an agreement with Legal Aid to provide these services at a cost of \$62,250 for a period of nine-months. Staff established an agreement with Legal Aid for the period of October 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019.

#### ANALYSIS

The funding for this agreement is currently budgeted in of the Housing & Community Services Department FY 2019/20 budget. The source of funds is the General Fund. Legal Aid has met the conditions of the agreement for the period of October 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019 thus far.

FISCAL IMPACT

This agreement is funded by the General Fund. The funding for this agreement is currently budgeted in of the Housing & Community Services Department FY 2019/20 budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Ronit Rubinoff, Executive Director, Legal Aid of Sonoma County

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution/Exhibit A – Professional Services Agreement with Legal Aid

CONTACT

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