

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: AMY REEVE, HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
JEFF BERK, CHIEF ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY
CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH
RENNE PUBLIC LAW GROUP LLP

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Human Resources Department and City Attorney's Office that Council, by resolution, approve a Professional Services Agreement with Renne Public Law Group LLP for specialized labor relations and employment law services in an amount of \$250,000.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Professional Services Agreement is to provide continued legal advice and support related to labor negotiations and other employment law services, consistent with the Scope of Services.

BACKGROUND

Renne Public Law Group LLP, (formerly Renne Sloan Holtzman and Sakai), has been providing legal services to the Human Resources Department since 2016.

On February 11, 2016, the City entered into a Professional Services Agreement with Renne Sloan Holtzman and Sakai LLP (the "RSHS Agreement") in the amount of \$100,000, under the authority provided to the City Manager under Council Policy 600-01. The contract was for legal advice in connection with all aspects of labor negotiations.

On November 15, 2016, Council approved (by Resolution 28881) the first amendment to the RSHS Agreement, increasing compensation by \$200,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$300,000.

On May 2, 2017, the Council approved (by Resolution 2017-067) a second amendment to the RSHS Agreement, adding additional compensation of \$100,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$400,000 and revising the rate structure to distinguish between the hourly rates paid for labor negotiations and other legal services provided.

On, August 15, 2017, Council approved (by Resolution 2017-159) a third amendment to the RSHS Agreement increasing compensation by \$400,000 for an amount not to exceed \$800,000.

On February 27, 2018, the Council by Resolution 2018-033) entered into a Professional Services Agreement with the newly formed firm of Renne Public Law Group (RPLG Agreement) in an amount of \$72,068.56, which was the residual amount remaining under the existing RSHS Agreement after the firm split into two entities.

The RPLG Agreement was amended on July 13, 2018 to add \$100,000, under the signature authority of the City Manager, for a total amount of \$172,068.56.

On November 27, 2018, Council approved (by Resolution 2018-203) a second amendment in the amount of \$250,000, for total compensation not to exceed \$422,068.56.

On January 6, 2020, the City entered into a third to the RPLG Agreement to increase compensation by \$45,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$467,068.56. The agreement was executed by the City Manager.

The City is currently in negotiations with all bargaining groups. The City has used representatives from RPLG to assist in negotiations and recommends continuing to retain outside legal services with a firm that has particular expertise in this area of the law as well as continuity with a firm that has thorough knowledge of the City's policies and procedures.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

As outlined in the Background above.

ANALYSIS

Given the complexity of legal issues in connection with labor negotiations and employment matters, the Human Resources Department and the City Attorney's Office recommend that the Council approve a new Professional Services Agreement with Renne Public Law Group LLP. As detailed above, the Renne Group has significant experience working with City staff in labor negotiations. This experience is particularly helpful since all MOU's are up June 30, 2020. An RFP for these legal services is expected to be conducted before the next round of labor negotiations.

The City is engaged in negotiations with all employee groups. The City is making a strong effort to keep outside legal costs as low as possible by relying more heavily on staff from HR and the City Attorney's Office. However, it is anticipated that there will be a need for the expertise of outside counsel. The Human Resources Department and City Attorney's Office recommend continuing to retain outside legal services with the Renne Group and to approve a new Professional Services Agreement in the amount of \$250,000.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for professional services are currently appropriated in the FY 2019-20 budget in an amount sufficient to cover this contract.

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

Not applicable

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution / Exhibit A – Professional Services Agreement

CONTACT

Jeff Berk, Chief Assistant City Attorney
707-543-3040 jberk@srcity.org