



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Sq Dr NE
Blaine MN 55449

Legislation Text

File #: MO 22-011, Version: 1

Administration, *Cassandra Tabor, Director of Administration*

Title

Approval of Labor Attorney Contract

Executive Summary

City Council is being asked to review and approve a Labor Attorney Contract with Eckberg and Lammers.

Background

As a best practice, staff periodically reviews existing contracts and conducts Request for Proposals (RFP) processes to ensure ongoing value of services. In 2021, it was determined that the city should conduct a process for labor and employment attorney services. The city has contracted with Scott Lepak of Barny, Guzy & Steffen Ltd to do labor attorney work for several years. He did not respond to this new RFP citing work load. The city has used several other attorneys over the years, on a case-by-case basis, for employment law matters. This process included both Labor and Employment legal services.

The RFP was publicized and was sent directly to ten firms. The city initially received seven (7) proposals. These were carefully narrowed down to three finalists. Two rounds of interviews were conducted. The review team consisted of the City Manager, Director of Administration, Finance Director/Assistant City Manager, Deputy HR Director, Safety Services Manager/Police Chief, and Public Works Director.

Factors considered included:

- Experience of lead attorney(s)
- Existing contracts with local government
- Hourly rates
- Depth of resources/responsiveness/availability

In addition to the formal interviews, additional screening discussions were performed by the Director of Administration and Police Chief. Reference checks were also conducted.

The review team unanimously agreed to recommend award of a contract to the firm Eckberg Lammers. Attached is a copy of their proposal and a contract. The attorneys designated for this work are Lida Bannick (primary) and Pamela Whitmore (backup). Eckberg Lammers currently provides our city attorney civil services as well as prosecution. Staff has some experience working with both Ms. Bannick and Ms. Whitmore, and have confidence in their abilities to provide excellent legal services in these specialized areas.

Strategic Plan Relationship

Financial sustainability - periodically reviewing contracts and requesting proposals to ensure ongoing value in services.

Board/Commission Review

n/a

Financial Impact

Consistent with past practice, these services are billed at an hourly rate as described in the proposal documents and contract. Costs can vary significantly year to year depending on how many contracts are being negotiated, and number of grievances, investigations, and other employment matters that develop. A base amount for these services is annually included the HR budget.

Public Outreach/Input

n/a

Staff Recommendation

By motion, approve the Labor Attorney Contract with Eckberg and Lammers.

Attachment List

Response to Request for Proposals: Labor Attorney Services dated August 13, 2021
Proposed Contract