

SULTAN CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

ITEM NO: A-2

DATE: January 10, 2008

SUBJECT: Weed Graafstra and Benson –Special Legal Council

CONTACT PERSON: Deborah Knight, City Administrator

ISSUE:

The issue before the City Council is authorizing the Mayor to sign a professional services contract with Weed Graafstra and Benson for special legal counsel.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the Mayor to sign a professional services contract with Weed Graafstra and Benson for special legal counsel to transition general municipal work to Kenyon Disend and to bring closure to long-term legal matters in the police and community development departments.

SUMMARY:

The City's contract with Weed, Graafstra and Benson for general municipal attorney services expired on December 31, 2007.

The Mayor is recommending the City contract with Kenyon Disend for municipal attorney services. See Action Item A-1.

Weed Graafstra and Benson have been Sultan's municipal attorneys since 1999. Since they have served Sultan for an extended period of time they are involved in a number of short- and long-term legal matters that will need to be transitioned to Kenyon Disend.

City staff recommend contracting separately with Weed Graafstra Benson to transition general municipal work to Kenyon Disend and bring closure to the long-term legal matters that are progressing to completion under their guidance.

The transition of general municipal work should be accomplished by January 31, 2008. The timeline to complete the long-term legal matters is unknown at this time. City staff recommend a one-year contract with a limited scope of work for Weed Graafstra and Benson to complete this work.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The 2008 legal budget includes \$85,000 for municipal attorney services.

In 2007, the City paid Weed Graafstra and Benson \$125/month for the first 20 hours of work per month and \$140 hours for all hours over the initial 20. Litigation was billed at \$165/hour.

The transition work from Weed Graafstra Benson to Kenyon Disend during the month of January is estimated at approximately 40 hours at the basic \$140/hour rate adjusted for 2008.

Police and land use legal matters were billed at \$165/hour in 2007. Staff estimate the attorneys will spend approximately 10-15 hours on police and land use matters in January. Estimates for the remainder of the year may be better known after January.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize the Mayor to sign a professional services contract with Weed Graafstra Benson for special legal counsel.
2. Do not authorize the Mayor to sign a professional services contract with Weed Graafstra and Benson for special legal counsel.
3. Do not authorize the Mayor to sign a professional services contract with Weed Graafstra and Benson and direct staff to areas of concern.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Authorize the Mayor to sign a professional services contract with Weed Graafstra Benson for special legal counsel.

COUNCIL ACTION:

DATE: