



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: CEO
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: 12/1/09
Placement: Set Hearing
Estimated Tme: 1 hour on 12/8/09
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Michael F. Brown, County Executive Officer
Director(s)
Contact Info: Terri Nisich, Assistant County Executive Officer, 568-3400
SUBJECT: Annual Federal and State Legislative Reports and Contract Renewal

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: NA

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: NA

Other Concurrence:

As to form: NA

Recommended Actions:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors set a hearing on December 8, 2009 for 1 hour to consider the following:

- (a) Renew the contract with Governmental Advocates, Inc. for state advocacy services for the period of January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010 for an amount not to exceed \$61,236; and
- (b) Receive a presentation from Governmental Advocates, Inc. to provide an update on state advocacy services rendered in the prior year; and
- (c) Receive a presentation from Thomas Walters and Associates to provide an update on federal advocacy services rendered in the prior year.

Summary Text:

Each year the Board of Supervisors identifies specific issues, projects and/or programs (priorities) that warrant targeted legislative advocacy and includes these priorities are part of its legislative platform for the upcoming calendar year. Once the platform is adopted by the Board, staff determines various legislative strategies centered on the identified priorities such as enacting or amending legislation, creating partnerships with federal and state agencies and exploring funding opportunities. One component of the County's legislative strategy has been to utilize the advocacy services of Governmental Advocates, Inc. and Thomas Walters and Associates to assist the County in implementing the legislative platform at both the state and federal levels.

Background:

This item is before the Board to: (1) authorize the renewal of the contract with Governmental Advocates, Inc. for State advocacy services for the upcoming year; (2) receive a report on the key legislative actions that transpired at the state level, including the passage of bills that directly impacted the County; and (3) receive a report on the key legislative actions that transpired at the federal level, including the status of funding for infrastructure projects located within the County.

A State advocate is advantageous to the County because there are approximately 5,000 bills introduced by the State legislature each year, with the bills representing the key issues and interests of legislators from the entire State. The content of many of these bills change when they enter the political arena in Sacramento. During the last several years, the budget process in Sacramento has been fluid and prolonged, resulting in the introduction of various budget proposals that impact the County. The role of Governmental Advocates, Inc. is to be the “ears and voice” of the County in Sacramento. Governmental Advocates, Inc. helps County staff stay abreast of the specific bills and budget proposals that would either benefit or adversely impact the County and advocates on behalf of the County to the Legislature and the Governor. Given the rapidly changing environment, often there is little time for County staff to travel to Sacramento before a vital decision is made. With Governmental Advocates, Inc.’s location across from the State Capital, the firm has immediate access to all legislators, Committee staff and State agencies. Similarly, the role of Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc. is to monitor federal legislation, assist the County in preparing appropriation requests and representing the County in Washington, D.C.

Performance Measure:

The measure associated with this contract is contained within the CEO Department Summary for the Legislative Advocacy program (D-33 of the FY 09-10 Operating Plan), and states, “To seek legislative solutions for addressing the County’s critical issues, obtain bill sponsors for legislation identified as part of the County’s legislative platform.” Governmental Advocates, Inc. worked with the County’s delegation to secure sponsorship of several bills related to the County’s 2009 legislative platform as noted below (more details are contained within the attached annual report):

- AB 50 (Assemblymember Nava author, Senator Maldonado co-author): Disaster relief: Reimburse the County for property tax revenue reductions resulting from a reassessment from wildfires that commenced in November 2008 or May 2009.
- AB 359 (Assemblymember Nava author, Assemblymember Blakeslee, Senator Maldonado and Senator Strickland coauthors): Allow digital mammograms to be covered by Medi-Cal when analog mammograms are not available.
- SB 326 (Senator Strickland author): Require foreclosures to be part of the inventory and projection in determining the regional housing needs allocation.
- SB 619 (Senator Strickland author, Assemblymember Nava coauthor): Require State to provide subvention funds to Lower Mission Creek.

The attached contract and scope of work also outlines the tasks associated with the Governmental Advocates, Inc. contract.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

The total contract cost for Governmental Advocates, Inc. is \$61,236, which includes a monthly retainer of \$4,853 and annual travel expenses not to exceed \$3,000.

Staffing Impacts:

None

Special Instructions:

None

Attachments:

Governmental Advocates, Inc. Contract and Scope of Work
State Annual Report (prepared by Governmental Advocates, Inc.)
Federal Annual Report (prepared by Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc.)

Authored by:

Terri Nisich, Assistant County Executive Officer, 568-3400

cc:

Cliff Berg and Monica Miller, Governmental Advocates, Inc.
Thomas Walters, Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc.
Jette Christiansson, CEO Business Manager