

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor TJ Gilmore
Mayor Pro Tem Kristin Green
Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Brandon Jones
Councilmember Bob Troyer
Councilmember William Meridith
Councilmember Ronni Cade

FROM: Donna Barron, City Manager

DATE: July 19, 2021

SUBJECT: **Approval of a Two Year Agreement with Bird Advocacy and Consulting, Inc., in an Amount Up to \$112,000 for Government Relations Services; and Authorization for the City Manager to Execute the Contract.**

BACKGROUND

Burt Solomons has served as the City's legislative consultant since April 2013. Beginning with the 86th Legislative Session, the City also hired Bird Advocacy to assist with legislative changes related to DCTA. During the 87th Legislative Session, Bird Advocacy's responsibilities were expanded to monitor issues related to the annexation of Castle Hills and any changes related to sales tax collection. Mr. Solomons was to handle other areas of concern as staff identified proposed bills. Because Bird Advocacy was in Austin on a weekly basis, Ms. Bird's responsibilities were expanded beyond the two designated areas. Ms. Bird took on these additional services within the agreed-upon monthly retainer.

Bird Advocacy has a separate agreement with the City to advise on matters related to DCTA. The cost of this agreement was shared with the City of Denton until recently when Denton chose not to renew the agreement. Lewisville has continued DCTA advisory services for an additional 12 months in a separate agreement.

ANALYSIS

The 87th Legislative Session ended in May 2021. The Governor has called a special session that does not currently include any issues that impact our operations. While proposed election law changes seem to have shut down the current session, additional topics that do impact Lewisville can be added by the Governor to this session or additional special sessions that might be called in the near future. In addition, various issues are normally studied during the interim period that require potential review and follow-up. One issue that we have been told will be a focus of the interim session is sales tax sourcing.

James Kunke handles our legislative program along with his many other duties. While Mr. Kunke does a great job coordinating this program, he does not have the time to interact with

legislators on a regular basis and form a relationship with them as well as their staff. The proposed agreement with Bird Advocacy will provide payment during the interim period for any such follow-up requested by staff. Because we have not used Bird Advocacy during the interim session in the past, we requested an hourly rate with a not-to-exceed cap. The proposed agreement does include a monthly retainer for the 88th regular session when we expect to face a number of issues, including sales tax reform and other types of micro-management by state officials. Burt Solomons will continue to be the lead consultant during the interim session under a 12-month agreement and will be expected to supply reports on issues impacting city operations. Ms. Bird will be used on specialty issues. As we move toward the 88th regular session in 2023, a decision will need to be made related to whether or not a team approach is needed.

RECOMMENDATION

It is City staff's recommendation that the City Council approve the agreement as set forth in the caption above; and authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement.