



Legislation Text

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**TO:** Chair and Members of the Board

**FROM:** Diane Colonna, Executive Director

**DATE:** February 10, 2016

**DISCUSSION RE:** CRA LEGAL REPRESENTATION

**BACKGROUND:**

With the CRA attorney's upcoming retirement, the CRA board will need to consider how the agency's legal services will be provided. At last November's CRA meeting, the board had a brief discussion as to whether or not the CRA should continue to be represented by the City Attorney or if we should consider going with an outside firm. The consensus of the board was to wait until the City Attorney selection process was a little further along.

Currently the City Attorney handles the majority of the CRA's legal work including (but not limited to) review of various contracts and agreements, resolution of tenant issues, review of agenda items and representation at board meetings, conflicts and ethical issues, and intergovernmental relations. The CRA has used outside counsel primarily for real estate transactions, including negotiation of the City Center development agreement. The CRA could continue with the present arrangement or have all of its legal work handled by a separate entity.

The coming years are going to be very active for the CRA, with the implementation of City Center and numerous capital projects. If the board wants the City Attorney's office to continue to represent the CRA, then familiarity with CRA operations and Florida Statutes Chapter 163 Part III should be an important consideration in the selection of Mr. Steinfeld's replacement.

Alternatively, we could issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for CRA legal services and review the responses through an established evaluation process. The board would not be obligated to contract with any of the firms, but it would at least provide an opportunity to consider different options in moving forward. A proposed Scope of Services that could be included in an RFQ is attached.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Direct staff to issue an RFQ for CRA legal services.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** N/A - not known at this time

**CONTACT PERSON:** Diane Colonna, Executive Director

