



## Legislation Text

**File #:** 17-609, **Version:** 1

Approve a three year contract with Waterman & Associates for federal advocacy services from October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2020 in an amount not to exceed \$483,026; and Delegate authority to the County Administrator to sign the contract

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Approve a contract with Waterman & Associates for federal advocacy services from October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2020 in an amount not to exceed \$483,026 which includes reasonable travel and incidental expenses in an amount not to exceed \$6,000 per year; and
2. Delegate authority to the County Administrator to sign the contract.

### **SUMMARY:**

The County retained the services of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer and Field, LLP (AGSHF) until the contract expired on October 1, 2009. AGSHF was succeeded by Waterman & Associates through a Request for Qualifications process and has served commendably as the County's federal advocacy team since October 7, 2009. The current contract with Waterman & Associates is set to expire on September 30, 2017. Staff recommends maintaining continuity with Waterman & Associates as the federal advocacy team based on their exemplary performance, high level of expertise, and their proven access to congressional staffers and elected officials.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The County has retained the services of a federal advocate since 2003. The initial contract with AGSHF was for \$13,125 per month or \$157,500 annually. Waterman and Associates assumed the contract in October 2009 at a rate of \$120,000 annually. Currently their contract is approximately \$146,068 annually. In addition, their contract includes reasonable travel and incidental expenses reimbursable according to the current I.R.S. rates in an amount not to exceed \$6,000 annually for a total of \$18,000 for the three years.

The proposed contract is for a three-year term from October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2020. The proposed cost starts at \$150,450 for the first year and increases by three percent per year to \$154,964 for year two, and \$159,613 for year three. In addition, the proposed contract includes reasonable travel and incidental expenses reimbursable according to the current I.R.S. rates in an amount not to exceed \$6,000 annually for a total of \$18,000 for the three years. The total of the three-year contract shall not exceed \$483,026.

### **DISCUSSION:**

If approved, under the proposed contract, Waterman & Associates will continue to serve as the Washington D.C. advocacy team for the County, and maintain liaison between the County and Congress, Executive

Branch, and other officials in the federal government. They will represent and promote the County's interests and federal priorities with members of the Solano County Congressional Delegation, other pertinent Members of Congress, appropriate congressional committees, staff, federal agencies, and other bodies as appropriate. They will prepare briefing materials in advance of meetings and will conduct briefings on County's Legislative Priorities and issues to Congress. Waterman & Associates will continue to work with the County on bill language and amendments for County sponsored legislation approved by the Board.

Waterman & Associates will maintain regular communication with the County's Legislative, Intergovernmental, and Public Affairs Officer and provide the County with a quarterly report of activities undertaken on behalf of the County and provide reports of specific legislation and programs as requested.

In addition, Waterman & Associates will attend and make presentations at the Solano County Board of Supervisors meetings up to two times each year or as requested by the Board. They will also participate in the development of the annual federal Legislative Platform with staff from the various County departments.

Waterman & Associates (W&A) has provided federal legislative and administrative services on behalf of Solano County since 2009. During that time, the firm has successfully promoted the County's policy objectives in Washington, D.C. while earning the respect of the California congressional delegation, key administration officials, and pertinent national organizations, including the National Association of Counties (NACo). W&A's approach to lobbying emphasizes teamwork and collaboration. In conjunction with the Board of Supervisors, key Department heads and County staff, the firm has registered a number of notable achievements on behalf of Solano County. Attachment A outlines some of Waterman & Associates' recent accomplishments.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The Board could choose not to approve the contract with Waterman & Associates and have the County Administrator's Office and departmental staff work directly with the County's Legislative Delegation on issues of federal interest. This is not recommended as the County desires to have representation in Washington D.C. and advocacy services have been shown to be impactful for Solano County.

The Board may choose to direct staff to conduct a Request for Proposal to solicit a different or larger firm for a lower cost. This is not recommended because Waterman & Associates have a proven track record with Solano County and as a smaller firm, have provided superb service with the required expertise on topics of importance to Solano County. Furthermore, larger firms tend to overshadow small contracts like one being proposed and Solano County's priorities may get overlooked.

#### **OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

County Counsel and Risk Management have reviewed and approved the contract as to form.

#### **CAO RECOMMENDATION:**

**APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION**