



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

FROM: CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: ADD LAW OFFICES OF WILLIAM R. PRICE TO APPROVED ATTORNEY PANEL

ISSUE:

The addition of the Law Offices of William R. Price to the City's approved attorney panel.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council add the Law Offices of William R. Price to the City's approved outside attorney panel.

DISCUSSION:

The City Attorney's Office has developed an in-house legal services team. However, there are times in which it is necessary to employ a panel firm to provide legal services, if for example, there is a conflict of interest or there are inadequate office resources due to unforeseen medical issues with staffing that require long leave periods. Because the City has been handling most of its litigation in-house for the last seven years, the City currently does not have many law firms on its approved panel who specialize in tort litigation. The City Attorney proposes to add the Law Offices of William R. Price. Having this firm added to our approved panel will enable the City Attorney's Office to have more options in the rare and unusual event the need arises to retain outside counsel. Mr. Price is being added to an existing in-house trial team to enhance the collective skill set to improve the chances of an optimal outcome for a high exposure and complex litigated matter.

The Law Offices of William R. Price is based in San Diego. Principal attorney William R. Price specializes in civil litigation, employment law, and law enforcement defense. Mr. Price represents public and private sector clients throughout California and has extensive experience representing state and local agencies. Mr. Price has successfully tried cases in state and federal courts for more than 25 years in the areas of personal injury, breach of contract, wrongful termination, discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation, harassment, disability accommodation, whistleblower, unfair competition, wrongful death, excessive force, and civil rights claims. Mr. Price served as a Deputy Attorney General for the State of California from 2007-2019. He was the top trial attorney for both the Employment and Tort Sections of the San

Diego Office, and regularly represented the Department of Justice, California Highway Patrol, CalTrans, CalFire, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, State Parks, Health Care Services, and other agencies. He led the successful defense of Section 1983 claims against the Department of Justice and former Attorneys General Brown and Harris. Mr. Price won every trial and appeal during his tenure and received the statewide 2018 Attorney General's Award for Outstanding Client Representation following two major trial wins in law enforcement civil rights cases.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The addition of this outside law firm to the approved attorney panel will have no fiscal impact. The budget requested for use of this law firm is an amount not to exceed \$200,000 for attorneys' fees and an amount not to exceed \$77,800 for expert fees and litigation expenses. These funds will be expended from the Liability Trust Fund. There are sufficient funds available for this expenditure from the Liability Trust Fund.

Prepared by: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Certified as to
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer