



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: February 2, 2004

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: ORGANIZATION REVIEW/COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF THE CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

DATE: JANUARY 14, 2004

FROM: ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PRESENTATION BY: HOWARD PERKINS, PERSONNEL MANAGER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: HOWARD PERKINS AT 754-5169

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. Receive and file the Organizational Review of the Office of the City Attorney report prepared by the consulting firm of Management Partners, Inc.
2. Appoint two Council Members to work with staff determined by the City Manager to provide a proposed implementation plan based upon the preferred alternative.

BACKGROUND:

The consulting firm of Management Partners, Inc. was retained in September 2003 to conduct an organizational review and cost/benefit analysis of the City Attorney's Office, and to provide recommendations on how legal services for Costa Mesa could best be effectively and efficiently provided for the City Council and operating departments.

At the December 8th City Council Study Session, the results of the study and the research findings were presented to the City Council.

ANALYSIS:

The commissioned organization assessment called for:

- A review of the functions, responsibilities, staffing levels and programs currently assigned to the City Attorney's Office and the services provided to the City Council and operating departments;
- A review of workload and a determination as to whether the current complement of attorneys is too high, too low or appropriate;
- And an examination of the advantages and disadvantages of retaining in-house legal services versus contracting with an outside law firm.

Management Partners conducted interviews with 18 City officials to gather general information on the current status of the City Attorney's Office operations, identify service levels and perceived problem areas, and gain insight into organizational dynamics. Management Partners also identified 17 other California communities with populations or geographic locations that made them comparable to Costa Mesa and then surveyed those cities for relevant fiscal and staffing data in an effort to make responsible and relevant comparisons and recommendations.

Management Partners provided its analysis in a December 2003 report and enumerated 16 recommendations for improvement in the following areas:

- The current organizational structure, staffing level and work assignments;
- The use of external counsel;
- Cost of legal service;
- Management issues; and
- Best approach for the City.

The City Council is requested to appoint two Council Members to work with staff determined by the City Manager to provide a proposed implementation plan if changes with the City Attorney's Office is desired. A proposed implementation plan will then be presented to the full City Council for authorization of how the future provision of legal services for the City will be handled.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

The alternatives that Council could consider for an implementation plan include:

- Contracting out for all legal services;
- Contracting out for select legal services and reorganizing some aspects of the City Attorney's Office;
- Maintaining the current operations and organization of the City Attorney's Office; and/or,
- Taking action on the list of recommendations presented within the Management Partners organizational review report.

FISCAL REVIEW:

There is no fiscal impact on this item.

LEGAL REVIEW:

There is no legal review required for this item.

CONCLUSION:

Staff is requesting Council assistance in giving direction on how to proceed with the Management Partners organizational review of the City Attorney's Office. After the appointed Council Members provide input to City staff, a proposed implementation plan if changes are to be made regarding the provision of legal services for the City will then be presented to the full City Council for authorization

HOWARD PERKINS

Personnel Manager

STEVEN E. HAYMAN

Administrative Services Director

ATTACHMENT: 1 [City of Costa Mesa Organizational Review of the Office of the City Attorney](#)

DISTRIBUTION: City Manager
 City Attorney
 Deputy City Clerk
 Administrative Services Director