



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: JULY 19, 2011

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: EXTENSION OF EXISTING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH 4 BOYS NEW MEDIA FOR ENHANCEMENT OF COMMUNICATION SERVICES

DATE: JULY 7, 2011

FROM: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

PRESENTATION BY: THOMAS R. HATCH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: DANIEL K. BAKER AT (714) 754-5156

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the City CEO to extend the existing Professional Services Agreement extension (Attachment 1) with 4 Boys New Media in an amount not to exceed \$70,000.

BACKGROUND:

In March of 2011, the City entered into a Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with Four Boys New Media (4 Boys). The PSA was for consulting services to design and implement a new communications plan for the City of Costa Mesa designed around transparency and the dissemination of relevant daily news and information to both internal staff and external outlets. The terms of the original agreement was to have 4 Boys provide consulting services to the City for a term of 90 days with a total compensation of \$36,000.

Over the past months, Four Boys New Media has assessed the City's current communications strategy and resources, and designed and implemented a communications strategy for Costa Mesa that has created maximum transparency, relayed CEO and Council policies in easy-to-understand ways, delivered timely news and information, and developed meaningful two-way conversations with residents, local businesses, City team members and all other community stakeholders.

Four Boys New Media focused on five major areas of concentration: 1) an audit of the City's current communications plan, and design and implementation of a new strategy centered around transparency and the dissemination of daily news and information; 2) Clear and immediate communication of City's message of transformation—as well as other priorities set by the Council and CEO—to residents and the media; 3) Establishment of direct, open and honest communication with City team members. 4) With the help of others, development of a new website rich in daily news and public information. 5) Work with members of the local, regional and national media, both traditional and digital.

In the time that 4 Boys has worked with the City, they have helped revitalize Costa Mesa's website, provided unprecedented access to the City's budget process, created "Transparency" and "Behind the Budget Numbers" web pages and a new openness within City Hall, launched Costa Mesa's social media effort, launched the City's weekly CEO E-Briefing newsletter to the City Council and Community, written scores of press releases, changed the City's URL to a user-friendly address, revamped structure of Council study sessions to allow public to ask questions after each presentation, promoted the intelligent use of the City's e-mail "all" function to communication better with employees, supervised CMTV-24 crew for better communications coordination, developed an effective media contact list, established excellent working relationships with local and national media, produced "Fact Check" to counter falsehoods and misperceptions about Costa Mesa perpetuated in the media and elsewhere, developed FAQs about Costa Mesa and the budget controversy, and helped scores of journalists with their reporting on Costa Mesa.

With Costa Mesa at the center of a national story about municipal budgets and pension reform, there continues to be a high demand for communications work within the City. At the close of the original agreement in June, staff determined that the City was still in need of enhanced communication services due to a decrease in staffing levels from prior retirements and staff reductions. Subsequently, the original PSA with 4 Boys was administratively extended by \$14,000 with a total not to exceed amount of \$50,000.

Mr. Bill Lobdell, partner with 4 Boys New Media, is currently providing 40 hours a week of consulting services as the Interim Communications Director to the City. Due to limited staffing and expertise, when the existing PSA extension expires in late July, the City's lines of communications will fall back to existing staff and will be greatly reduced.

Therefore, staff recommends increasing the existing PSA with 4 Boys New Media to compensate for additional responsibilities associated with providing both enhanced internal and external communications services.

ANALYSIS:

Increasing the existing PSA extension will allow 4 Boys and Mr. Lobdell to continue to provide the City with the necessary professional experience to continue with the above mentioned tasks.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

An alternate consideration would be to not extend the existing PSA extension with 4 Boys. The responsibilities listed above and all other duties originally assigned to 4 Boys will be allocated to existing staff for completion. Given the high volume workload of existing staff this is not a feasible alternative. In addition, the CEO could administratively fill the position with an interim employee or another consultant.

FISCAL REVIEW:

Currently, 4 Boys' hourly rate is \$75 per hour and provides the City with 40 hours a week of enhanced communication services. Funding for the existing contract extension will end on or around July 25, 2011. Based upon the 22 weeks left in the calendar year, the total compensation to extend the existing PSA with 4 Boys to the end of December, 2011 equates to approximately \$70,000. Funding for this extension will come from existing staff vacancy savings.

LEGAL REVIEW:

If approved, the existing amended PSA (Attachment 2) would be extended in a form approved by the City Attorney.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the City CEO to extend the existing Amendment 1 Professional Services Agreement with 4 Boys New Media, for enhanced communication services, in an amount not to exceed \$70,000.

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TERRY MATZ
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ATTACHMENTS: 1 [Amendment 1 Professional Services Agreement](#)
 2 [Amendment 2 Professional Services Agreement](#)