

CITY OF SPOKANE ETHICS COMMISSION

Ethics Commission's Decision Regarding Request by the City's Chief Administrative Officer for Contract Approval


On April 22, 2016, Theresa Sanders, the City of Spokane's Chief Administrative Officer, provided notice to the City of Spokane's Ethics Commission, pursuant to SMC 1.04.030 (O) 3, of the City's request for the Commission's approval to contract for the services of a former city employee. A copy of the letter is attached to this decision. SMC 1.04.030 (O) 3. provides that whenever a City officer or employee wishes to contract with a former City officer or employee for expert or consultant services within one year of the latter's leaving City service, advance notice shall be given to and approval received from the Ethics Commission.

The Ethics Commission met on May 18, 2016 to review Ms. Sanders' request. During the hearing, Ms. Sanders clarified that the contract would be with Archbright, a company that provides a variety of human resources services, and the current employer of former Assistant City Attorney Erin Jacobson. Ms. Sanders further clarified that the City would be contracting with Archbright for Ms. Jacobson's services relating to the on-going labor negotiations between the City and Local 270 estimated to continue for an additional three to six months. Ms. Sanders stipulated that she does not believe Ms. Jacobson is a partner or principal with Archbright and that if those facts are incorrect, she will immediately notify the Commission.

Pursuant to the facts set forth in Ms. Sanders' April 22, 2016 letter and submitted during the May 18, 2016 meeting and the provisions of SMC 1.04.030 (O) 3, the Ethics Commission determines that:

1. Appropriate notice has been given to the Ethics Commission,
2. There are no adverse effects to the City in granting approval,
3. No violations of the Ethics Code would occur by approving the request and,
4. The requirements of SMC 1.04A.030 (O) have been satisfied.

The Ethics Commission approves the request by the Chief Administrative Officer to contract with Archbright, including the services of former Assistant City Attorney Erin Jacobson as set forth in the April 22, 2016 letter. This decision was approved by a vote of four to zero of the Ethics Commission members present for and participating in the hearing.


Levi Liljenquist - Vice Chairperson

6-29-16
Date



CITY OF SPOKANE
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April 22, 2016

Troy Bruner, Chair
Spokane Ethics Commission
City of Spokane
808 West Spokane Falls Boulevard
Spokane WA 99201

Re: Request for Decision from City of Spokane Ethics Commission

Dear Mr. Bruner,

I am seeking review and approval to utilize the services of a City employee who is leaving City employment on May 6, 2016. I want to make sure if we decide to contract with her in the future that we will not be running afoul of the City Code of Ethics prohibiting employment after leaving the City.

Specifically, Erin Jacobson, who has worked for the City Attorney's Office as the Chief Labor Assistant City Attorney for over seven years, will be employed next month by a company called Archbright. Archbright provides a variety of human resources benefits to its members, including HR advice and legal counsel, workers' compensation services and employment law and labor relations. Erin's experience in employment law and labor relations while at the City has been invaluable, and it will be difficult to replace her skill set.

The City has never contracted with Archbright before, and there is no present contractual relationship with Archbright. I would like the flexibility to be able to retain Erin's services in the future if the need arises on the matters within her areas of expertise. Those services would be pursuant to a contract approved in the ordinary course of business in the future.

Again, I do not see that retaining Erin's services in the future poses any problem, but in an abundance of precaution, I thought it would be best to advise the Ethics Commission of this issue if there should be any concerns. I understand the Commission has reviewed previous requests of this nature, and provided guidance. I am happy to provide any additional information upon request.

Sincerely,

Theresa M. Sanders
City Administrator