



Date: July 13, 2011

To: Thomas Bonfield, City Manager
Through: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager
From: Delilah Donaldson, Interim Director-Human Relations
Subject: Contract for District Attorney Legal Assistant

Executive Summary

Staff recommends that Council authorize the City Manager to execute a contract between the City of Durham and the Administrative Office of the Courts under which the Administrative Office of the Courts will expend City funds to continue to support salary and benefits for a victim legal assistant to assist with administrative duties of the domestic violence court.

The Human Relations Department has budgeted \$52,228 to fund this position in the 2011-2012 budget.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Council authorize the City Manager to execute a contract between the City of Durham, the District Attorney for the 14th Prosecutorial District and the Administrative Office of the Courts under which the Administrative Office of the Courts will expend City funds to continue to support salary and benefits for a victim legal assistant who will assist with administrative duties of the domestic violence court.

The total funding for this contract is \$52,228.

Staff recommends that Council authorize the City Manager to modify the contract before execution, provided that modifications do not increase the dollar amount of the contract and the modifications are consistent with the general intent of the existing version of the contracts.

Background

Prior to 2002, the Durham District Attorney's Office received an appropriation from the Governor's Crime Commission for a specially trained team that included a judge designated to hear only domestic violence cases. In FY 2002, the City began funding a judge to hear domestic violence cases in the community and a victim legal assistant because the Governor's Crime Commission discontinued funding these positions. This specially trained team has proven to be an important component in the community effort to reduce incidents of domestic violence and to improve victim safety and offender accountability by enabling the expedient prosecution of these cases and related offenses.

Issues/Analysis

The term of the contract is from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 and the total city funding contract amount is \$52,228. Within the period of this contract the District Attorney shall continue to employ a legal assistant to address the administrative duties associated with the domestic violence caseload in Durham County.

The activities supported under this contract will enable the speedy disposition of cases involving domestic violence and related offenses which threaten public safety.

Alternatives

The alternative would be to deny this motion, which would result in these cases being handled in the normal courts. The loss of the legal assistant would mean that case processing for domestic violence cases would be delayed significantly.

Financial Impact

The City shall pay up to \$52,228 to fund this contract. The City shall pay to the Administrative Office of the Courts, an amount up to, but not to exceed \$52,228 for reimbursements of expenditures based on the budget below.

(1) Temporary full time Victim/Witness Legal Assistant for 52 weeks (Total Cost)	\$52,228
Total Budget	\$52,228

SDBE Summary

This requirement is not applicable because the City will not be making any purchases under this contract. The funding will continue to support salary and benefits for a judge to hear domestic violence cases in the community and a victim legal assistant; and for equipment, training and travel expenses for these positions.