

**COMMITTEE ON MDC GOVERNMENT
SPECIAL MEETING**

555 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
Monday, January 10, 2022

Present: Commissioners John Avedisian, Allen Hoffman and District Chairman William A. DiBella (3)

Remote

Attendance: Commissioners Clifford Avery Buell, Peter Gardow, James Healy, Jean Holloway, Gary LeBeau, Maureen Magnan and Alvin Taylor (7)

Absent: Commissioners David Ionno, Shubhada Kambli and Alphonse Marotta (3)

Also

Present: Commissioner Diane Lewis (Remote Attendance)
Commissioner Jacqueline Mandyck
Commissioner Pasquale Salemi (Remote Attendance)
Scott W. Jellison, Chief Executive Officer
Christopher Stone, District Counsel
John S. Mirtle, District Clerk
Christopher Levesque, Chief Operating Officer (Remote Attendance)
Sue Negrelli, Director of Engineering (Remote Attendance)
Robert Schwarm, Director of Information Technology (Remote Attendance)
Tom Tyler, Director of Facilities (Remote Attendance)
Jamie Harlow, Director of Human Resources (Remote Attendance)
Nick Salemi, Communications Administrator
Carrie Blardo, Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer
Victoria Escoriza, Executive Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hoffman called the meeting to order at 4:34 PM

PUBLIC COMMENTS RELATIVE TO AGENDA ITEMS

No one from the public appeared to be heard.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion made by Commissioner Magnan and duly seconded, the meeting minutes of December 6, 2021 were approved.

Commissioner LeBeau entered the meeting at 4:45 PM

**COMMITTEE ON MDC GOVERNMENT
APPOINTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE CONSULTANTS**

To: Committee on MDC Government

January 10, 2022

Over the past year, the firms of Gaffney, Bennett and Associates Inc. (Attorney Brendan Fox), SJB Strategies, LLC (Attorney Steve Bonafonte) and Strategic Outreach Solutions, LLC (Janice Flemming) have provided exemplary service in the area of government relations and advocacy within state government on behalf of the District, and the same holds true for Squire Patton Boggs (William Schuster) and SJB Strategies, LLC on the federal level. Based upon their collective past performance, and to maintain the necessary level of continuity within the District's legislative and administrative lobbying activities, District staff recommends the reappointment of each of these firms for the 2022 state and federal legislative consultants. The term of these appointments would be from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022, subject to Board approval.

Furthermore, in the event the Committee on MDC Government forwards the appointments to the District Board, District staff recommends the following annual fees for state legislative/administrative consultants: (1) Gaffney, Bennett and Associates, Inc. receive \$60,000.00, (2) SJB Strategies, LLC receive \$20,000.00 and (3) Strategic Outreach Solutions, LLC receive \$60,000.00, for a total of \$140,000.00.

On the Federal level, District staff recommends the reappointment of Squire Patton Boggs and SJB Strategies LLC as federal legislative consultants. In the event the Committee on MDC Government forwards the appointments to the District Board, District staff recommends the following annual fees for federal legislative/administrative consultants: (1) Squire Patton Boggs receive \$150,000.00; and (2) SJB Strategies, LLC receive \$70,000.00.

It is therefore recommended that it be:

Voted: That the Committee on MDC Government recommends to the District Board passage of the following resolution:


Resolved: That the firms of Gaffney, Bennett and Associates Inc., SJB Strategies, LLC and Strategic Outreach Solutions, LLC be retained to perform state lobbying services for a period commencing on January 1, 2022 and

terminating on December 31, 2022. Gaffney, Bennett and Associates, Inc. fee will receive \$60,000.00, SJB Strategies, LLC will receive \$20,000.00, and Strategic Outreach Solutions, LLC will receive \$60,000.00, subject to the execution of a written agreement prepared and approved by District Counsel as to form and content, reflecting the scope of services, reporting requirements and such other terms and conditions as District Counsel, may specify.

Further

Resolved: That the firms of Squire Patton Boggs and SJB Strategies, LLC be retained to perform federal lobbying services for a period commencing on January 1, 2022 and terminating on December 31, 2022. Squire Patton Boggs will receive at \$150,000.00 and SJB Strategies, LLC will receive \$70,000.00, subject to the execution of a written agreement prepared and approved by District Counsel as to form and content, reflecting the scope of services, reporting requirements and such other terms and conditions as District Counsel may specify.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott W. Jellison
Chief Executive Officer

On motion made by Commissioner Magnan and duly seconded, the report was received and resolution adopted by unanimous vote of those present.

**REVISION TO DISTRICT BYLAWS
TELEPHONIC ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

To: Committee on MDC Government for consideration January 10, 2022

District staff, through the Office of District Counsel, submits the following bylaw revision to The Metropolitan District Bylaws for consideration by the Committee on MDC Government.

The District Board first approved the addition of Bylaw § B1j in October 2014 to allow members to participate at meetings and be counted toward a quorum for the meeting. The original § B1j included a requirement that at least a majority of the required quorum be physically present.

In March 2020, Governor Lamont issued executive orders that suspended public meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act in order to allow remote participation for public agency members and the general public. In July 2021, the General Assembly passed Public Act 21-2 that codified into law

the ability for public agencies to hold fully remote meetings so long as certain conditions are met. Both the executive orders and Public Act 21-2 allow remote attendees to count towards a quorum.

In July 2021 the Committee on MDC Government recommended to the District Board revision to Bylaw § B1j to give the District the same ability to hold remote meetings as other public agencies. In October 2021, the District Board considered the revision and amended the recommended bylaw to add a sunset provision that will remove the District's ability to count remote attendees towards a quorum and hold remote meetings as of March 1, 2022. It is the recommendation of the District Clerk and Office of District Counsel to remove the sunset provision in order to allow the District Board and committees to function the same as all other public agencies in accordance with the State of Connecticut Freedom of Information Act.

Therefore, it is **RECOMMENDED** that it be

VOTED: That the Committee on MDC Government recommends to the District Board passage of the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That the revision to The Metropolitan District's Bylaws be adopted as follows:

B1J TELEPHONIC ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Commissioners may participate in and act at any meeting of the Board or any Committee through the use of a conference telephone or by means of other electronic equipment so long as all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other concurrently. Telephonic or electronic participation in a meeting shall constitute attendance and presence at the meeting ~~provided that as of March 1, 2022 and absent action by the District Board to the contrary, Commissioners physically present at any meeting must constitute a majority of the required quorum.~~

Respectfully submitted,



Scott W. Jellison
Chief Executive Officer

On motion made by Commissioner Avedisian and duly seconded, the report was received and resolution adopted by unanimous vote of those present.

OPPORTUNITY FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one from the public appeared to be heard.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 PM

ATTEST:

John S. Mirtle, Esq.
District Clerk

Date of Approval