

**COMMITTEE ON MDC GOVERNMENT
SPECIAL MEETING**

555 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
Wednesday, January 31, 2024

Present: Commissioners Kyle Anderson, John Avedisian, John Bazzano, Clifford Avery Buell, Peter Gardow, James Healy, Jean Holloway, Calixto Torres and District Chairman Donald Currey (9)

Absent: Commissioner Maureen Magnan (1)

Also

Present: Commissioner Allen Hoffman
Commissioner Bhupen Patel
Commissioner Alvin Taylor
Scott W. Jellison, Chief Executive Officer
Christopher Stone, District Counsel
John S. Mirtle, District Clerk
Kelly Shane, Chief Administrative Officer (Remote Attendance)
Tom Tyler, Director of Facilities (Remote Attendance)
Carrie Blardo, Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer
Julie Price, Executive Assistant
Victoria Escoriza, Executive Assistant (Remote Attendance)
Dylan Pecego, IT Consultant (Remote Attendance)

CALL TO ORDER

District Counsel Christopher Stone called the meeting to order at 3:35 PM

PUBLIC COMMENTS RELATIVE TO AGENDA ITEMS

No one from the public appeared to be heard.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion made by Commissioner Buell and duly seconded, the meeting minutes of December 4, 2023 were approved. Commissioner Torres abstained.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

District Counsel Christopher Stone called for the election of the Chairperson. Commissioner Woulfe placed Commissioner John Bazzano's name in nomination, the nomination was duly seconded.

There being no further nominations, the nominations were closed. Commissioner Bazzano was elected Chairperson of the Committee on MDC Government for 2024 and 2025 by unanimous vote of those present. Chairperson Bazzano assumed the Chair and thanked the Committee on MDC Government.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Chairman Bazzano called for the election of the Vice Chairperson. Commissioner Healy placed commissioner Avery Buell's name in nomination and the nomination was duly seconded.

There being no further nominations, the nominations were closed. Commissioner Avery Buell was elected Vice Chairperson of the Committee on MDC Government for 2024 and 2025.

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

To: Committee on MDC Government

January 31, 2024

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. On the federal level, we have been working with our Congressional delegation on an amendment to federal infrastructure legislation that would terminate our agreement with the US Army Corps of Engineers relating to the Colebrook River Reservoir, consistent with the granting of source abandonment application by the State Department of Public Health. The importance of this federal initiative cannot be understated, and staff suggest that SJB Strategies, LLC devote its time exclusively to its federal lobbying effort, and that another firm, namely Levin, Paolino and Christ Government Relations Consulting, LLC, be added during the state legislative session to assist at the state level. Based upon this suggestion, and in recognition of the past performance of our existing lobbyist, District staff recommends the reappointment of each of our existing firms for the 2024 state and federal legislative consultants, and addition of Levin, Paolino and Christ Government Relations Consulting, LLC. The term of the appointments of existing firms would be from January 1, 2024 through December 31,

2024, and as to Levin, Paolino and Christ Government Relations Consulting, LLC, from February 6, 2024 to May, 2024, all 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 \$69,000.00, (2) Levin, Paolino and Christ Government Relations Consulting, LLC receive \$14,000.00 and (3) Strategic Outreach Solutions, LLC receive \$66,000.00.

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 \$95,000.00.

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. and Strategic Outreach Solutions, LLC shall be retained to perform state lobbying services for a period commencing on January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, and the firm of Levin, Paolino, and Christ Government Relations Consulting, LLC, shall be retained for the period from February 6, 2024 through May, 2024. Gaffney, Bennett and Associates, Inc. fee will receive \$69,000.00, Levin, Paolino and Christ Government Relations Consulting, LLC will receive \$14,000.00, and Strategic Outreach Solutions, LLC will receive \$66,000.00, all 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, 2024 and terminating on December 31, 2024. Squire Patton Boggs will receive \$150,000.00 and SJB Strategies, LLC will receive \$95,000.00, 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. J. L.', is written below the text 'Respectfully submitted,'.

Scott W. Jellison
Chief Executive Officer

On motion made by Commissioner Torres and duly seconded, the report was received and resolution adopted by unanimous vote of those present. District Chairman Currey abstained due to a potential conflict of interest.

OPPORTUNITY FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one from the public appeared to be heard.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:48 PM

ATTEST:

John S. Mirtle, Esq.
District Clerk

Date of Approval