



Legislation Details (With Text)

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| File #: | 20-0420 | Version: | 1 | Name: | |
| Type: | Consent Item | Status: | | Agenda Ready | |
| File created: | 5/16/2020 | In control: | | Board of County Commissioners | |
| On agenda: | 5/26/2020 | Final action: | | | |
| Title: | County Attorney requests appointment of special attorney to assist in legal defense of emergency actions of the County | | | | |
| Sponsors: | Manager's Signature for Contracts & Agreements | | | | |
| Indexes: | | | | | |
| Code sections: | | | | | |
| Attachments: | 1. Agreement for Professional and Legal Services Between Alachua County and Siegel Hughes Ross (00282738xBFB7D).pdf | | | | |

| Date | Ver. | Action By | Action | Result |
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Agenda Item Name:

County Attorney requests appointment of special attorney to assist in legal defense of emergency actions of the County

Presenter:

Sylvia Torres

Description:

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a virus that spreads rapidly from person to person and may result in serious illness or death which the Board has determined constitutes a clear and present threat to the lives, health, welfare, and safety of the people of Alachua County. On March 1, 2020, Governor DeSantis declared a Public Health Emergency because of COVID-19. Eight days later, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-52, declaring a general State of Emergency because of COVID-19. On March 11, the World Health Organization declared the spread of COVID-19 to be a global pandemic. Two days later, President Trump declared a national emergency concerning COVID-19. Alachua County issued Emergency Order 2020-01 declaring a local state of emergency on March 16, 2020. These states of emergencies and the global pandemic that caused them have been extended until today.

During these states of emergency, Alachua County has taken various actions, in the form of emergency orders, which it has deemed necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of Alachua County. These emergency orders have drawn 3 lawsuits to date (May 16, 2020). Partners at Siegel Hughes & Ross, a Gainesville-based civil law firm, offered their services pro bono to assist the County in its legal defense of the emergency actions taken by the County. The County Attorney reviewed the request and discussed representation with the firm. Subsequently, the firm executed a professional services agreement with the County for this representation, which is within the Manager's signature authority. More information regarding the firm and its attorneys:

<https://www.shrlawfirm.com/>

Pursuant to Section 21.42, Alachua County Code (Special Attorneys), the Board of County Commissioners must appoint special attorneys.

Recommended Action:

Appoint Siegel Hughes & Ross as special attorneys

Prior Board Motions:

NA

Fiscal Consideration:

NA

Background:

None.