

NEWS

From the Offices of Councilmembers
Bill Rosendahl
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ROSENDAHL, ZINE CALL FOR REVIEW OF OUTSIDE LEGAL COUNSEL

Los Angeles--In the wake of the settlement reached in the Tennie Pierce v. City of Los Angeles case and subsequent attorney fees totaling \$1.3 million, Councilmembers Bill Rosendahl and Dennis P. Zine today called for a review of the City's practice of hiring outside law firms.

Rosendahl and Zine introduced a motion calling for a thorough assessment of the uses, services, costs, and terms of contract relating to outside law firms retained by the City.

"Taxpayer dollars need to be protected," Councilmember Bill Rosendahl said. "At times, we need outside counsel, but the costs associated with hiring outside law firms have been substantial and call for a thorough review. We need a better understanding of what we are paying for."

"While we believe that the retaining of outside counsel by the City is desirable in many legal proceedings for various reasons (such as in the recent Tennie Pierce case), we need to take a hard look at what services the City is receiving for the payment that the taxpayers are footing," said Councilman Dennis P. Zine, Vice Chair of the Audits & Governmental Efficiency Committee. "We need to ensure that these firms are being held accountable for the billable hours and the costs being incurred by the City."

Specifically, the motion calls for the City Administrative Officer and City Attorney to report back to the City Council with a detailed review and comparison of outside law firms hired

by the City in the last three years.

The motion also calls for the City Administrative Officer and City Attorney to report back on the mechanisms that exist within the City Attorney's Office to control the direction of litigation when outside counsel is hired and how outside counsel costs are contained.

The motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Greig Smith, was referred to the City's Audits & Governmental Efficiency Committee.

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