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Regular review of city contracts makes good business sense

You may have heard that Nampa is reviewing a number of city contracts. We're doing that because it is one way to evaluate costs and services, making sure we are using your tax dollars effectively and efficiently. When I joined the Nampa City Council a couple of years ago, I raised some questions about the city attorney and the fact that the same person with the same firm had provided legal services for nearly 40 years without a contract.

I have no personal concern or complaints about the legal services provided by Terry White and his firm, but in a day when services are negotiated all the time, it was quite surprising that there was not a regular review of the contract. In fact, there was not even a contract until I asked questions two years ago. Last year the first contract was established, but it was without any comparisons on cost and services. The city spent \$505,914 in Fiscal Year 2013 for these legal services.

With the expanded City Council – and four of the six members new – we agreed to do an RFP – a request for proposal. Again, let me be perfectly clear: This is not about the kind of service the city receives. It is about good business sense. Most contracted services are negotiated and reviewed regularly. It makes sense for all parties involved for the following reasons:



- It keeps costs competitive
- It opens up the opportunity to all providers to compete for the job
- It allows for creative delivery of services

The proposals for the city attorney are due by April 28 and the evaluation process will take time as well. The evaluators will present their findings and recommendations to the City Council for a decision. It's important to note, the cheapest bidder is not necessarily the one chosen. There is a whole host of criteria. This contract would be for three years with up to two additional three-year extensions, subject to annual review. If you'd like to review the RFP for the city attorney, [visit this link](#).

Other contracts under review, too

The city is currently evaluating the food and beverage services at the Idaho Center and Civic Center. The city actually makes money from the sales of food and beverages at these two buildings. Currently separate vendors provide those services and do a great job. But again, it has been several years since costs and services have been negotiated. The city also decided to seek one vendor for both the Idaho Center and Civic Center, and bidders were asked to include in their proposals capital investment plans to help upgrade the kitchen and concessions equipment at the two facilities.

Sometimes it doesn't make financially good sense to contract out for some services. It might be better for the city to use internal staff or add staff rather than outsource those services. As we head into the 2014-2015 budget planning process, we are looking at those contracts as well.

Miss a City Council meeting but want details?

[Visit the city's Website and scroll down enough to find the icon that symbolizes audio recordings.](#) The city clerk tries to

get that posted by noon the day after a City Council meeting. We

hope to have enough space to keep the recordings up for at least six months. In the past if you wanted to listen the minutes, you had to ask the city clerk to make you a copy and then you had to pick it up from City Hall. Now those minutes are at your fingertips!

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Volunteers sought for front desk at City Hall

I'm also seeking volunteers to serve as greeters at City Hall's front reception desk.

I'm also seeking volunteers to serve as greeters at City Hall's front reception desk. Volunteers will work a 3.5-hour morning or afternoon shift Monday through Friday helping visitors at City Hall and answering basic questions. This will help make City Hall a more friendly place to visit. Shifts will be 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. If you'd like to participate, [please fill out this on-line form](#) or call 468-5701.



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