MARIPOSA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

DEPARTMENT: Admin/Co. Counsel
BY: Gregory G. Iturria & Jeffrey G. Green
PHONE: 966-3222

AGENDA
ACTION FORM
DATE: 10/2/01
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 10

RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION: (Policy Item: Yes ___ No ___)

Resolution approving Agreement and authorizing Chairman to sign long-term Legal Services Agreement with current providers of the indigent legal services in Mariposa County.

Counsel has verified the increase in caseload with the Superior Court and based on that increased caseload, staff recommends the requested increase of $2,250 per month. The proposal also contains a 3% COLA annually which will not only cover costs of living increases, but also reasonable increases in caseload which are expected. The County Administrative Officer joins in this recommendation.

There is currently sufficient funding for this proposed increase.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

The current Agreement expired on August 16, 2001. The current Agreement does not contain any provisions for additional extensions.

LIST ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:
1. Approve recommendation with current providers to continue services.
2. Direct staff to further negotiate with current providers.

COSTS:
A. Budgeted current FY
B. Total anticipated costs
C. Required additional funding
D. Internal transfers

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
List the attachments and number the pages consecutively:

1. Legal Services Agreement
2. Letter from David Smothers, Esq.

CLERK’S USE ONLY:
Res. No.: 81-223
Ord. No.

Vote - Ayes: __
Noes: __
Absent: __
Abstained: __
Approved: __
Denied: __
Minute Order Attached: __
No Action Necessary

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.

Date:
ATTEST: MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board
County of Mariposa, State of California
By: Deputy

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER’S RECOMMENDATION:
This item on agenda as:

Recommended
Not Recommended
For Policy Determination
Submitted with Comment
Returned for Further Action

Comment:

A.O. Initials:

Action Form Revised 5/92
LEGAL SERVICES AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT shall become effective on the 17th day of August 2001 regardless of date of execution by the parties, and is executed in Mariposa, California, by and between the COUNTY OF MARIPOSA, a political subdivision of the State of California, hereinafter referred to as "COUNTY", and David A. Smothers and Gary L. Collings, hereinafter referred to as "CONTRACTORS". Smothers and Collings represent and warrant that they are now, and will during the term of this Agreement and any extensions, each conducting business as an independent law office and they are in no way affiliated as partners, employees or agents of the other.

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the COUNTY OF MARIPOSA has determined that it is in the best interest of the COUNTY OF MARIPOSA to contract with an independent contractor for the special legal services hereinafter set forth; and

WHEREAS, CONTRACTORS are Attorneys at Law, licensed to practice law before all the courts of the State of California and are otherwise qualified to perform the services hereinafter set forth.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY AGREED as follows:

1. CONTRACTORS shall perform all duties normally provided by a public defender as required by law, including, but not limited to those duties outlined on Exhibit "A" attached hereto.

2. COUNTY shall pay to CONTRACTORS the sum of Two Hundred Six Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty Dollars ($206,880.00) per year, payable monthly in TWELVE (12) payments of Seventeen Thousand Two Hundred Forty Dollars ($17,240.00) on or before the tenth (10th) day of each month. Each monthly payment shall be in arrears for the services performed during the prior month. Commencing on July 1, 2002 the total sum to be paid to CONTRACTORS shall
be increased by three percent (3%) for the following year, and each July 1, thereafter the total sum shall be increased by an additional three percent (3%) during the term of this Agreement. Each CONTRACTOR shall be paid according to the formula agreed upon between the CONTRACTORS and the County Administrative Officer, however, in no event shall the total paid to all CONTRACTORS exceed the sum of Seventeen Thousand Two Hundred Forty Dollars ($17,240.00) in any month during the term of this AGREEMENT unless an increase is granted pursuant to paragraph 3 below, or otherwise as approved by County based upon the terms and conditions of this Agreement. The parties agree and represent that the amount of compensation has been established after consideration of the facts set forth in California Penal Code § 987.3 and further recognize that circumstances such as those referred to in Paragraphs 4 and 5 may require changes in the total amount of compensation. COUNTY and CONTRACTORS agree to re-negotiate the total sum to be paid to CONTRACTORS hereunder if in the event CONTRACTORS are required to make Court appearances for new programs which no regular Court appearances are required at the time of the execution of this Agreement. By way of example only, if a new program is added to the judicial system, which requires CONTRACTOR to appear in Court on Monday, in addition to the then current appearances on Wednesday and Thursday, this clause will be invoked. However, should the Court simply move Thursday court to Monday, with no additional days requiring court appearances, this clause shall not be invoked.

County will make available to the Superior Court the sum of Five Thousand Dollars ($5,000) for each fiscal year during the term of this Agreement to be used for investigative purposes as determined by the Court. No funds will be accessed by Contractor for investigative expenses without the prior written approval of the Court. In the event investigative expenses which are approved by the Court exceed the sum of Five Thousand Dollars ($5,000) during any fiscal
year of this Agreement, Contractor shall be solely responsible for those sums
over and above Five Thousand Dollars ($5,000) for that fiscal year only.

3. This Agreement shall be for a term of four (4) years, ten (10) months,
and fourteen (14) days, commencing on August 17, 2001, and terminating on
June 30, 2006, unless earlier extended by mutual agreement of the parties.
COUNTY shall have the option to extend the term of this AGREEMENT for one
(1) three (3) year term. Should COUNTY elect to extend this AGREEMENT
CONTRACTORS shall be notified in writing sixty (60) days prior to the expiration
of the initial term, or any extended term. In the event of any extensions
hereunder the parties shall mutually agree upon the following annual contract
price.

4. COUNTY shall receive all funds collected pursuant to Penal Code §§
987.4, 987.6, and 987.8, Government Code § 27712, and any similar statute
providing for reimbursement for the cost of legal services rendered under this
Agreement, and no portion of the funds shall inure to CONTRACTORS’ benefit or
otherwise affect the amount specified in Paragraph 2 above.

5. This Agreement shall not apply to cases governed by California Penal
Code § 987.9,"Capital Cases", nor shall it apply to costs for investigators in
Homicide cases where the Court has approved extraordinary expenses.

6. In addition to the sum specified in Paragraph 2 above, CONTRACTOR
shall be reimbursed for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred in
representing criminal defendants in matters where venue has been changed
outside the County of Mariposa.

7. Each CONTRACTOR shall maintain a full-time office within the
County of Mariposa and shall insure that all attorneys performing legal services
under this Agreement are members of the California State Bar in good standing
and have the qualifications required in the Request for Proposals which preceded
this AGREEMENT or its predecessor. Each CONTRACTOR shall maintain a
telephone answering service or device for the taking of telephone messages
during non-business hours. In-custody clients shall be interviewed within thirty-
six (36) hours of CONTRACTOR’S appointment. Out-of-custody clients shall be
interviewed within seventy-two (72) hours of CONTRACTOR’S appointment.

8. CONTRACTORS shall develop eligibility guidelines for the purpose of
determining individual person’s financial eligibility for indigent representation.
CONTRACTORS shall obtain from each and every person he/she is appointed to
represent, a completed questionnaire verifying the person’s eligibility for indigent
representation services. Failure to perform this requirement shall constitute a
material breach of this AGREEMENT.

9. In performing the duties herein specified, each CONTRACTOR is and
shall be an independent contractor and not an employee of the COUNTY.
CONTRACTORS will be responsible to COUNTY for only the good faith
performance of this Agreement in conformity with the Rules of Professional
Conduct of the State Bar of California and not for the specific manner in which
his/her duties are performed or his/her professional judgment exercised. Because
each CONTRACTOR is an independent contractor, it shall be his/her sole and
absolute responsibility to comply with all federal, state and local statutes,
regulations and ordinances respecting this Agreement.

10. The parties recognize that ethics considerations, such as those
referred to in the Rules of Professional Conduct, may prohibit CONTRACTORS
from accepting some appointments that would otherwise be included within this
Agreement’s caseload.

Upon discovery of a conflict of interest or other ethical
consideration which precludes further representation, CONTRACTOR shall
immediately notify the affected client(s) and move the court to be relieved as
counsel.
11. CONTRACTORS, as independent contractors, shall be solely responsible for providing all office furniture, equipment, supplies, secretaries, clerks, attorneys, in-house investigators, and other persons necessary to performing this Agreement, including any professional education and expenses, except experts, expert witness fees, court reporter fees, filing fees, transcript fees, and witness fees paid out of the court’s budget. In the event of a conflict in the performance by CONTRACTORS’ investigator, CONTRACTORS shall request additional sums from the Court with which to retain investigative services.

12. A) CONTRACTORS hereby individually indemnify and hold COUNTY, its officers and its employees absolutely harmless from any and all liability, cost, or expense whatsoever arising out of, or pertaining to, this Agreement and shall defend at no cost to COUNTY or COUNTY’S officers or employees, any such action brought against COUNTY, its officers or its employees.

B) During the term of this Agreement, each CONTRACTOR shall carry professional malpractice insurance in a minimum amount of $750,000, insuring CONTRACTOR against all claims arising out of CONTRACTORS’ services performed hereunder. CONTRACTORS shall provide COUNTY with proof of insurance required herein upon execution of this Agreement by CONTRACTORS.

C) Each CONTRACTOR shall notify COUNTY, in writing, within ten (10) working days of receipt by CONTRACTOR of a claim or allegation of ineffective representation by CONTRACTOR arising out of services provided hereunder by CONTRACTOR.

13. Upon the termination of this Agreement, CONTRACTORS shall cooperate fully with COUNTY and with such persons as may be designated by COUNTY to succeed CONTRACTORS in order to effect the orderly transition of legal services from CONTRACTORS to his/her successor. The cooperation
specified in this Paragraph includes, but is not limited to, the releasing of such files, papers and records as may be required to carry out the provisions of this Agreement and any subsequent agreement with a successor contractor and to ensure the continued adequate legal representation of persons eligible for the services herein set forth.

14. Each CONTRACTOR shall maintain all files and records for each case for which services are provided under this Agreement for at least ten (10) years following the last date CONTRACTOR rendered services pursuant to this Agreement, unless such files are assigned to successor counsel. CONTRACTORS shall have access to his/her files as necessary and COUNTY guarantees the confidentiality and protection of such files. Neither the COUNTY nor any other person or entity shall be permitted access to any such files without the written consent of CONTRACTOR, or court order. Prior to closing each case, CONTRACTOR shall notify the client of the requirements of this clause.

15. CONTRACTORS shall provide for the maintenance of quality representation of indigent defendants consistent with constitutional and professional standards. Federal and state constitutions require provision of competent counsel in criminal cases. In California, the benchmark adopted test for determining competency of counsel in criminal cases is that of a reasonably competent attorney acting as a diligent, conscientious advocate. (People v. Pope, 23 Cal.3d 412 [1979]).

CONTRACTORS agree to provide competent legal services in conformity with the above standard, or with standards as modified by more recent legislation or case law. Specifically, the following duties and responsibilities of counsel as set forth in prior court decisions and professional standards will be observed. These include:

A. Duty of careful factual and legal investigation. (See People v. Ibarra, 60 Cal.2d 460 [1963]) (duty to research the law and raise settled
objections); In re Saunders, 2 Cal.2d 1033 [1970] (duty to investigate medical reports and conduct psychiatric examinations to support a diminished capacity defense); ABA Standards on the Defense Function (hereinafter referred to as "ABA Standards", Section 4.1).

B. Duty to take prompt action to protect a client's legal rights. (ABA Standards, Section 3.6a [includes procedural steps such as moving for pretrial release, obtaining psychiatric examination, moving for change of venue or continuance, suppression of illegally obtained evidence, severance from jointly charged defendants, or dismissal.]).

C. Duty to keep the client informed. (ABA Standards, Section 3.8).

D. Duty to prepare for jury selection, examination of witnesses, submission of instructions and presentation of argument at trial. (See ABA Standards, Section 7.2(a) and 7.2(b));

E. Duty to know and explore sentencing alternatives. (ABA Standards, Section 8.1(b)).

F. Duty to advise concerning appeals. (ABA Standards, Section 8.2(a)).

G. Duty not to accept more cases than can be competently handled. (See Martin v. State Bar, 20 Cal.3d 717 [1978]).

H. Duty not to handle a legal matter which the lawyer knows or should know that he/she is not competent to handle. (ABA, Code of Professional Responsibility, Canon 6, Disciplinary Rule No. 6-101 (a)).

I. Duty to maintain client confidences and secrets.

16. The fees of attorneys appointed to represent persons who CONTRACTORS' cannot represent because of a conflict of interest shall not constitute a charge against any sums to which CONTRACTORS are otherwise entitled pursuant to this Agreement. CONTRACTORS shall not decline to
represent any eligible person except for a conflict of interest for disqualification recognized by the Court.

17. All matters to which CONTRACTORS have been appointed prior to the termination of this Agreement shall be completed by CONTRACTORS notwithstanding the termination of this Agreement. CONTRACTORS acknowledge that services rendered by CONTRACTORS to complete matters pending at the termination of this Agreement shall not entitle CONTRACTORS to any fees beyond the annual payment due CONTRACTORS pursuant to Paragraph 2 above.

18. Should any clause, paragraph or language in this Agreement be held to be void, unenforceable, or unconstitutional, such clause, paragraph or language shall be stricken from this Agreement and the remainder of this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect the same as if such clause, paragraph or language had never been contained herein.

19. Neither this Agreement nor any of the rights, obligations or duties specified herein shall be assigned, transferred or delegated to any person without the prior written consent of COUNTY. CONTRACTOR shall neither assign nor transfer any interest in or to the proceeds of this Agreement. Any assignment, transfer or delegation in violation of this Paragraph shall be void.

20. This Agreement may not be modified or amended except by a written agreement signed by all the parties hereto.

21. Any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this Agreement which cannot be amicably settled without court action shall be litigated either in a state court in Mariposa County, California, or in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California. The rights and obligations of the parties and all interpretations and performance of this Agreement shall be governed in all respects by the laws of the State of California.
22. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between
CONTRACTORS and COUNTY with respect to the subject matter thereof and
supersedes all previous negotiations, proposals, commitments, writings,
advertisements, publications and understanding of any nature whatsoever unless
expressly included in this Agreement.

23. Any notices herein provided to be given by either PARTY to the
other shall be deemed to have been fully given when made in writing and
deposited in the United States mail, postage prepaid and addressed as follows:

    COUNTY: COUNTY OF MARIPOSA
c/o County Administrative Officer
    P.O. Box 784
    Mariposa, CA 95338

    CONTRACTOR: DAVID A. SMOTHERS, ATTORNEY AT LAW
    4983 8th Street; Suite "A"
    Mariposa, CA 95338

    CONTRACTOR: GARY L. COLLINGS, ATTORNEY AT LAW
    4983 8th Street; Suite "B"
    Mariposa, CA 95338

Nothing herein shall preclude the giving of any notice by personal service.

24. The COUNTY may terminate this Agreement as to any
CONTRACTOR performing services hereunder upon a thirty (30) day written
notice in the event of a breach by a CONTRACTOR of any of the terms and
conditions contained in this Agreement.

25. While some of the duties of CONTRACTORS hereunder would be
the duties of a Public Defender in a County served by a Public Defender, all
parties hereto understand and agree that CONTRACTORS are not a Public
Defender as described in California Government Code § 27700, et seq.

26. In the event any CONTRACTOR ceases to perform services
hereunder or is removed by COUNTY, COUNTY shall replace CONTRACTOR with
a qualified attorney.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement in duplicate on the day and year below written.

COUNTY OF MARIPosa:

[Signature]  DATE: 10-18-01
DOUG BALMAIN, Chair
Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

[Signature]  JEFFREY G. GREEN
MARGIE WILLIAMS  County Counsel
Clerk of the Board

CONTRACTORS:

[Signature]  DATE: 10-24-01
DAVID A. SMOTHERS
Attorney at Law

[Signature]  Date: 10-25-01
GARY L. COLLINGS
Attorney at Law
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement in duplicate on the day and year below written.

COUNTY OF MARIPosa:

DOUG BALMAIN, Chair
Board of Supervisors

DATE: 16-18-01

ATTEST:

MARGIE WILLIAMS
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM
AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

JEFFREY G. GREEN
County Counsel

CONTRACTORS:

_________________________ DATE: ______________________

DAVID A. SMOTHERS
Attorney at Law

_________________________ Date: ______________________

GARY L. COLLINGS
Attorney at Law
EXHIBIT "A"

1. Represent all persons whom the court has deemed indigent and who are charged with the commission of any felony or misdemeanor when appointed by a judge of the Mariposa County Court. Represent juveniles in all 300 and 600 Welfare and Institutions Code Petitions.

2. Represent any and all level 2 conflict defendants whom the court has deemed indigent and who are charged with the commission of any felony or misdemeanor when appointed by a judge of the Mariposa County Court.

3. Represent all persons requesting counsel and for whom counsel is appointed under Division 4 (Section 1400 et seq.) of the Probate Code (Guardianships and Conservatorships).

4. Represent persons in pretrial extraordinary writs and appeals to the Superior Court, related to accusations referred to in Paragraphs 1 and 2 above, provided that CONTRACTOR may decline appellate appointments when he has represented the client in related trial court proceedings. CONTRACTOR will in all cases assist client in perfecting client’s right to appeal.

The CONTRACTOR shall be required to represent individuals under Government Code § 27706(f), except for capital cases, as required by the trial court with respect to conditions of detention, of restriction prior to adjudication, or of treatment or punishment in criminal or juvenile proceedings only when appointed by the court. The CONTRACTOR shall not be required to represent persons in proceedings for modification of conditions of probation without the court’s consent.