



MARIPOSA COUNTY

Human Services/Social Services • (209) 966-2000



RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2015-370

MEETING: July 21, 2015

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Chevon Kothari, Human Services Director

RE: Professional Service Agreement with John LaLonde

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Approve the Professional Service Agreement with John LaLonde to provide legal services for Mariposa County Human Services in an amount not to exceed \$15,000; and authorize the Board of Supervisors Chair to sign the Agreement.

It is the goal of Child Welfare to work with families to prevent removal; however, in cases of abandonment, imminent danger, and/or sexual molestation, there is a need to remove children from the adults who are abusing them. Such action requires that we bring the matter before the Juvenile Court. Three separate court proceedings (detention, jurisdiction, and disposition) are involved. All parties in court are represented by counsel, including the child and the parents. The Department must have qualified legal representation to be able to act in the best interest of the child and to do so in a manner that is lawful and prevents civil litigation to the greatest extent possible. The laws surrounding Child Welfare are complex. It is difficult for most counties to find quality legal representation.

John LaLonde can also provide paralegal services for the Public Guardian/Conservator unit currently housed in the Behavioral Health Division of Human Services. He has the expertise to support our staff in accurately preparing or reviewing documents for the court.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

The current Professional Service Agreement with John LaLonde to provide legal services for the Human Services Department was approved by the Board on June 10, 2014 by Resolution 2014-259. This service was provided by others in the past and is a vital component of department services.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

If the Board does not approve the Agreement, the department will not have access to Mr. LaLonde's legal representation or legal expertise for child welfare cases.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Funding in the amount of \$15,000 has been included in the 2015/16 Requested Budget for Social Services.

There is no impact to the County General Fund.

ATTACHMENTS:

LaLonde PSA 2016 - Vendor Assurance (PDF)

CAO RECOMMENDATION

Requested Action Recommended

Mary Hodson

Mary Hodson, CAO

7/14/2015

RESULT: ADOPTED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Marshall Long, District III Supervisor

SECONDER: Kevin Cann, District IV Supervisor

AYES: Rosemarie Smallcombe, Merlin Jones, Marshall Long, Kevin Cann

EXCUSED: John Carrier