



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**City Commission Agenda Memo**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

**#24-0579**

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**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members of the  
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

**FROM:** Thomas J. Ansbro, City Attorney

**DATE:** June 18, 2024

**TITLE:** Resolution Increasing the Compensation to be Paid to Special Counsel,  
Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman, P.L., and Carmen Rodriguez, P.A.,  
for Legal Services for Labor and Employment Matters and Related Litigation  
and Appeals - **(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

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**Recommendation**

The City Attorney recommends the City Commission adopt a resolution increasing the hourly fees and compensation to Special Counsel, Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman, P.L., and Carmen Rodriguez, P.A., for legal services for labor and employment matters and related litigation and appeals.

**Background**

On May 16, 2017, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 17-103, reappointing Carmen Rodriguez, P.A., as special counsel for labor and employment matters and related litigation and appeals, and prescribing hourly rates of \$250.00 for partners, \$200.00 for associates, and \$95.00 for paralegals, plus actual reasonable expenses subject to the City Attorney's approval.

On March 6, 2018, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 18-35, appointing Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman, P.L., as special counsel for labor and employment matters and related litigation and appeals, and prescribing hourly rates of \$250.00 for partners and members, \$200.00 for associates, and \$95.00 for paralegals, plus actual reasonable expenses subject to the City Attorney's approval.

On July 5, 2022, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 22-146, increasing the prescribed hourly rates for Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman, P.L., and Carmen Rodriguez, P.A., from \$250.00 per hour to \$300.00 per hour for partners, and from \$200.00 per hour to \$250.00 per hour for associates, with paralegals remaining at \$95.00 per hour.

The City Attorney's Office has determined that in order to retain the specialized services of the aforementioned counsel in the competitive legal market, it would be appropriate and recommended to increase special labor and employment counsel's hourly rates for

both Weiss Serota and Carmen Rodriguez, P.A. from \$300.00 per hour to \$350.00 per hour for partners, with associates remaining at \$250.00 per hour and paralegals remaining at \$95.00 per hour.

**Resource Impact**

The fees and expenses for the special counsel, in the amount of \$100,000.00, will be included in and funded from the FY 2024 Budget in the account listed below:

<i>Funds available as of May 29, 2024</i>					
ACCOUNT NUMBER	INDEX NAME (Program)	CHARACTER CODE/ SUB-OBJECT NAME	AMENDED BUDGET (Character)	AVAILABLE BALANCE (Character)	AMOUNT
10-001-1202-514-30-3119	City Attorney	Services/ Materials/ Legal Services	\$1,309,781	\$828,810	\$100,000
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT ►</b>					\$100,000

**Attachment**

Exhibit 1 – Resolution

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Prepared by: Eric W. Abend, Senior Assistant City Attorney, City Attorney’s Office

Charter Officer: Thomas J. Ansbro, City Attorney