



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:21-3853

Agenda Item Number: 31B.

Agenda Date: 5/20/2021

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Human Resources

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Renee Frieda, Human Resources Director Interim

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT: City of San Antonio Council Aides Corporation Interlocal Agreement

SUMMARY:

This Ordinance authorizes the City to enter in to an Interlocal Agreement with the City of San Antonio Council Aides Corporation to provide for the employment of City Council aides to include the provision of compensation and benefits. The Interlocal Agreement will remain in effect until mutually terminated.

Immediately following City Council action, the Council will recess and convene the organizational meeting of the City of San Antonio Council Aides Corporation to approve Bylaws and an Interlocal Agreement. Following action of the Corporation, the Corporation will adjourn and the City Council will resume in A session.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On August 9, 2019, a City Council Consideration Request was submitted by Councilman Trevino regarding City Council staff compensation. As part of the FY 2020 budget process, City Council appropriated \$870,284 for a City Council staff policy discussion with any recommendations to be effective February 1, 2020. During a Governance Committee meeting on October 16, 2019, Mayor Nirenberg appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on City Council Staff Compensation, including Councilmember Adrianna Rocha Garcia as Chair and consisting of Council members Roberto Treviño, Ana Sandoval, and John Courage.

The Department of Human Resources facilitated a classification and compensation review, and drafted job descriptions. The Ad Hoc Committee approved the use of a third-party consultant to view

the draft job descriptions and information gathered to make pay range recommendations. After review and discussion by the Ad Hoc Committee, pay ranges and job descriptions were adopted by Council on January 30, 2020.

After completing the compensation work, the Ad Hoc Committee began work to review benefits provided to Council Aides. The Council Aide medical plan format was modified in June 2020 to provide improved dependent coverage and the portion of the cost paid by the City was designed to closely match the City cost sharing that is provided to civilian employees.

As the Committee studied options for retirement benefits, the creation of a Local Government Corporation (LGC) to help facilitate the provision of pension benefits was explored along with other options. Further evaluation resulted in an interpretation by the Texas Municipal Retirement System (TMRS) that employment by the LGC could be treated as a department of the City and would qualify the Council Aides for TMRS participation. Staff reevaluated the medical plan participation from the perspective of the LGC and found that employment through the LGC would also qualify the Council Aides for participation in the City's self-funded medical plans.

The City of San Antonio Council Aides Corporation was organized solely for the purpose of aiding and acting on behalf of the City to accomplish certain governmental purposes of the City, specifically to provide for the employment of city council aides with regular employment benefits. Through this structure, compensation and benefits are being provided to City Council Aides that are comparable to that of City civilian employees. The attached Interlocal Agreement outlines the agreement between the City of San Antonio and the City of San Antonio Council Aides Corporation related to compensation, benefits, administrative functions, and process.

The City of San Antonio Council Aides Corporation is governed by a board made up of the members of the City Council of the City of San Antonio. The City's Assistant to City Council shall serve as Executive Director of the Corporation, who shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Corporation and shall exercise such powers and perform such duties as shall be determined from time to time by the Board. Funding for the LGC will come from the City's General Fund budgeted amounts currently paying for Council Aides.

ISSUE:

Mayor and Council requested a review to ensure Council staff pay and benefits were equitable between districts and across the City organization while continuing to retain staffing flexibility to best serve the needs of constituents. City Council Aides have worked as direct employees of each individual Councilmember which has made it difficult to efficiently provide employment benefits to them. Approval of this interlocal agreement will allow for the City of San Antonio Council Aides Corporation to act as employer for the City Council Aides promoting efficiency in services and allowing for Council Aide benefits. Council Aides will be able to enjoy the same medical and retirement benefits as the City's civilian employees.

ALTERNATIVES:

If the interlocal agreement is not approved, the council aides will remain employees of the individual council members and will not be eligible for participation in the City's health benefits or be eligible for participation in the Texas Municipal Retirement System. Medical benefits would be bid each year with frequent plan and provider changes due to the small group size. Retirement benefits would continue to be provided through matches to individual IRAs with low contribution limits.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The City budget provides for the employment of city council aides. Passage of the Interlocal Agreement between the City of San Antonio and the City of San Antonio Council Aides Corporation will result in enhanced benefits for City Council Aides. The FY 2022 budget will include additional funds in the City Council district budgets to support the implementation of benefits outlined in the interlocal agreement (revised May 19, 2021).

RECOMMENDATION:

Human Resources department staff recommends approval of this Ordinance to execute a Interlocal Agreement between the City of San Antonio and the City of San Antonio Council Aides Corporation subject to and contingent upon funding by City Council.