



Rent Stabilization Board

DATE: June 15, 2023

TO: Honorable Members of the Rent Stabilization Board

FROM: DéSeana Williams, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Recommendation to adopt Resolution 23-16 authorizing the Executive Director to amend the contract with Brian Augusta & Associates for legislative advocacy services by extending the term through July 31, 2023, and increasing the contract by an amount not to exceed \$7,000

Recommendation:

Adopt Resolution 23-16 authorizing the Executive Director to amend the contract with Brian Augusta & Associates for legislative advocacy services by extending the term through July 31, 2023, and increasing the contract by an amount not to exceed \$7,000.

Background and Need for Rent Stabilization Board Action:

Since 1984, the Rent Stabilization Board (Board) has contracted for legislative advocacy services in Sacramento. Such services are critical to the agency as they directly inform potential and proposed legislative measures that affect Berkeley's Rent Stabilization Ordinance and coordinate rental housing-related legislative issues.

The current contract with Mr. Augusta is \$5,000 per month or \$60,000 annually. The contract also calls for reimbursement of associated travel expenses. The additional amount set aside for these documented costs was \$1,000, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$60,000 for the fiscal year 2022/2023.

For nearly a decade, Brian Augusta (dba Brian Augusta & Associates) has served as the Board's legislative advocate and has done an excellent job.

In May 2023, to align with best practices, staff released an invitation to bid for Legislative Advocacy Services for the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board (Specification No. 23-11605-C), extending an opportunity for the most qualified and responsive firm to provide legislative and advocacy support for the Board. The due date for the proposals was on June 8, 2023. An amendment allows sufficient time for staff to review the submissions while ensuring uninterrupted legislative support to the Board.

Mr. Augusta's firm has agreed to continue to provide the following types of services for the Rent Board through July 30, 2023:

- Regular Legislative Updates – Throughout the legislative session, the Board will receive written reports identifying and explaining the many different pieces of legislation affecting rent control and rental housing.
- Rent Board Updates – The Board will receive periodic oral updates from Brian Augusta & Associates at televised Board meetings for the broadest dissemination of current legislative events. Mr. Augusta will attend several Board meetings each year to provide comprehensive reports to the Board.
- RSB Staff Updates – Brian Augusta & Associates will meet with Program staff to discuss our operations and proposed legislation to ensure that we appropriately respond to situations as they may develop in Sacramento and Berkeley via Sacramento. He will also provide feedback from Sacramento regarding ways to administer the program in a manner that is responsive to legislative concerns.
- Statewide Coordination – Mr. Augusta has similar legislative advocacy contracts with other California rent control cities and assists the Board with periodic statewide coordination efforts that may be appropriate for dealing with proposed and/or adopted legislation.
- Research – When necessary, Brian Augusta & Associates will conduct or disseminate research on the economic and social factors which affect landlords and tenants in California and thus affect our Legislative agenda.

The Rent Board has utilized the services of a legislative advocate for many years to provide highly time-consuming and detailed work in Sacramento with legislators and their staff members to protect the interests of Berkeley's Rent Ordinance and Regulations.

Financial Impact:

There are sufficient funds in the Fiscal Year 2022/2023 budget to extend Mr. Augusta's contract through July 31, 2023, increasing the amount not to exceed \$7,000. Staff will return to the Board in July 2023 to make a recommendation for FY 2023/24 legislative advocacy services.

Name and Telephone Number of Contact Person:

DéSeana Williams, Executive Director (510) 981-7368

RESOLUTION 23-16

AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT MODIFICATION WITH BRIAN AUGUSTA & ASSOCIATES THROUGH JULY 31, 2023 IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$7,000

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Rent Stabilization Board of the City of Berkeley as follows:

WHEREAS, since 1984, the Board has contracted for legislative advocacy services in order to protect the integrity of the rent and eviction protections repeatedly enacted by Berkeley voters; and

WHEREAS, Brian Augusta & Associates has worked closely on rent control and affordable housing for nearly a decade, doing research and advocacy on issues of concern to the Board; and

WHEREAS, a need continues to exist for legislative advocacy service and Brian Augusta & Associates has the expertise and direct involvement in rent control and tenant issues to provide this service; and

WHEREAS, the Board has been extremely pleased with the excellent services provided by Brian Augusta & Associates and wishes to have them continue to register as the lobbyist for the Board; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City of Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to extend the contract with Brian Augusta & Associates to represent the City of Berkeley Rent Stabilization in Sacramento on rent control issues through July 31, 2023, in an amount not to exceed \$7,000. The new total amount payable under this contract shall not exceed \$495,000.

Dated: June 15, 2023

Adopted by the Rent Stabilization Board of the City of Berkeley by the following vote:

YES:

NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Leah Simon-Weisberg, Chair
Rent Stabilization Board

Attest: _____
DéSeana Williams, Executive Director