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COUNTY OF ERIE

CHRISTOPHER L. JACOBS
COUNTY CLERK

September 25, 2012

The Honorable
Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

RE: Erie County Clerk – Accounting Review/Registrar Division

Dear Honorable Members:

The Erie County Clerk is requesting authorization for Erie County to enter into a contract with Tronconi Segarra & Associates to conduct an external accounting review of the Clerk's Registrar Division for the period January 2011 through September 2012.

In accordance with Section 19.08 of the Erie County Administrative Code, an RFP was issued and Tronconi Segarra & Associates was selected as the most qualified firm among the responders. Funds to cover this contract are available from identified funds within the Clerk's 2012 Budget.

Should your Honorable Body require further information, representatives from the Clerk's Office will be available to discuss. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER L. JACOBS
Erie County Clerk

Attachment

ERIE COUNTY HALL • 92 FRANKLIN STREET • BUFFALO, N.Y. • 14202 • PHONE: (716) 858-8865 • FAX: (716) 858-6550

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Christopher L. Jacobs, Erie County Clerk
Re: Erie County Clerk – Accounting Review/Registrar Division
Date: **September 25, 2012**

SUMMARY

Authorization is requested to allow Erie County Office to enter into an agreement with Tronconi Segarra & Associates to conduct an external accounting review of the Clerk's Registrar Division. In accordance with Section 19.08 of the Erie County Administrative Code, an RFP was issued and Tronconi Segarra & Associates was selected as the most qualified firm among the responders. See attached Rating Sheets.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

None. Funds to cover this agreement have been identified within the County Clerk's 2012 Budget.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Since the beginning of 2012, focus has been directed at improving processes and accountability within the Clerk's Office. As part of this on-going initiative, we believe it would be beneficial to engage a firm to conduct an external accounting review of our cash receipts and disbursements. Focus of the review will be on design and effectiveness of internal controls and recommendations on best practices and process improvements.

Funds to cover this contract are available from identified funds within the Clerk's 2012 Budget.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Registrar Division is responsible for recording, filing and maintaining a central repository of legal documents and records affecting property titles, including land and real estate transactions, those related to corporate filings, assumed names, and, as Clerk of the Supreme and County Courts, all court pleadings and papers.

Fees are mandated by state and local law. The operations of the Clerk's Office garner revenue primarily from recording, filing or processing the various legal records and documents, and for services provided by the Registrar Division, such as copying and certifying the records maintained as public records in the Clerk's Office. More specifically, the Clerk's Office, as an agent of the state, collects mortgage and real estate transfer taxes that are then apportioned between the state, state agencies, the County, and cities, towns and villages located within Erie County. Recording fees, filing fees, licensing fees and fees such as criminal surcharges and fines paid to the Division are divided between various state agencies, such as the New York State Department of Education, the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance, the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA), the Unified Court System, and the Niagara Frontier Transportation Agency (NFTA). The funds required for expenses of the office, administrative costs, and New York State document and record retention requirements are drawn from the

County general fund, into which the balance of revenues collected by the Division are deposited. The Division processes an average of 17,000 transactions monthly, and records related cash receipts of approximately $60 million annually. The Clerk's Office maintains five (5) separate bank accounts.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

The Clerk will not be able to secure the services of an outside agency to complete the review. We will not be able to obtain an independent assessment of internal controls or recommendations for changes or improvements.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

An agreement will be drawn up between Erie County and Tronconi Segarra & Associates and work will begin once fully executed. A copy of the final report will be filed with the Legislature.

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
ERIE COUNTY CLERK

RE: Erie County Clerk – Accounting Review/Registrar Division

WHEREAS, the Erie County Clerk Registrar's Division is responsible for recording, filing and maintaining a central repository of legal documents and records affecting property titles, including land and real estate transactions, those related to corporate filings, assumed names, and, as Clerk of the Supreme and County Courts, all court pleadings and papers; and

WHEREAS, fees are mandated by state and local law; and

WHEREAS, the Registrar Division processes an average of 17,000 transactions monthly, and records related cash receipts of approximately $60 million annually maintaining five (5) separate bank accounts; and

WHEREAS, the Clerk's Office knows that adequate internal controls are essential over the collection and transmittal of revenue; and

WHEREAS the request for proposal provision of Section 19.08 of the Erie County Administrative Code was complied with and a summary of the process is included as included as Attachment A to this resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature does hereby authorize the County Executive to enter into an agreement with Tronconi Segarra & Associates to perform services through the Erie County Clerk's Office for a review of cash collections and disbursements within the Registrar Divisions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the following funds have been identified within the 2012 Budget to fund this contract:

Erie County Clerk, Business Area 113 – Fund 110

Registrar Division – Fund Center 11310

Revenue	
466090 Misc Trust Fund Revenues	$ 7,156.44
466000 Misc Receipts	$17,843.56
	$25,000.00
Expense	**Increase**
516020 Prof Svcs Contracts & Fees	$25,000.00

and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to the County Executive, the County Clerk, the Director of Budget and Management, the Department of Law, and the County Comptroller.

Rating Matrix - RFP #1228VF

RFP to Conduct Externmal Accounting Review of Cash REceipts/Revenue Collections

Rate Using Score of 1-10, with 10 being most favorable	Dopkins	Toski	Chaimpou	Tronconi	Dansa & D'Arta
Proposer's background, experience and resources meets County needs	25	34	30	36	19
Completeness of response - adequately outlined services to be provided	23	30	28	35	17
Price	22	15	30	28	24
Technology Resources	19	24	24	31	17
TOTAL	89	103	112	130	77