

**COUNTY OF SONOMA  
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY REPORT**

Clerk of the Board Use Only  
 Meeting Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Held Until: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
 Agenda Item No: \_\_\_\_\_ Agenda Item No: \_\_\_\_\_

**Department:** Human Resources

( ) **4/5 Vote Required**

**Contact:**  
Sonja Rhoades

**Phone:**  
(707) 565-2318

**Board Date:**  
4/28/09

**Deadline for Board Action:**

**Agenda Short Title:**  
Executive Search Services Agreement

**Requested Board Action:**  
Authorize the Director of Human Resources to execute agreements for executive search services with Avery and Associates, not to exceed a cumulative total of \$100,000, for a period of one year effective April 1, 2009.

**CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT**

<u><b>Expenditures</b></u>		<u><b>Add'l Funds Requiring Board Approval</b></u>	
Estimated Cost	\$ 12,000	Contingencies (Fund Name: )	\$
Amount Budgeted	\$	Unanticipated Revenue (Source: )	\$
Other Avail Approp (Explain below)	\$ _____	Other Transfer(s) (Source: )	\$ _____
<b>Additional Requested:</b>	<b>\$ 12,000</b>	<b>Add'l Funds Requested:</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

**Explanation (if required):** The current FY costs equate to the initial retainer fee and reimbursable expenses for one department head search in which an appointment is expected to be made approximately August 2009.

**Prior Board Action(s):** 8/12/08. Authorized Human Resources Director to execute agreements for Executive Search services with Avery and Associates not to exceed \$100,000, which entailed three department heads and Assistant County Administrator.

**Alternatives – Results of Non-Approval:** The immediate need of beginning the recruitment process to find a replacement for the retiring Information Systems Director will not take place resulting in this key position being vacant.

**Background:**

The Information Service Director has announced his retirement. The County needs to conduct a recruitment for this key position. The most prevalent best management recruitment practice in the public sector (private sector included) for hiring executive level positions is to use the services of executive search firms. This established practice is a result of search firms specialized knowledge of specific fields, and the complexity, time, and resources required to conduct an executive search. The typical vetting process the principal recruiter conducts for executive searches includes many meetings with the County Administrator, significant networking and personal contact with candidates and follow-up on referrals of candidates, an intensive and very thorough interview and referencing process with each individual who appears qualified, a thorough presentation of the most qualified candidates to the County Administrator, the coordination of the interview process such as interview panels, the County Administrator and in many cases the Board of Supervisors, and further references and job offer facilitation. Because an executive search is highly personalized, requires significant trust, and contact with the County Administrator, and in many cases the Board of Supervisors, the relationship and credibility of a recruiting firm, it's principals, and specifically, the assigned lead is critical. Executive searches are typically launched 4-6 months prior to the vacancy date.

Over the last couple of years, the County has anticipated several retirements at the Department Head level and as such the Human Resources Department researched executive search firms late 2007. Human Resources staff contacted several California executive search firms who had significant public sector experience and discussed with principals at these firms their recruitment processes, their work samples, history of placements, fees, availability, and interest level. (The fee structure and costs per search were virtually identical between these firms.) After this process, the Board agreed that Avery and Associates was the most appropriate firm to use. Since early 2008, Avery has conducted four searches, one of which is still in progress (Assistant County Administrator). Avery has been successful in the three completed searches and the County Administrator and Human Resources Director have been pleased with the work Avery and Associates has done thus far and recommends continuing to work with them.

However, the authority granted by your Board on August 12, 2008 to the Human Resources Director to execute agreements with Avery and Associates has expired. To be compliant with the County's purchasing policy, Human Resources is again asking for the Board's authority to execute further agreements with Avery and Associates. The request for authorization for up to \$100,000 will allow for the recruitment of the Information Systems Director and up to three more searches and agreements if additional needs at the Department Head level arise between now and April 2010. The authorization amount is based on fees for services and will not be used unless recruitments are requested.

Although the Recruitment and Classification Division's recruitment workload is down due to budget issues, this division is still conducting recruitments, administers the County's layoff process, conducts classification studies of which there is large backlog that are being worked on, and performs many other ancillary duties. Human Resources anticipates the division will be heavily impacted by layoff proceedings June-August which is the primary recruiting period for Information Services Director. Additionally, the analyst staff in this division is primarily new and not yet working at the full working level and the manager is on a leave of absence. Given these circumstances, the importance of hiring an Information Systems Director, and the time and resources required to conduct an executive search, the Human Resources Director and County Administrator would not recommend that the Recruitment and Classification Division conduct the recruitment for Information Systems Director.

**Recommendation:**

Authorize the Director of Human Resources to execute agreements for executive search services with Avery and Associates, not to exceed a cumulative total of \$100,000, for a period of one year effective April 1, 2009.

**Attachments:**

**On File With Clerk:** Agreement

**CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY**

**Board Action** (If other than "Requested")

**Vote:**

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_____	
_____	