

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

APPROVED
JAN 30 2006

NO. 06-26

DATE January 30, 2006

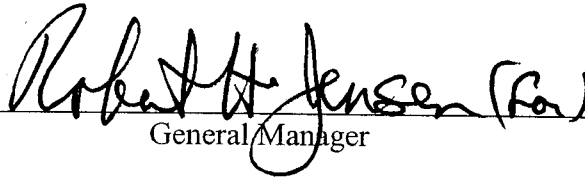
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**BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS**

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY – AMENDMENT TO PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACT NO. 3175 WITH JEFF YANA FOR THE INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE, AND OPTIMIZIMATION OF SERVERS AND RENDERING CAPACITY FOR ASTRONOMICAL VISUALIZATIONS FOR THE PLANETARIUM SHOW

*B. Jensen	_____	H. Fujita	_____
M. Shull	_____	J. Kolb	_____
F. Mok	_____	K. Regan	_____
S. Huntley	_____	J. Combs	_____



 General Manager

Approved

Disapproved

Withdrawn

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve an amendment to personal services contract No. 3175 with Jeff Yana, substantially in the form attached, for additional expert systems assistance related to the graphics software and rendering systems and hardware used in development of the Griffith Observatory Planetarium Show, extending the termination of the contract from March 3, 2006, to May 31, 2006, and increasing the contract amount from \$40,000.00 to \$70,000.00, subject to approval of the Mayor and review and approval by the City Attorney as to form;
2. Find, pursuant to Charter Section 1022, that the Department does not have personnel available in its employ with sufficient expertise to undertake these specialized professional tasks in a timely manner, and that these services can be performed more feasibly by a qualified independent contractor than by a City employee;
3. Direct the Board Secretary to transmit the proposed amendment to the Mayor in accordance with Executive Directive No. 3, and concurrently to the City Attorney for review and approval as to form; and,
4. Authorize the President and Secretary to execute the amendment upon receipt of necessary approvals.

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SUMMARY:

The Griffith Observatory will reopen in 2006 with the new state-of-the-art Samuel Oschin Planetarium theater. A laser-projected, all-dome video system with the capability to show high-definition 3-D video will replace the antiquated 35 mm slide system removed in 2002. A team of graphics specialists, 3-D animators, compositors, modelers, and production staff, funded in part by the Department and in part by the Friends Of The Observatory (FOTO), are working on the premiere show for the planetarium. The Department has undertaken the purchase of high quality, state-of-the-art graphics workstations, graphics software used in the most sophisticated current commercial animation motion pictures, and computer capacity to render complex five- and six-camera animated sequences. The specialized servers and other computer equipment necessary to draw, animate, composite, and ultimately render into final form the planetarium show are unique to the motion picture industry and require expert knowledge for installation and regular monitoring to increase efficiency.

Among the staffing resources which have been budgeted at the Observatory are a Systems Programmer and a Systems Analyst II, who are intended to work on applications, networking, and personal computer support, for the planetarium show production studio, for the exhibit program, for the ticketing system, and for general operating assistance. Based on the specialized and non-permanent systems needs in support of the premiere planetarium show production, staff recommended and the Board approved a personal services contract with Jeff Yana to provide expert services to: train staff on daily operations, assist in installation of addition of rendering capacity added as the production accelerates toward final rendering, and advise throughout the production on troubleshooting, enhancements, and efficiency improvements.

The initial contract term was set to expire on March 3, 2006, and the contract maximum was \$40,000.00. For several reasons, the workload has extended in both time and funding requirements. Production of the show has been drawn out as production of the emerging technology used in the new laser projection system, under purchase by FOTO, has taken longer than first estimated. This means a longer time until animators can see the show at the Griffith Observatory and make final changes before rendering the production. Delays in construction completion also affected the timetable for moving the specialized computer equipment from the Observatory satellite to the renovated Observatory's new animation studio. Delays in executing the contract led to a suspension of needed work until January 2006, and the hiring of the new Systems Analyst to be trained in basic understanding of the animation and rendering systems will not occur until early in 2006. For these reasons, Mr. Yana's services will almost certainly be needed for some period later than March 3, 2006, and some additional expenses will likely be incurred. In order to provide sufficient cushion, staff recommends extending the contract by about three months, and adding additional funds. The Department is under no obligation to expend more funds or utilize Mr. Yana's services to the maximum amount; use of his services under this agreement is on an as-needed basis.

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Mr. Yana was referred to the Observatory by a graphics animation specialist and is well-known in the local animation studio industry as an expert, with experience working with major studios, production houses, and vendors. He possesses multiple years' specialized experience in visual and special effects systems administration, applications, and network administration for effects rendering, all working in a cross-platform environment (Linux, Mac OSX, and Windows). He assisted the Observatory systems and graphics staff in designing an improved system, of which the servers, memory back-up, and rendering boxes were purchased with MICLA and other funds set aside for Observatory needs. His services to date have been excellent and essential.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The Department's Budget for fiscal year 2005-2006 includes \$553,124.00 in contractual services funds for the Observatory, much of which is planned for Planetarium show production expenses. Mr. Yana will be paid \$55 per hour on an as-needed basis when requested for assistance. Sufficient funds are available in Department 88, Fund 302, Contractual Services Account 3040, Activity 7800.

Report prepared by Linda Barth, Administrative Resource Division