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File #: 2016-337, Version: 1

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***City Council***

**MEETING DATE: 9/14/2016**

**TITLE:**

**Contract with the Lew Edwards Group for an Educational Campaign Regarding the Proposed City Ballot Measures**

**FROM:**

Charlie McClendon, City Manager

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the City Council ratify a contract with the Lew Edwards Group to develop an Education and Communication Campaign regarding the Proposed City Charter and Marijuana Tax Measures and approve the corresponding budget.

**BACKGROUND:**

At the August 24, 2016 Council Meeting, the City Manager was directed to engage the Lew Edwards Group to develop an Education and Communication Campaign regarding the proposed City Charter-Measure HH. The City Manager is now asking Council to ratify the contract with the Lew Edwards Group.

**DISCUSSION:**

The City has used a professional firm to provide an educational campaign on some previous ballot questions. The City cannot use public money to advocate for or against a City ballot measure, however educational materials can be provided regarding a Measure so that voters can make an informed decision.

A Council Subcommittee was formed to develop a budget for an education and communication campaign on both Measure HH and Measure P. After significant discussion with the Lew Edwards Group and the City Attorney, it is recommended that three mailings be completed to include all registered voters, as recommended by the City Attorney and Subcommittee, not just a subset of high propensity registered voters. This will provide education to a broader group of residents. As this adds an additional 4,000 units per mailing, the Not-to-Exceed cost of up to three mailings, the first being the most expensive is, \$40,000. The first mailing would be an 11x17 bookfold to allow room for a Question and Answer section and information on both measures, which would be done in mid-September. Then both the October mailings would be 9x12 cards, which is larger than originally anticipated due to the education pieces on both measures.

The City Manager was directed to engage the Lew Edwards Group immediately, which is \$25,000, but to meet with the selected council subcommittee and develop a budget for the education and communication campaign for the both measures. The Council Subcommittee and staff has now met with the Lew Edwards Group and the recommended budget to move forward is an amount not to exceed \$40,000, which will provide us with three bulk mailings to all registered voters in the city.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There are no funds budgeted for an educational campaign. A budget amendment transferring funds from reserves, in an amount not to exceed \$65,000 will be required once the contract is ratified and the budget is approved.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Contract