

Council Meeting of  
November 3, 2009

Honorable Mayor and Members  
of the Torrance City Council  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

**Members of the Council:**

**SUBJECT: City Attorney – Approve Fee Amendment for legal fees**

**Expenditure: \$30,000**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Recommendation of the City Attorney that the City Council approve the Second Amendment to Fee Agreement (C2008-211) with the law firm of Liebert Cassidy Whitmore to provide legal services in the matter of Nazir v. City of Torrance, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BS115581, for an additional \$30,000 for a contract total not to exceed amount of \$75,000.

Funding

Funding is available from the Police Department General Fund and the Self-Insurance Fund.

**BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

On August 27, 2008, the City Manager entered into Fee Agreement (Contract No. C2008-211) in an amount not to exceed \$25,000 with the law firm of Liebert Cassidy Whitmore to act as legal counsel on behalf of the City in the lawsuit of Nazir v. City of Torrance, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BS115581.

On May 5, 2009, the City Council approved a First Amendment to the Fee Agreement adding additional compensation for an amount not to exceed \$45,000. The law firm has advised the City that additional work is required to continue with this litigation in an additional amount of \$30,000 for a contract total not to exceed amount of \$75,000.

The City Attorney recommends that the City Council approve the Second Amendment to the Fee Agreement (Attachment A) with the law firm of Liebert Cassidy Whitmore in an amount not to exceed \$75,000.

Respectfully submitted,

John L. Fellows III  
City Attorney

By   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Alice Rusa  
Management Associate

CONCUR:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John L. Fellows III, City Attorney

NOTED:

*for*  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
LeRoy J. Jackson, City Manager

Attachment A) Second Amendment to Fee Agreement

## SECOND AMENDMENT TO FEE AGREEMENT FOR LEGAL SERVICES

This Second Amendment to Fee Agreement for legal services (“Amendment”) is made and entered into as of September 1, 2009, by and between the **CITY OF TORRANCE**, a municipal corporation (“CITY”), and **LIEBERT CASSIDY WHITMORE**, a professional corporation (“FIRM”).

### RECITALS:

- A. CITY and FIRM entered into a Fee Agreement for Legal Services (“Fee Agreement”) on August 27, 2008, in the amount of \$25,000. A copy of that Fee Agreement for Legal Services is attached as Exhibit A (Contract No. C2008-211)
- B. On May 5, 2009, the City Council approved a First Amendment to the Fee Agreement in an additional amount of \$20,000 for a total not to exceed amount of \$45,000. A copy of that First Amendment to Fee Agreement for Legal Services is attached as Exhibit B.
- C. FIRM advised that an additional \$30,000 is required to fund the litigation in this matter.

### AGREEMENT:

1. Section 2 entitled “FIRM’s Fee” is amended in its entirety to read:
2. FIRM’s Fee.  
For services rendered pursuant to this Second Amendment, FIRM will be paid in accordance with the Fee Agreement; provided, however, that in no event will the total amount of money paid the FIRM, for services contemplated by this Amendment, exceed the sum of **\$75,000.00** unless otherwise first approved in writing by CITY.

3. In all other respects, the Agreement dated August 27, 2008 and the First Amendment dated March 1, 2009 are ratified and reaffirmed and are in full force and effect.

CITY OF TORRANCE,  
a municipal corporation

LIEBERT CASSIDY WHITMORE  
a professional corporation

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Frank Scotto, Mayor

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Scott Tiedemann  
Partner

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sue Herbers, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JOHN L. FELLOWS III  
City Attorney

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Exhibit A: Fee Agreement  
Exhibit B: First Amendment to Fee Agreement

**AGREEMENT FOR SPECIAL SERVICES**

This Agreement is entered into between the law firm of LIEBERT CASSIDY WHITMORE, A Professional Corporation ("Attorney"), and the CITY OF TORRANCE, A Municipal Corporation ("City").

**1. Conditions**

This Agreement will not take effect, and Attorney will have no obligation to provide services, until City returns a properly signed and executed copy of this Agreement.

**2. Attorney's Services**

Attorney agrees to provide City with consulting, representational and legal services pertaining to the Rehan Nazir Complaint BS116560.

**3. Fees, Costs, Expenses**

City agrees to pay Attorney the sums billed monthly for time spent by Attorney in providing the services, including reasonable travel time.

The range of hourly rates for Attorney time is from One Hundred Sixty to Two Hundred Ninety Dollars (\$160.00 - \$290.00), and from One Hundred to One Hundred Thirty Dollars (\$100.00 - \$130.00) for time of paraprofessional staff. Attorney reviews its hourly rates on an annual basis and, if appropriate, adjusts them effective July 1. Attorneys and paraprofessional staff bill their time in minimum units of one-tenth of an hour. Communications advice (telephone, voice-mail, e-mail) is billed in a minimum increment of three-tenths (.30) of an hour.

City agrees to reimburse Attorney for necessary costs and expenses incurred by Attorney on behalf of City. Attorney bills photocopying charges at Fifteen Cents (\$.15)

C2008-211

per page and facsimile charges at Fifty Cents (\$0.50) per page. A Public Agency Fee Schedule is attached to this Agreement.

Payment by City against monthly billings is due upon receipt of statements, and is considered delinquent if payment is not received within thirty (30) days of the date of the invoice.

The California Business & Professions Code requires us to inform you whether we maintain errors and omissions insurance coverage applicable to the services to be rendered to you. We hereby confirm that the firm does maintain such insurance coverage.

**4. Arbitration of Professional Liability or Other Claims**

Disputes. If a dispute between City and Attorney arises over fees charged for services, the controversy will be submitted to binding arbitration in accordance with the rules of the California State Bar Fee Arbitration Program, set forth in California Business and Professions Code, sections 6200 through 6206. The arbitrator or arbitration panel shall have the authority to award to the prevailing party attorneys' fees, costs and interest incurred. Any arbitration award may be served by mail upon either side and personal service shall not be required.

If a dispute arises between City and Attorney over any other aspect of the attorney-client relationship, including, without limitation, a claim for breach of professional duty, that dispute will also be resolved by arbitration. It is understood that any dispute as to any alleged breach of professional duty (that is, as to whether any legal services rendered under this agreement were allegedly unnecessary, unauthorized, omitted entirely, or were improperly, negligently or incompetently rendered) will be

determined by submission to arbitration as provided by California law, and not by a lawsuit or resort to court process except as California law provides for judicial review of arbitration proceedings. **Both parties to this agreement, by entering into it, are giving up their constitutional right to have any such dispute decided in a court of law before a jury, and instead are accepting the use of arbitration.** Each party is to bear its own attorney's fees and costs.

**5. File Retention**

After our services conclude, Attorney will, upon City's request, deliver the file for the matter to City, along with any funds or property of City's in our possession. If City requests the file for the matter, Attorney will retain a copy of the file at the City's expense. If City does not request the file for this matter, we will retain it for a period of seven (7) years after this matter is closed. If City does not request delivery of the file for this matter before the end of the seven (7) year period, we will have no further obligation to retain the file and may, at our discretion, destroy it without further notice to City. At any point during the seven (7) year period, City may request delivery of the file.

**6. Assignment**

This Agreement is not assignable without the written consent of City.

**7. Independent Contractor**

It is understood and agreed that Attorney, while engaged in performing the terms of this Agreement, is an independent contractor and not an employee of City.

8. Authority

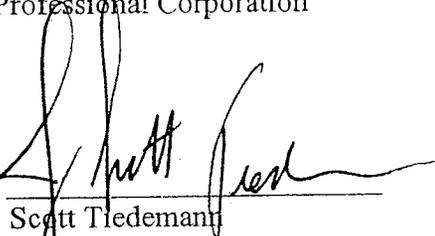
The signators to this Agreement represent that they hold the positions set forth below their signatures, and that they are authorized to execute this Agreement on behalf of their respective parties and to bind their respective parties hereto.

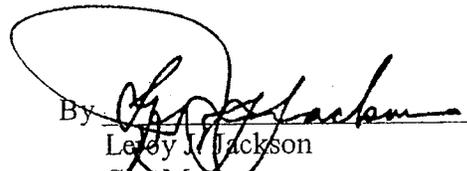
9. Term

This Agreement is effective August 27, 2008, ongoing and may be modified by mutual agreement of the parties. This agreement shall be terminable by either party upon thirty (30) days written notice.

LIEBERT CASSIDY WHITMORE,  
A Professional Corporation

CITY OF TORRANCE,  
A Municipal Corporation

By:   
Scott Tiedemann  
Partner

By:   
Leroy J. Jackson  
City Manager

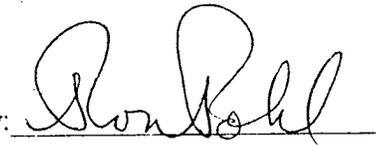
Date: 9/22/08

Date: 17 Oct 2008

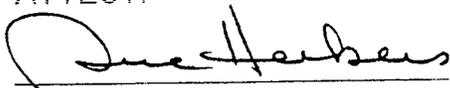
CITY OF TORRANCE,  
a municipal corporation

APPROVED AS TO FORM.

By:   
Frank Scotto, Mayor

By: 

ATTEST:

  
Sue Herbers, City Clerk

I. PUBLIC AGENCY FEE SCHEDULE

## Hourly Rates (As of Contract Date)

|                              |                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Partners                     | \$260.00 - \$290.00 |
| Of Counsel                   | \$240.00 - \$260.00 |
| Associates                   | \$160.00 - \$240.00 |
| Labor Relations Professional | \$170.00 - \$200.00 |
| Paraprofessionals            | \$100.00 - \$130.00 |

II. COST SCHEDULE

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Photocopies           | \$0.15 per copy |
| 2. Facsimile Transmittal | \$0.50 per page |

## FIRST AMENDMENT TO FEE AGREEMENT FOR LEGAL SERVICES

This First Amendment to Fee Agreement for legal services ("Amendment") is made and entered into as of March 1, 2009, by and between the **CITY OF TORRANCE**, a municipal corporation ("CITY"), and **LIEBERT, CASSIDY, WHITMORE**, a professional corporation ("FIRM").

### RECITALS:

- A. CITY and FIRM entered into a Fee Agreement for Legal Services ("Fee Agreement") on August 27, 2008, in the amount of \$25,000. A copy of that Fee Agreement for Legal Services is attached as Exhibit A (Contract No. C2008-211)
- B. FIRM advised that an additional \$20,000 is required to fund the litigation in this matter.

### AGREEMENT:

1. Services to be Performed by FIRM.  
FIRM will provide the services set forth in the Fee Agreement attached as Exhibit A and incorporated into this First Amendment by this reference. FIRM warrants that all services set forth in the Fee Agreement and this Amendment will be performed in a competent, professional and satisfactory manner.
2. FIRM's Fee.  
For services rendered pursuant to this First Amendment, FIRM will be paid in accordance with the Fee Agreement; provided, however, that in no event will the total amount of money paid the FIRM, for services contemplated by this Amendment, exceed the sum of **\$45,000** unless otherwise first approved in writing by CITY.
3. Conflict of Interest.  
FIRM warrants that all necessary conflict clearances have been obtained.

C 2008-211

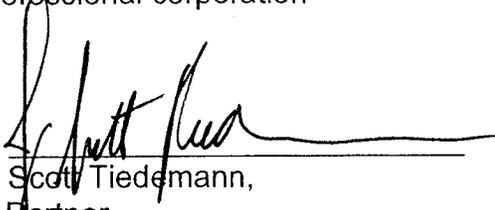
4. Business License.

FIRM will not be required to obtain a City business license.

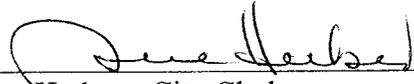
CITY OF TORRANCE,  
a municipal corporation

LIEBERT, CASSIDY, WHITMORE,  
a professional corporation

By:   
Frank Scotto,  
Mayor

By:   
Scott Tiedemann,  
Partner

ATTEST:

  
Sue Herbers, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JOHN L. FELLOWS III  
City Attorney

By: 

Exhibit A) Fee Agreement