



# MINUTES

## AD HOC LEGAL SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

4:45 PM

Village Hall – 21 East Church Street, Lake Orion, MI 48362

(248) 693-8391 ext. 102

### 1. Call to Order

The December 10, 2025, Ad Hoc Legal Services Review Committee Meeting was called to order at 4:45 PM by Village Manager McClary.

### 2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

#### PRESENT

Council Member Alex Comparoni Jr  
Council Member George Dandalides  
Council Member Eric Papacek  
Village Manager Darwin McClary  
Police Chief Mark Amundson

#### STAFF PRESENT

Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Lynsey Blough

### 3. Minute Approval

#### A. Approval of Minutes of December 1, 2025, Meeting of the Legal Services Review Committee

**MOTION** made by Council Member Dandalides, Seconded by Council Member Comparoni Jr, to approve the Minutes of the December 1, 2025 Ad Hoc Legal Services Review Committee Meeting, as presented.

**VOTING YEA:** Comparoni Jr, Dandalides, Papacek, McClary, Amundson

**VOTING NAY:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**MOTION:** Carried

### 4. Call to the Public

None.

## **5. Other Items**

Before starting the interview, the committee reviewed the interview questions and procedure. Police Chief Amundson requested clarification on Question 2, noting it felt vague. Council Member Dandalides explained the intent was to understand how each firm proactively stays current on legal developments and communicates those to municipal clients. Village Manager McClary confirmed the question would remain as written and that, if clarification is requested, the same explanation will be provided to all firms.

The group then discussed interview protocol. Council Member Dandalides asked whether follow-up questions would be allowed. Village Manager McClary and Police Chief Amundson emphasized the need for consistency and fairness, agreeing that no follow-up questions should occur unless asked uniformly of all firms. They expressed particular caution about avoiding extended dialogue with Beier Howlett due to its existing familiarity with Village operations.

The committee agreed that Village Manager McClary will begin each interview by outlining the process: he will ask all questions, there will be no back-and-forth questioning, approximately three minutes per question. No further procedural concerns were raised.

The Ad Hoc Legal Services Review Committee has prepared 14 interview questions that will be used consistently for all firms.

### **A. Secret Wardle 5:00 PM**

At 4:56 PM, the Ad Hoc Legal Services Review Committee began the interview with Secret Wardle.

The interview ended at 5:44 PM.

The committee expressed strong overall approval of Secret Wardle's interview. Committee members highlighted the firm's well-prepared, efficient, and professional presentation, noting clear expertise across municipal legal areas and effective team-based responses. Several commented that the firm set a high bar for the remaining interviews.

Police Chief Amundson was particularly satisfied with their prosecution-related answers, emphasizing their understanding of statutory requirements and their balanced approach to case strategy. Village Manager McClary appreciated their broad capabilities, which could limit the need for outside counsel. One attorney's limited participation was attributed to being new.

The committee viewed the firm's experience with lake and riparian issues as a significant advantage. They also discussed the attorney's suggestion to attend council meetings, concluding that while potentially beneficial, routine attendance would be costly and could create unnecessary friction. The consensus was to continue having legal counsel attend only when needed.

Secret Wardle's competitive rates and strong overall performance left the committee with a positive impression.

**B. Giarmarco, Mullins & Horton 6:00 PM**

At 6:00 PM, the Ad Hoc Legal Services Review Committee began the interview with Giarmarco, Mullins & Horton.

The interview ended at 6:58 PM.

The committee generally viewed Giarmarco, Mullins & Horton's interview as strong and well-prepared. Committee members highlighted the team's clear municipal expertise, cohesive presentation, and thorough responses across legal disciplines. Several appreciated the firm's proactive approach, familiarity with regional and riparian issues, and policies such as not billing for brief calls.

Police Chief Amundson was particularly impressed with their prosecution strategy and flexibility. Council Member Comparoni expressed some concern that the presentation felt overly sales-oriented, though he acknowledged their strong qualifications.

Council Members Dandalides and Papacek praised the firm's preparation, examples, and ability to assign matters to subject-matter specialists. Village Manager McClary noted their depth of experience and saw them as stronger than the first firm interviewed.

Overall, Giarmarco, Mullins & Horton ranked highly among the firms reviewed to date, with final decisions deferred until all four interviews are completed.

**6. Adjournment**

**MOTION** made by Police Chief Amundson, Seconded by Council Member Comparoni Jr, to adjourn the December 10, 2025, Ad Hoc Legal Services Review Committee Meeting.

**VOTING YEA:** Comparoni Jr, Dandalides, Papacek, McClary, Amundson

**VOTING NAY:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**MOTION:** Carried

The December 10, 2025, Ad Hoc Legal Services Review Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM.

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Darwin McClary  
Chairperson

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Lynsey Blough, CMC  
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

Date Approved: as presented on December 15, 2025