

**ROCHELLE CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA ITEM MEMO  
REGULAR MEETING**

**SUBJECT:** Approval of two-year agreement with VanBuren Consulting to assist with RMU lobbying efforts

**Staff Contact:** Jeff Fiegenschuh, City Manager

**Summary:** Since 2019, the City of Rochelle has hired Paul O’Grady and his firm VanBuren Associates to represent RMU electric division for multiple projects/issues at the IL Legislature. Some of the issues they’ve assisted the city with in the past, which have yielded more favorable results include the sale of our transmission assets to ComEd, working to keep Prairie State and fully operational through 2038, ensuring the new CEJA legislation is not overly burdensome to municipal owned utilities and protecting our local enterprise zone from state rules stripping local governments of zoning authority related to renewables.

Specifically, they secured two separate subject matter hearings city representatives testified at, which assisted with the sale of our transmission assets. Further they secured several subject matter hearings during the CEJA discussions. We also were able to meet with the chairperson of the Senate Environmental Committee and other prominent lawmakers.

There are new efforts within the Governor’s office and the legislature to approve legislation that is detrimental to RMU and our interests. One of these proposals would be to allow nonresidents statewide to serve on our local boards that oversee electric utilities.

To ensure RMU has a seat at the table within the legislature, I would like to hire VanBuren Consulting on a two-year agreement not to exceed \$110,000 total. This is an investment in the utility’s future and a much needed and proactive venture. The single largest and most important issue facing Rochelle over the next twenty years is the future of Prairie State and state over reach as it relates to utilities and renewable energy.

**Revenue Sources:**

Source:	Budgeted Amount:	Proposed Expenditure
RMU electric operations	\$200,000	\$110,000

**Recommendation:** Approve the two-year agreement with VanBuren Consulting to represent RMU’s interests in the IL legislature.