

## Briefing for PWSRCAC Board of Directors – September 2026

**ACTION ITEM**

**Sponsor:** Donna Schantz, Executive Director  
and Hans Odegard, Director of  
Administration

**Project number and name or topic:** Legal Services Contract Approval

1. **Description of agenda item:** PWSRCAC learned over the summer that our legal representative, Joe Levesque of Landye Bennett Blumstein, LLP (LBB), will be retiring at the end of 2026. Levesque recommends that LBB associate, Jed Ullrich, replace him. Jed will be supported by LBB partner Anna Cray and paralegal BJ Carlson (BJ has worked with Joe Levesque for the last 5+ years, including on Council issues), and has already been involved in PWSRCAC matters since late 2025, including attending the Council's May 2026 Board meeting in Valdez.

PWSRCAC has had a limited number of legal counsel representatives since its inception. Levesque began his tenure as PWSRCAC legal counsel as an alternate to Bill Walker in 2003, and became lead counsel in 2013. The following is a complete list of past general legal counsel, not including legal expertise retained as subject matter experts:

- 1989-1990: Gordon Tans of Perkins Coie
- 1990-2003: Avrum Gross and Susan Burke of Gross & Burke
- 2003-2013: Bill Walker of Walker & Levesque
- 2013-current: Joe Levesque of Levesque Law Group/Landye Bennett Blumstein LLC

A proposal was received on August 6, 2026, establishing various hourly rates for Ullrich and his associates, based on the work being completed, for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2029. This proposal and the included proposed rates were reviewed with the Executive Committee at its August 17, 2026 meeting. The Executive Committee recommends the full Board accept the August 6, 2026 proposal from Landye Bennett Blumstein LLC for Jed Ullrich to serve as PWSRCAC's primary attorney following Joe Levesque's retirement.

2. **Why is this item important to PWSRCAC:** It is important that the professional services provided to PWSRCAC are of the highest quality and that the cost is reasonable.

3. **Previous actions taken by the Board on this item:**

| <u>Meeting</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Action</u>                                |
|----------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Board          | 12/3/90     | Selected Gross & Burke as legal counsel.     |
| Board          | 3/12/98     | Confirmed Gross & Burke as legal counsel.    |
| Board          | 3/14/03     | Selected Walker & Levesque as legal counsel. |

## Legal Sole Source Professional Services Agreement 4-3

|       |         |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Board | 5/1/05  | Directed staff to prepare a professional service agreement for legal services with Walker & Levesque.                                                                                       |
| XCOM  | 7/18/24 | Authorized the Executive Director to enter into a sole source professional services agreement with Landye Bennett Blumstein (LBB), LLP for legal services.                                  |
| XCOM  | 8/17/26 | Recommended the full Board accept the August 6, 2026 proposal from Landye Bennett Blumstein LLC for Jed Ullrich to serve as PWSRCAC's primary attorney following Joe Levesque's retirement. |

4. **Summary of policy, issues, support, or opposition:** None known.
5. **Committee Recommendation:** The Executive Committee recommends that the Board accept the August 6, 2026 proposal from Landye Bennett Blumstein LLC for Jed Ullrich to serve as PWSRCAC's primary attorney following Joe Levesque's retirement.
6. **Relationship to LRP and Budget:** The Council has approximately \$30,860 in the FY2027 budget allocated towards legal counsel to conduct such work as review contracts and project related issues, to provide advice on regulatory issues, to provide advice relating to administrative and personnel issues, and to attend PWSRCAC Board meetings.
7. **Action Requested of the Board of Directors:** Authorize the Executive Director to enter into a sole source legal services agreement with Landye Bennett Blumstein (LBB), LLP, with Jed Ullrich as primary general legal counsel, for a term beginning January 2027 through December 2029.
8. **Alternatives:** None recommended.
9. **Attachments:** Supporting materials including the August 6, 2026 proposal from Landye Bennett Blumstein LLC and the draft legal services agreement will be provided to the Board under separate cover.