



305 East 2nd Street Uhrichsville, OH 44683 • Phone: (740) 922-1242 • Fax: (740) 922-6668

♦ Mayor - James Zucal ♦ Administrative Assistant - Bonnie Coventry ♦
Code Enforcement - Terry McFerren ♦ Director of City Services - Cade Watkins ♦

July 25, 2025

To: all of city council members and the city council president
Re: retention of outside legal counsel for litigation regarding landlord fees

After last evening's vote and passage of Resolution 1985 I would like you to know that I will not be signing it for approval and I will be using the mayor's veto rights. I was disappointed to see a vote of approval for outside counsel when we have a duly elected law director. Our law director's position is part-time and has a salary of \$40,000 per year along with an office payment that has been averaging \$1,200 to \$2,000 a month. That is approximately \$60,000 per year. A few years ago, the salary was \$20,000 a year and it was raised to \$40,000 a year...more money more responsibilities!

I know that the sales pitch of the law director was that we have a "better chance of winning" and "some attorneys are specialized just like doctor's when you need them to look at a lump in your throat." This is the law director's job, and he should perform his duties just like the rest of us. Besides, do you know where the money is coming from in what account and was it appropriated?

Just a reminder, down the road when this is over, we may not win no matter who represents us, as it is a gamble. If we pay the extra money and lose, I will at that time remind you of the cost involved. This is taxpayer's dollars we are using. Therefore, I am asking you to reconsider and support my cause to settle this case as soon as possible and not prolong it or spend unnecessary funds. Keep in mind that this will draw media attention to Uhrichsville and I will plead my cause in a positive light.

Copy: Auditor, Jeryl McGaffick

Emphatically,
James Zucal
Mayor

Section 1. The written agreement as attached hereto and submitted by Mr. Yarzan S. Ashrawi of the Columbus, Ohio law firm of Frost, Brown and Todd is approved under the terms set forth therein, including but not limited to the immediate payment of a retainer of Ten Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$10,000.00), to be billed at the rate of \$460.00/hour for Mr. Ashrawi and \$320.00/hour for Mr. Joe Batchelor, and similar hourly rates if other attorneys work on the case. Subject, however, to a maximum outside counsel fee/costs paid of Thirty Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$30,000.00) unless Council authorizes further payments.