

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

APPROVED

NO. 06-195

DATE July 12, 2006

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BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS

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BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY – SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT TO PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACT NO. 3132 WITH ANDREW HOFMAN FOR 3-D ASTRONOMICAL ANIMATION AND SPECIAL EFFECTS ARTISTRY FOR THE PLANETARIUM SHOW

*B. Jensen	_____	H. Fujita	_____
M. Shull	_____	J. Kolb	_____
F. Mok	_____	K. Regan	_____
S. Huntley	_____	J. Combs	_____

Robert Jensen (G)

 General Manager

Approved

Disapproved

Withdrawn

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve a supplemental agreement to personal services Contract No. 3132 with Andrew Hofman, substantially in the form attached, for additional expert creation and oversight of 3-D graphic effects, and animation of science and astronomical sequences, in development of the Griffith Observatory's planetarium show, extending the contract termination from June 30, 2006, to December 31, 2006, and increasing the contract by \$90,000 to a new maximum of \$402,500, subject to approval of the Mayor and review and approval by the City Attorney as to form;
2. Find, pursuant to Charter Section 1022, that the Department does not have personnel available in its employ with sufficient expertise to undertake these specialized professional tasks in a timely manner, and that these services can be performed more feasibly by qualified independent contractors than by a City employee;
3. Direct the Board Secretary to transmit the proposed supplemental agreement to the Mayor in accordance with Executive Directive No. 3, and concurrently to the City Attorney for review and approval as to form; and,
4. Authorize the President and Secretary to execute the Supplemental Agreement upon receipt of necessary approvals.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 2

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SUMMARY:

The Griffith Observatory will reopen in 2006 with the new state-of-the-art Samuel Oschin Planetarium Theater. A laser-projected, all-dome video system with the capability to show high-definition 3-D video will replace the antiquated 35 mm slide system removed in 2002. A team of graphics specialists, 3-D animators, compositors, modelers, and production staff, funded by the Department and in part by the Friends Of The Observatory (FOTO), are working on the premiere show for the planetarium. The Department has undertaken the purchase of high quality, state-of-the-art graphics workstations, graphics software used in the most sophisticated current commercial animation motion pictures, and computer capacity to render complex five- and six-camera animated sequences. The animation team, on which Mr. Hofman was an early member and has become a key leader, has pushed the boundaries of typical animation to create a premiere show which will be more advanced than any like it. The use of the laser projection system, which will assist in presentation of a startlingly beautiful and affecting show, also presents unique technical and stylistic challenges for the animation team that are carefully being surmounted through study and collaboration with the manufacturing team. Mr. Hofman is an expert in the effects field, with uniquely applicable knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience in graphics and effects for film, including alternative formats such as IMAX, and animation of science and astronomical sequences, and his insight, leadership, and learning are crucial to keeping the show production on track and to maintaining the excellent quality.

The initial contract term for Mr. Hofman was August 16, 2004, to February 15, 2006, for a contract maximum of \$292,500 (Board Report No. 04-229). The workload for key members of the animation team has extended in time, and funding was needed to cover the additional time because production of the emerging technology used in the new laser projection system, under purchase by FOTO, was taking longer than first estimated. This meant a longer time until animators could see the show at the Griffith Observatory and make final changes before rendering the production. For these reasons the contract was amended on April 5, 2006, to extend to June 30, 2006 (Board Report No. 06-25). Additional delays in the laser projector delivery and set up now require a supplemental agreement to extend the contract to December 31, 2006. The Department is under no obligation to expend more funds or utilize Mr. Hofman's services to the maximum amount; use of his services under this contract is on an as-needed basis. To date, Mr. Hofman's specialized services have been excellent and essential. The expertise applied by Mr. Hofman and other animators on contract is unlike the experience of any City employee and is needed only during production of shows for the planetarium.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

Mr. Hofman will be paid \$80 per hour on an as-needed basis, an increase over the start up wage of \$75 per hour due to increases in the contractor's costs for insurance and other overhead. Sufficient funds for this supplemental agreement are available in Department 88, Fund 302, Contractual Services Account 304, Activity 7800, which specifically includes \$289,000 for the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

Report prepared by Michael D. Cole, Griffith Observatory