

**RESOLUTION NO. 1791**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF NEVADA, MISSOURI, AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN ENGAGEMENT LETTER BETWEEN THE CITY OF NEVADA, MISSOURI, AND STINSON LLP**

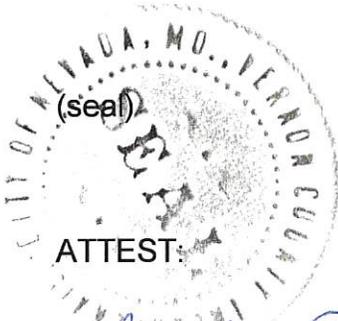
**WHEREAS**, The engagement letter attached as "Exhibit A" and incorporated by reference is approved; and

**WHEREAS**, Stinson LLP will assist the city in identifying and treating PFAS sources in drinking and wastewater systems; and

**WHEREAS**, The City Manager or their designee is authorized and directed to execute the agreement on behalf of the City of Nevada, Missouri.

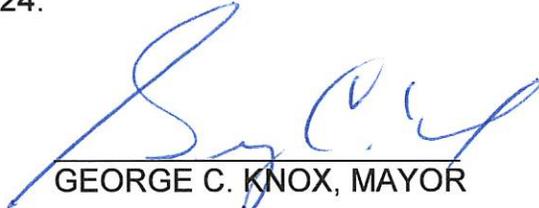
**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Nevada, Missouri authorizes the execution of an engagement letter between the City of Nevada, Missouri, and Stinson LLP.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** by the City Council of the City of Nevada, Missouri, this 18th day of June 2024.



**ATTEST:**

  
CYNTHIA DYE, CITY CLERK

  
GEORGE C. KNOX, MAYOR

**AGENDA ITEM**  
June 18, 2024

**Subject:** Stinson LLP Engagement Letter-PFAS Testing

**Department:** Administration

**Managers Notes:**

The attached engagement letter from the Stinson law firm is recommended for your approval. This law firm, along with the KimHEC engineering firm, will work with the City in identifying chemicals known as PFAS (Polyfluoroalkyl substances), and treating these sources as they occur in our drinking water and wastewater systems. Specifically we will be working with the Mo. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and 3M to prepare the parameters of a new National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

Most of this work will take place in the next several months in preparation for the new permit, which will be needed from DNR by the end of the 2024 calendar year. Joe Tipper, our Water Treatment Plant Manager, and Mark Mendenhall, our Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager, have also had some preliminary discussions with DNR and 3M over the past few months.

Mr. McCaffree has also reviewed the engagement letter.

June 5, 2024

Mr. Larry Stevens  
City Manager  
110 S. Ash St.  
Nevada, Missouri 64772

**Re: Assist utility in identifying and treating PFAS sources in drinking and wastewater systems (the "Matter")**

Dear Larry,

Thank you for selecting Stinson LLP (the "Firm") to represent the **City of Nevada, MO** in connection with the above-referenced Matter. We appreciate the confidence that you have placed in us and look forward to serving as counsel in this engagement.

We are submitting this letter and the accompanying General Terms of Representation to serve as the written agreement for our engagement. This letter and the General Terms of Representation contain important information regarding how we provide legal services and will apply, unless otherwise agreed in writing, to all current and future matters for which you have retained or will retain us. If you have any questions about any part of our engagement or if you would like to discuss possible modifications to the terms of this engagement, please call me.

#### **Client**

For purposes of this engagement, the Firm's sole client will be the **City of Nevada, MO** (the "Client"). Except as otherwise agreed in writing, the Firm will not be representing any other person or entity in the Matter.

#### **Scope of Engagement**

Unless otherwise specifically agreed in writing, the scope of this engagement will be limited to the provision of legal services for **assisting the City in identifying and treating PFAS sources in drinking and wastewater systems**. Our acceptance of this engagement does not involve an undertaking to represent you or your interests in any other matter.

During this engagement, the Firm will be working in coordination with KimHEC LLC ("KimHEC"), an engineering firm. The Firm, Client and KimHEC will be working cooperatively and collaboratively, including in developing NPDES permit terms and agreements and meeting and negotiating with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and 3M.

#### **Fees and Charges**

Our fees for this engagement will be based upon and billed at the hourly rates of each attorney, paralegal, and other timekeeper performing services on your behalf, but in no event shall exceed \$31,565 unless

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otherwise agreed to by the City in writing. The current hourly rates for attorneys and paralegals anticipated to work on the Matter are as follows:

<u>Attorney/Paralegal</u>	<u>Hourly Rate</u>
Aimee Davenport	\$535
Sarah Struby	\$440
Betsy Smith	\$340

Our hourly rates are adjusted periodically, typically on an annual basis, to reflect the advancing experience, capabilities, and seniority of our attorneys and paralegals as well as general economic factors. From time to time, it may become necessary or desirable to assign different or additional attorneys or paralegals to work on your Matter. You agree that we may charge the hourly rates currently in effect at the time the work is performed. In addition, we will bill for or request direct payment for disbursements or expenses that we incur, including delivery charges, significant photocopy or reproduction costs, computerized legal research charges, filing fees, fees and costs associated with practice support and/or electronic discovery providers, travel expenses, expert witness fees, and other vendor fees, if any. Typically, we forward third-party charges in excess of \$250 directly to you for payment. You agree to be responsible for the payment of such third-party charges and agree to indemnify the Firm in the event such charges are not paid and the vendor makes a claim against the Firm. Payment is due upon receipt of our statements.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE GENERAL TERMS OF REPRESENTATION THAT WE ASK YOU TO AGREE TO INCLUDE A PROVISION CONCERNING MANDATORY BINDING ARBITRATION OF ANY DISPUTES ABOUT OUR FEES OR OTHER CHARGES. We have included this provision to resolve any such disputes quickly, efficiently and in a less public forum than in court, but it does cause both parties to give up rights they would otherwise have to bring an action in court. Please read this provision and the explanatory statement that accompanies it, and we advise you to seek separate counsel concerning whether you should agree to it. If you do not wish this provision to be a part of your agreement with us, please advise us before you sign this letter.

#### **Retainers**

We may at any time request an advance fee retainer for any professional fees associated with the Matter. Retainers and other funds that belong to you will be held without interest on account by the Firm, until disbursed. Such funds may be applied in payment of your account for legal fees owed or other expenses incurred on your behalf.

#### **Conflicts of Interest**

We have performed a search of our other clients to determine if representing you might create a potential conflict of interest with any other clients. That check was done using your name and any other names you gave us. Please inform us immediately if you use other names.

**Review and Return of Engagement Letter**

We ask that you review this letter and the General Terms of Representation carefully and let us know if there is any provision that you do not understand. If you have any questions concerning the terms of our engagement, or if you ever have a question about our charges, or their reasonableness, please contact me at your convenience to discuss the matter.

Please sign and return this letter to confirm that it accurately reflects the scope, terms and conditions with respect to this engagement. You can send us the signed letter with your original ink signature, or you can scan it with your signature and send us a pdf, facsimile, or other imaged version. You also have the option of signing electronically, e.g., by typing "/s/ [your name]," in the space provided for your signature, or by using commercially available electronic signature software. By electing to use the option of signing electronically, you consent to do business by electronic means. Stinson also consents to do business by electronic means.

Please note that if we do not receive a signed copy of this letter, your instructing us or continuing to instruct us on this Matter will constitute your full acceptance of the terms of this letter and in the accompanying General Terms of Representation.

Thank you for choosing us as counsel. We look forward to a good and productive relationship.

Sincerely,

**Stinson LLP**

Aimee D. Davenport

ADD:lmc

ACCEPTED AND AGREED this 18<sup>th</sup> day of June 2024:

**City of Nevada, MO**

By:   
Name: LARRY STEVENS  
Title: CITY MANAGER

## GENERAL TERMS OF REPRESENTATION

Stinson LLP appreciates the opportunity to serve you. Our goal is to provide legal services that address your legal needs effectively and efficiently through our various offices.

The following information explains the client service practices and billing procedures that apply to our representation of your interests (unless you have reached a different written understanding with us). We encourage you to discuss these practices with our lawyers whenever you have questions during the course of our engagement.

**Our Client.** The person(s) or entity(ies) who are the client(s) in this engagement are limited to those specifically stated in the accompanying engagement letter. In order to avoid misunderstandings and/or inadvertent conflicts of interest in the future, it is understood that, in the absence of written agreement to the contrary, neither this engagement nor our work in connection with this engagement shall be understood or taken to create an attorney-client relationship with other, including related or affiliated (e.g., parent, subsidiary, shareholder, partner, member, director, officer, employee, insurer, joint venture, etc.), persons or entities.

**Personnel.** One lawyer will generally be assigned primary responsibility for seeing that your requests for legal services are met, but additional lawyers may assist in providing appropriate and efficient legal services. We attempt to assign personnel to each matter based on the nature and scope of the issues raised by the matter in conjunction with the experience and expertise of our lawyers.

**Provision of Legal Services.** This engagement is for provision of professional legal services, and not for the provision of business, personal, accounting, technical or other advice not constituting legal services. It is agreed that the client is not relying upon counsel in this engagement for advice in areas other than professional legal services, even if such matters should be discussed in connection with the engagement.

**Results.** At the commencement or during the course of our representation, we may express opinions or beliefs concerning various issues or courses of action and the results that might be anticipated. Any such statement made by any partner or employee of our Firm is intended to be an expression of opinion only, based on information available to us at the time, and should not be construed as a promise or guarantee.

**Entire Agreement.** The accompanying engagement letter together with these General Terms of Representation shall constitute the entire agreement between us concerning the engagement, and shall not be modified or supplemented, except in a subsequent writing signed by the parties.

**Periodic Billings for Legal Services.** Unless other arrangements have been made, it is our policy to render periodic statements for legal services on a monthly basis. We normally base these interim statements on hourly rates of lawyers and legal assistants working on the matter. Statements will be due upon presentation, and are to be paid no later than 30 days following the invoice date. The amounts paid on our interim billings are applied to the total final fee. If any statement amount remains unpaid 60 days after the invoice date, the Firm reserves the right to terminate its services, consistent with applicable Rules of Professional Conduct.

When agreed to by engagement letter, fees are sometimes fixed irrespective of the hours involved. Circumstances, including those set out below may require departure from the application of hourly rates. Determination of the total final fee may await conclusion of each specified case or matter so that all relevant factors may be considered.

The Firm has offices in multiple states. Our lawyers are subject to rules governing the professional conduct of lawyers in those states. In addition to time spent, these rules list other factors that can be considered in determining a reasonable fee. These include: reputation, the skill and experience required to complete the services properly; the extent to which the acceptance of the particular matter will preclude other employment; the amount involved; the results obtained; the time limitations imposed by the client or by the circumstances; the nature and length of the professional relationship with the client; and whether the fee is fixed or contingent. In the absence of agreement with you, those factors will not be used to increase our billings for fees above the charge resulting from application of hourly rates.

**Estimates and Budgets.** Please note that any estimates of anticipated fees and costs that we may provide at your request, whether for budgeting purposes or otherwise, are only an approximation because of the uncertainties involved in the representation. Unless we have otherwise agreed in writing to a specific fixed fee or fee cap, any such estimate is not a maximum or minimum fee quotation, and our fees will be determined based on actual hours incurred in accordance with the terms of our representation. It is also expressly understood that, absent a written contingent fee agreement, payment of the Firm's fees and costs is in no way contingent on the ultimate outcome of the matter.

**Retainers.** With new clients or with substantial new matters for existing clients, the Firm may require what is known as a "retainer held as security." This retainer may be in the nature of a deposit, held by the Firm for the protection of its investment of time and effort which will be applied to the final billing. Another type of retainer may require you to deposit a certain amount, against which monthly statement amounts will be applied. At the end of each month, the agreed upon monthly retainer amount must be replenished to its original amount. Even though a retainer is outstanding, we expect you to pay for services rendered as reflected by interim billings.

**Paralegals/Practice Support Consultants/Document Clerks.** Certain work will be done by paralegals, sometimes called "legal assistants," and/or Practice Support Consultants. Such persons, although not practicing lawyers, have undergone training to perform certain kinds of services at lower rates. In matters involving significant quantities of document management, document clerks may be used to perform tasks at lower rates than those of legal assistants. In matters in which electronically stored information is relevant to the representation, Practice Support Consultants are used. All such work is supervised by practicing lawyers. The use of such persons allows us to deliver legal services to you at a lower cost.

**Client Disbursements.** Most matters require, from time to time, certain monetary advances to be made on your behalf by the Firm. Some "client disbursements" represent out-of-pocket charges we advance, others represent internal costs (including costs such as fees for service of process, court filing fees, deliveries, copying charges, travel expenses, computer assisted legal research, costs associated with electronically stored information that may be relevant to the representation, etc.). It is understood that while acting as your lawyers, we have the authority to use our best judgment in making such expenditures on your behalf. Unless we have made prior arrangements with you, we will send you monthly billings for client disbursements incurred during the preceding month. If the nature of the matter is such that we anticipate substantial advances, we may require a separate deposit for such purpose. Substantial individual items in excess of \$250, such as expert witness fees, the costs of deposition transcripts, printing costs, etc., may be billed directly to you by the vendor of such services. In many matters when lawyers must examine legal

authorities, it is more economical to accomplish the task using computer databases of legal precedents (instead of the traditional method of manual retrieval). In such instances, the special charges assessed by the providers of these services, Lexis and Westlaw, are shown on client disbursement billings as "Lexis or Westlaw Research."

#### RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES CONCERNING FEES AND OTHER CHARGES.

(a) ANY CLAIM, CONTROVERSY OR DISPUTE, WHETHER SOUNDING IN CONTRACT, STATUTE, OR TORT, OR ANY OTHER LEGAL THEORY, RELATED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY TO THE FEES OR OTHER CHARGES BY OUR FIRM TO YOU, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO YOUR NON-PAYMENT OF ANY AMOUNTS BILLED TO YOU, SHALL BE RESOLVED BY MANDATORY BINDING ARBITRATION AS PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION. THE FEDERAL ARBITRATION ACT, NOT STATE LAW, GOVERNS THE ARBITRATION, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER A CLAIM IS SUBJECT TO ARBITRATION. YOU AND OUR FIRM EACH AGREE TO WAIVE ANY RIGHT TO TRIAL IN A COURT OF LAW AND ANY RIGHT TO A TRIAL BY JURY THAT MAY OTHERWISE EXIST.

(b) THE ARBITRATION WILL BE ADMINISTERED BY THE AMERICAN ARBITRATION ASSOCIATION UNDER ITS COMMERCIAL ARBITRATION RULES. THE ARBITRATION SHALL BE TO A SINGLE ARBITRATOR WHO IS A LICENSED ATTORNEY WITH AT LEAST TEN YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE JURISDICTION IN WHICH THE OFFICE OF OUR ATTORNEY PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR ENGAGEMENT IS LOCATED, AND THE ARBITRATION SHALL BE HELD IN THAT CITY. JUDGMENT UPON THE AWARD RENDERED BY THE ARBITRATOR MAY BE ENTERED IN ANY COURT HAVING JURISDICTION.

(c) THIS AGREEMENT TO ARBITRATE CONTAINS RISKS AND BENEFITS AND REQUIRES EACH PARTY TO GIVE UP RIGHTS THEY WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE. YOU ARE ADVISED TO SEEK INDEPENDENT COUNSEL, AND YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO AGREE TO THIS PROVISION. ARBITRATION MAY BE A MORE EFFICIENT AND LESS PUBLIC MEANS OF RESOLVING OUR DISPUTES. HOWEVER, BY AGREEING TO THIS PROVISION, YOU WAIVE YOUR RIGHT TO BRING AN ACTION IN COURT, AND TO HAVE A JURY TRIAL, AND YOUR RIGHT TO AN APPEAL. IN MOST CIRCUMSTANCES, THE DECISION OF THE ARBITRATOR IS FINAL AND MAY NOT BE APPEALED OR CHALLENGED, EXCEPT ON VERY LIMITED GROUNDS. DISCOVERY (THE PARTIES' RIGHT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION FOR EACH OTHER AND THIRD PARTIES) IS OR MAY BE LIMITED OR PRECLUDED IN ARBITRATION. ARBITRATION MAY BE MORE OR LESS EXPENSIVE THAN AN ACTION IN COURT. THE ARBITRATOR MAY ALLOCATE THE COSTS OF ARBITRATION, INCLUDING THE FEES OF THE ARBITRATOR, TO ONE OR BOTH OF THE PARTIES. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ARBITRATION OR WHETHER YOU SHOULD AGREE TO THIS PROVISION, SEEK INDEPENDENT LEGAL ADVICE OR ASK THAT THIS PROVISION BE DELETED FROM OUR AGREEMENT WITH YOU BEFORE YOU SIGN IT.

(d) THIS PROVISION SHALL NOT APPLY IN ANY JURISDICTION IN WHICH IT DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THE RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT APPLICABLE TO ATTORNEYS.

**File Retention.** After our representation has ended, we will, upon your request, deliver the file for this engagement to you. If you do not request the file, we will retain it for a period of five years after the matter is closed. If you do not request delivery of the file before the end of the five year period, we will have no further obligation to retain the file and may, at our discretion, destroy it without further notice to you,

subject to governing rules of professional conduct. At any point during the five year period, you may request delivery of the file.

**Disbursements and Other Charges.** We will also charge you for certain expense items listed below that we provide in connection with our legal services. Through long-term contracts with computer research vendors, and practice support and/or electronic discovery providers, we receive discounted rates on some of these services in exchange for guaranteed payment, usage or other obligations undertaken at our risk. The payments that we receive from clients for these services may or may not exceed our total payments to the vendors. Any excess is used to partially offset the costs we incur for related equipment and personnel as well as the risks we assume in entering into these contracts.

Specific items provided by the Firm are currently charged at the following rates which may be changed periodically due to economic factors as reflected on the monthly invoice:

**Computer Research.** We do not charge clients for the use of the Firm's internal work product retrieval system. Clients are charged for computer-assisted research at rates we establish based on any agreement we have with the vendor and our associated risks in entering into long-term usage contracts.

**Telecommunications.** We do not charge for local or long-distance phone calls or electronic mail transmissions.

**Mail/Messengers.** Messengers are used as appropriate to assure expedited delivery. The cost of such messengers is charged directly to clients without markup. We do not charge for regular mail; however, bulk mailings, packages and special postal services are charged at our actual cost.

**Travel.** Unless other arrangements have been specified, any air travel required in connection with our representation of your interests will be at coach rates.

**Electronic Communications.** We may use various forms of electronic communications to discuss matters concerning your representation. Any such communication is not without some risk. For example, someone with sufficient knowledge, tools, and access could intercept and use information related to those communications. This could cause you to lose your confidentiality and attorney/client privilege protections. However, to facilitate your representation, you approve the use of electronic communications during your representation by us unless we are instructed otherwise.

**Termination of Services.** In the event that you choose to terminate our services, please advise us of such in writing. We retain the right to cease performing legal services and to terminate our legal representation for any reason consistent with ethical rules, including conflicts of interest or the failure to pay legal fees and expenses when due. Our termination or your termination of services does not affect your obligation to pay legal fees and expenses incurred prior to the effective date of such termination. Unless previously terminated, our representation of the Client will terminate upon our sending our final statement for services rendered. Unless we are re-engaged after our representation terminates, we will have no continuing obligation to advise the Client with respect to future legal developments or otherwise monitor renewal or notice dates or similar deadlines that may arise from the matter(s) for which we had been engaged.

**Questions.** One of our goals is to ensure that legal services are delivered effectively and efficiently, and that all billings are accurate and understandable. Please direct any questions about services or billing practices to the Chief Operating Officer. Questions regarding the billing or payment status of your account may also be directed to our Client Accounting Department.