


2. Authorization to Enter into a Contract for Services with Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid in the Amount of \$156,000 for General Federal Advocacy Consulting Services

**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

DATE	February 4, 2025
TITLE	Authorization to Enter into a Contract for Services with Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid in the Amount of \$156,000 for General Federal Advocacy Consulting Services
DIVISION	General Manager's Office
FROM	Erich Pfuehler, Division Lead of Government and Legislative Affairs
APPROVED	Sabrina Landreth, General Manager 

RECOMMENDATION

The General Manager recommends the Board of Directors authorize the East Bay Regional Park District to enter into a contract with Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid (KDCR) for Federal advocacy services in the amount of \$156,000, with an option to extend the agreement for one (1) year.

BACKGROUND

The East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) has a long history of strategic Federal advocacy work to support the organization's priorities at the national level. To secure services for Federal advocacy during the 2025-2026 period, the Park District issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) from qualified firms. The RFP process began with the release of a formal solicitation on August 30, 2024 and remained open until September 20, 2024. However, due to a limited number of responses, the submission deadline was extended until October 11, 2024. In total, three proposals were received. Previous Federal Advocate E2 Strategies did not submit a proposal. Of the three received proposals, two firms were selected for interviews KDCR and Capri and Clay. Interviews took place the week of October 21, 2024. Each firm was asked the exact same questions. Following a comprehensive evaluation of the proposals and interviews, KDCR was selected as the preferred firm to provide Federal advocacy services for the Park District. The proposed contract with KDCR was considered at the December 11, 2024 Legislative Committee of the Board and at the January 14, 2025 Board meeting.

KDCR's bipartisan, bicameral and multi-generational approach, along with a deep understanding of energy and environmental issues and strong relationships with key decision-makers in Washington, D.C., were key considerations in its selection. Their experience in navigating Federal legislation and securing funding for their clients made them an ideal fit for the Park District's needs, especially given the changing political landscape at the Federal level.

ANALYSIS

Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid (KDCR) is a highly qualified firm with extensive experience in Federal advocacy, particularly in energy and environmental policies relevant to the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District). With a bipartisan, bicameral, multi-generational team that has

established relationships within key decision-making bodies in Washington, D.C., KDCR is well-equipped to navigate the complexities of Federal legislation, funding opportunities and potential challenges which impact the Park District.

Founded by principal Lisa Kountoupes in 2007, KDCR is a full-service firm which is routinely recognized as a top performing and notable firm by Bloomberg and Politico. Lisa primarily works with clients in the energy and environment space and has been the Park District's lead point of contact during a 2024 pilot contract with KDCR. She would continue to serve as the Park District's primary contact under this proposed contract. Prior to her consulting work, she held a series of senior positions in the federal government, including the Executive Branch at the White House, the Department of Energy and the United States Congress. Lisa served as Deputy Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs for President Bill Clinton. Prior to her tenure in the Clinton administration, Lisa served as a member of the staff of the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee under Chairman John D. Dingell (D-MI). In addition to Lisa, KDCR has assembled a team of experienced professionals with extensive ties to key decision-makers across the Senate, House, and Federal agencies to support the Park District, including:

- MJ Kenny, with experience as Senate Floor Director for Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL).
- Randi Reid, with strong ties to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and Republican Senate leadership.
- Adam Hechavarria, with expertise in appropriations, authorization, and fiscal negotiations.
- Mary Dee Beal, with deep knowledge of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and strong relationships on key House and Senate committees.

KDCR's strategic approach also involves significant collaboration with the Park District's internal teams. During the 2024 pilot with the Park District KDCR, supported securing language in the National Defense Authorization Act specific to the Oakland Army Base cleanup. KDCR provided assistance with the Navy around Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50 and legislation to specifically ensure special districts qualify for Federal grants. In 2025, KDCR proposes to conduct a strategy refresh meeting to align their advocacy efforts with the Park District's specific goals and objectives in light of the 2024 election. Their focus will include engagement with the East Bay delegation and Senators, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as work with Defense Department agencies including the Army Corps of Engineers. Other efforts will be to advance and protect wildfire resilience initiatives, foster collaborations with Federal agencies, advocate for permitting reform, and pursue updates to and protection of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). This proactive strategy aims to ensure the Park District is prepared to address emerging legislative priorities effectively.

Furthermore, KDCR has established an infrastructure for providing timely information and policy analysis, which is essential for the Park District's advocacy efforts. Their ability to customize advocacy strategies to meet the Park District's needs will help ensure the agency remains well-informed and strategically positioned to achieve its objectives in Federal advocacy. This comprehensive support will enhance the Park District's engagement with Federal decision-makers and address critical issues related to land management and environmental sustainability.

KDCR's team of 20 staff have legislative experience with both political parties while serving in the House, Senate and previous Administrations. Given their diverse backgrounds, they are well positioned to meet the District's current advocacy needs. It is also expected their team will provide support to the Board and staff during the proposed 2025 advocacy conference in Washington, D.C.

FISCAL IMPACT

The assumed fiscal impact would be \$156,000 for 2025.

SOURCE OF FUNDS	
101-2011-000-6191	\$156,000
Total Funds Available for Project	\$156,000
Total Funds Available	\$ Total

USE OF FUNDS	
Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid	\$156,000
Total Funds Available for Project	\$156,000
Total Current Project Cost	\$ Total

ATTACHMENTS

None.



**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
RESOLUTION NO. 2025 – 02 -
FEBRUARY 4, 2025**

**AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT FOR SERVICES WITH
KOUNTOUPES DENHAM CARR & REID IN THE AMOUNT OF \$156,000 FOR
GENERAL FEDERAL ADVOCACY CONSULTING SERVICES**

WHEREAS, the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) has a need for advocacy services at the Federal level and is actively working to secure legislation, funding and policy implementation to advance its mission; and

WHEREAS, for Federal advocacy beginning with the 119th Congress, a Request for Proposals process began with the release of a formal solicitation on August 30, 2024 and remained open until October 11, 2024; and

WHEREAS, following a comprehensive evaluation of the proposals and interviews, Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid (KDCR) was selected as the preferred firm to provide Federal advocacy services for the Park District; and

WHEREAS, Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid (KDCR) is a highly qualified firm with extensive experience in Federal advocacy, particularly in environmental policies relevant to the Park District's Legislative Program; and

WHEREAS, with a bipartisan, bicameral team that has established relationships within key decision-making bodies in Washington, D.C., KDCR is well-equipped to navigate the complexities of Federal legislation, funding opportunities and potential challenges which impact the Park District; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District hereby authorize the Contract for Services for \$156,000 with Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid for general Federal advocacy consulting services with an option to extend the agreement for one (1) year extension as presented to the Board on February 4, 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Manager is hereby authorized and directed, on behalf of the Park District and in its name, to execute and deliver such documents and to do such acts as may be deemed necessary or appropriate to accomplish the intentions of this resolution.

Moved by Director _____, and seconded by Director _____, and adopted February 4, 2025, by the following vote:

FOR:

AGAINST:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

