



To: President and Members of the Munster Town Council

From: Jim Marino
Town Manager

Date: November 3, 2025

Re: Lobbying Services Agreement

Summary

The town has engaged the law firm of Barnes & Thornburg LLP to advocate for the Town's interests before the Indiana General Assembly. Their services include monitoring legislation impacting Munster, drafting legislation, meeting with legislators on the town's behalf, monitoring relevant hearings and testifying on behalf of the town if necessary, representing the town in front of executive branch agencies, monitoring and assisting with grants, and tracking federal legislation that may impact the town.

Although these services provide advantages to the town, they are not required continuously. Certain tasks can be handled by staff or accessed through alternative resources. For example, staff actively monitors legislation, a function also performed by Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (AIM). AIM collaborates closely with legislators on important initiatives and legislation to promote municipal interests.

Due to the anticipated decrease in the town's property tax revenues resulting from Senate Enrolled Act 1 (SEA 1), staff has been instructed to explore methods for reducing expenses. Since the services of Barnes & Thornburg are not required on a continuous basis, the town can achieve savings by ending its engagement agreement with them. Their annual service fee totals 150,000. However, there will be occasions when the town requires additional support to promote our interests. During such instances, we can engage Barnes & Thornburg to represent us in advocating for specific legislation or initiatives.

I had a conversation with our representative at Barnes & Thornburg regarding our intent to terminate the engagement agreement. He expressed an understanding of our financial motivations for ending the agreement and looks forward to working with us in the future on legislative matters.

Recommendation

By motion and voice vote, direct the town manager to notify Barnes & Thornburg LLC that the town is terminating its engagement agreement for state legislative and executive branch relations counsel services.