COMMISSIONERS COURT
COMMUNICATION

COURT ORDER NUMBER 145714
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DATE: 8/19/2025

SUBJECT: **CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE ATTORNEY EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT ENGAGING TIM DAVIS OF JACKSON WALKER, LLP FOR THE DEFENSE OF TOM WILDER, DISTRICT CLERK IN A LAWSUIT ENTITLED THE STATE OF TEXAS, EX. REL., CONGHUA YAN V. TOM WILDER, IN HIS OFFICIAL CAPACITY AS DISTRICT CLERK OF TARRANT COUNTY, CASE NO. 141-257219-25**

COMMISSIONERS COURT ACTION REQUESTED

It is requested that the Commissioners Court consider the approval of the Attorney Employment Agreement engaging Jackson Walker, LLP as outside counsel for Tarrant County District Clerk Tom Wilder.

BACKGROUND

Tarrant County District Clerk, Tom Wilder has been sued in a Chapter 87 proceeding to remove a public official. Pursuant to Local Government Code Section 157.901, it is necessary for outside counsel to be employed to represent any employee or official where a conflict might exist. Tom Wilder has been sued in the lawsuit entitled the State of Texas, Ex. Rel., Conghua Yan v. Tom Wilder, in his Official Capacity as District Clerk of Tarrant County, Case No. 141-257219-25.

With approval of this action, Tarrant County District Clerk Tom Wilder will have representation in this lawsuit.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact associated with this action is unknown at this time, however, the law firm is to use all reasonable means to resolve this matter at a total cost of no more than $30,000.00, subject to further court approval. Funds are available in account 62200-2025 - District Clerk Professional Liability/ 4810010000 - District Clerk/ 585071 - Litigation Expense.

SUBMITTED BY	Criminal District Attorney	PREPARED BY:	Polly Maxwell
		APPROVED BY:	Craig Price

PHIL SORRELLS
Criminal District Attorney
Tarrant County

August 6, 2025

Commissioners Court
Administration Building
100 E. Weatherford, Room 502-A
Fort Worth, Texas 76196-0609

Re: **ATTORNEY EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT – RE: DISTRICT CLERK TOM WILDER**
The State of Texas, Ex. Rel., Conghua Yan v. Tom Wilder, in his Official Capacity as District Clerk of Tarrant County, Case No. 141-257219-25, 141st District Court, Tarrant County, Texas

Dear Judge O'Hare:

Thank you for considering me to serve as outside conflicts counsel in this matter. Specifically, I am writing to confirm that Jackson Walker, LLP (the "Law Firm") and Tarrant County, Texas (the "County") agree that the Law Firm will, upon approval by the Tarrant County Commissioners, represent Tarrant County District Clerk Tom Wilder (the "Client") in his official capacity.

Scope of Engagement: The Law Firm is authorized to represent the Client in this matter and to appear on the Client's behalf before courts, arbitration panels, or similar authorities as may be required to represent the Client. Except as may be limited by the attorney-client privilege, the Law Firm agrees to keep the County apprised of the status of the case as the case progresses.

Services and Rates: The legal services to be provided by the Law Firm include, but are not limited to, conferences (both in person and by telephone), correspondence, research, analysis, investigation, preparation of legal documents, meetings with parties, witnesses, and other necessary persons, negotiations, written discovery and depositions, trial and hearing preparation, appearances in court and in mediation, and all related work required to represent the Client properly in this matter.

The rates for legal services provided by the Law Firm are as follows:

$400.00 per hour for attorney services rendered by Law Firm. Additional expenses as may be required to represent the Client may be charged to the County, including but not limited to court costs, filing fees, postage and copy charges, courier fees, costs to create exhibits, expert and consultant fees, and other reasonably necessary items. **The Law Firm, however, will not hire outside experts or consultants, will not incur travel expenses, and will not incur any other**

substantial expense without the County's prior approval. The Law Firm will work with counsel for the County in this lawsuit pursuant to joint defense and common interest privileges to the extent ethically possible in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to reduce costs. The County understands that the Law Firm's ethical duty of loyalty is solely to the Client.

The Law Firm agrees to keep track of time and to submit redacted bills on a periodic basis for payment. Time will be billed in 1/10th increments. In order to meet existing deadlines and in order to preserve and protect the Client's interests, the Law Firm may have needed to perform certain necessary services prior to formal approval of this contract and may bill for such services.

The Law Firm shall use all reasonable means, including the utilization of dispositive pretrial motions as appropriate, to resolve this matter as quickly and inexpensively as reasonably and ethically possible. The Law Firm cannot guarantee specific outcomes nor guarantee the amount of time that will ultimately be needed to adequately represent the Client as much depends on actions taken by the opposing party, the Court, and other matters beyond my control, nor have I yet had an opportunity to fully review all relevant materials or formulate any sort of a reliable budget. The Law Firm will endeavor, however, to complete this assignment for less than $30,000.00 if at all possible. In the event the billing reaches $30,000.00, the Law Firm shall brief the Tarrant County Commissioners Court on the budget and request an additional reasonable amount to complete the matter.

NOTICE TO CLIENTS: The State Bar of Texas investigates and prosecutes professional misconduct committed by Texas attorneys. Although not every complaint against or dispute with a lawyer involves professional misconduct, the State Bar's Office of Chief Disciplinary Counsel will provide you with information about how to file a complaint. Please call 1-800-932-1900 toll-free for more information.

Sincerely,

_____
JACKSON WALKER LLP

AGREED: _____
Tom Wilder
Tarrant County District Clerk

TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS

see separate page
Tim O'Hare, County Judge

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Criminal District Attorney's Office*

CERTIFICATION OF AVAILABLE FUNDS: $_____

Tarrant County Auditor

*By law, the Criminal District Attorney's Office may only approve contracts for its clients. We reviewed this document as to form from our client's legal perspective. Other parties may not rely on this approval. Instead those parties should seek contract review from independent counsel.