

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
REGENTS COMMUNICATION**

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Regental Action Required Under the State of Michigan Conflict of Interest Statute

Action Requested: Authorization for the University to enter into a contract with Blue Cottage Consulting, Inc. (University of Michigan Employee, Benjamin Bassin, Owner, Stockholder, Vice President).

Background:

The University of Michigan Emergency Medicine seeks approval to enter into a contract with Blue Cottage Consulting, Inc. (also known as Blue Cottage of Cannon Design) for consulting services.

The proposed contract falls under the State of Michigan Conflict of Interest Statute as Benjamin Bassin is employed by the University as a Clinical Professor with Emergency Medicine and would be a party to the contract as owner, stockholder, and Vice President of Blue Cottage Consulting, Inc.

However, the Statute allows the university to enter into such contracts if the following conditions are met:

- a) The public servant promptly discloses any pecuniary interest in the contract to the official body which has power to approve the purchase, which disclosure shall be a matter of record in its official proceedings.
- b) The purchase is approved by a vote of not less than 2/3 of the full membership of the approving body in open session without the vote of the public servant making the disclosure.
- c) The official body discloses the following summary information in its official minutes:
  - i) The name of each party involved in the contract.
  - ii) The terms of the purchase, including duration, financial consideration between the parties, facilities or services of the public entity included in the purchase, and the nature and degree of assignment of employees of the public entity for fulfillment of the purchase.
  - iii) The nature of any pecuniary interest.

The following information is provided in compliance with the statutory requirements contained in Section (c) above:

- i) The parties to the contract are the Regents of the University of Michigan and its Emergency Medicine and Blue Cottage Consulting, Inc.
- ii) The contract is for consulting services to facilitate and attend regular project management/planning meetings so they can advise the Design Thinking Workshops and Go-to-Market Strategy teams for a term of two years at a total cost not to exceed \$500,000. Blue Cottage Consulting, Inc. will supply the necessary resources and personnel to fulfill this contract. The remaining base contract terms and conditions are typical to those used in Procurement Services standard templates for other similar contracts entered into by the Regents.
- iii) The pecuniary interest arises from the fact that University of Michigan employee, Benjamin Bassin, is owner, stockholder, and Vice President of Blue Cottage Consulting, Inc.

Benjamin Bassin has met state law requirements with the disclosure of his pecuniary interest and formal appointment arrangements with the University of Michigan. Requirements, if any, that may be applicable by the supervisor of Benjamin Bassin under the Emergency Medicine or OVPR's Conflict of Interest Committee's procedures are separately analyzed and managed.

We recommend that the Board of Regents approve the contract between the University of Michigan and Blue Cottage Consulting, Inc. subject to requirements, if any, that the supervisor of Benjamin Bassin or the Emergency Medicine or OVPR's Conflict of Interest Committee may impose.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Hewlett III  
Interim Executive Vice President  
and Chief Financial Officer

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