

Robinson retained as city attorney

Contributed by Chris Case
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It took the mayor's vote to break a council tie Monday night and keep Kent Robinson as Cuba's city attorney. The council was locked in disagreement over Mayor Kenny Killeen's choice to retain Robinson's law firm as the city's legal representation, with aldermen Kevin Copling, Faye Howard and Don Conaway opposed to the appointment.

Copling made it clear from the start that he wanted a local attorney serving the city, not one from Rolla. "I say we go with Lange & Lange," he said. "They're about the same price, they're right here in town, and not only that, they bring money into our community. They buy 4-H cattle at the fair and support our local kids."

Claiming it had nothing to do with Robinson or his past performance as attorney, Alderman Howard said her decision to vote no was based primarily on supporting local businesses: "When we do these bids, we look at them and say if we can keep it in town, let's keep it in town."

There were three bids opened for city attorney and two bids for city prosecutor: Catherine Lange (Lange, Paulus, Howald & Smith), Shelly Woodward (Woodward Law Firm) and Robinson (Williams, Robinson, Rigler & Buschjost) all submitted bids for city attorney at \$2,000 per month, plus hourly fees for additional legal time required.

Stephen Paulus (Lange, Paulus, Howald & Smith), the current prosecutor for the Cuba Municipal Court, gave a city prosecutor's bid at \$850 per month, with \$100 per hour fees for additional services, and Robinson also bid the prosecutor's job at \$750 per month, plus additional hourly fees of \$150 as needed. However, Robinson, upon learning that Paulus had offered to retain his position, asked that his proposal be withdrawn if the city was satisfied with the current attorney's courtroom performance.

Alderman Les Murdock moved to accept the mayoral appointments as presented, with both Robinson and Paulus being retained as city attorney and city prosecutor, respectively.

"I've worked with all the people who have put in bids, and they are people like you and I. They have both good points and bad points," said Murdock. "I think our present lawyer has done as well, maybe better than the others. I know we have a lot of things going on right now that he's involved in and it would be beneficial to have him stay with us. Right or wrong, I don't know, but I would rather stay where I am."

As roll call was taken and the council ended up tied with three votes in favor of the motion and three against, Mayor Killeen explained why he was breaking the tie in favor of retaining Robinson's firm: "I know in the past we've had different lawyers from time to time, and we've always gone back to our current legal representation (Robinson) because his firm had more background in city law. I'm going to let it stand the way it is right now."