

SPONSORED BY: _____
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CITY OF HOBOKEN
RESOLUTION NO.: _____

**RESOLUTION FOR A WRITTEN REQUEST TO THE MAYOR OF
HOBOKEN TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CONCERNING HIS RECENT APPOINTMENT AS ‘OF COUNSEL’
WITH THE FIRM LAVERY, SELVAGGI, ABROMITIS & COHEN, P.C.**

WHEREAS, the City of Hoboken pays its mayor \$116,950, the highest in Hudson County, as a full-time position; and

WHEREAS, on both November 2nd and November 12th, then Councilman and Mayor-Elect Bhalla, respectively, stated in interviews with the members of the press that he would resign from his position as partner at Florio Perrucci Steinhardt & Fader and work “full-time for the people of Hoboken”;

WHEREAS, on Friday, February 16th, 2018, the law firm Lavery, Selvaggi, Abromitis & Cohen, P.C (“LSAC”) posted publicly on their webpage the following announcement concerning Hoboken Mayor Ravinder Bhalla:

“Lavery, Selvaggi, Abromitis & Cohen, P.C. is pleased to welcome Ravi S. Bhalla as Of Counsel to the Firm. In this capacity, Ravi will provide strategic advice and counsel to the Firm, enabling it to draw on his broad range of legal expertise as a seasoned litigator and trial attorney. Among Ravi’s areas of expertise are employment, commercial, civil rights, criminal defense, and governmental affairs. While not practicing law, Ravi will serve as a valuable resource to clients and attorneys at the Firm.

Ravi most recently served as a partner at Florio Perrucci Steinhardt & Fader, where he represented major corporations, small businesses, public entities and individuals in complex civil and criminal litigation matters....”

WHEREAS, on Friday evening, February 16th, 2018, just before a three-day weekend, Mayor Bhalla, disclosed only on his personal Facebook page this message with a link to LSAC’s announcement:

“So happy to have an association with this great firm! Although I will miss practicing law, I’m so happy for the opportunity to mentor and guide younger attorneys.”

WHEREAS, as of the date of this resolution, neither the City of Hoboken nor Mayor Bhalla have provided any official statement to the City Council nor to Hoboken residents concerning the new role, the required commitment and any compensation he will receive for this new role that could distract him from serving in the best interests of Hoboken as a full time Mayor; and

WHEREAS the City Council are concerned about the potential conflicts associated with Mayor Bhalla’s new role with LSAC including, but not limited to: (1) financial and political

incentives to prioritize LSAC and its clients over the City of Hoboken and (2) established and future clients of LSAC which may preclude the City of Hoboken from obtaining the services from such clients today or in the future or which may require the Mayor to abstain from acting in the best interest of Hoboken; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and many residents in Hoboken have expressed a desire that the Mayor of Hoboken be a full-time position to deal with the myriad of complex issues that Hoboken faces and be free from conflicts which would keep the Mayor from performing in the best interests of Hoboken at any time; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wish Mayor Bhalla to provide responses to a list of questions so that the council and the public can have a better understanding of the new Of Counsel role with LSAC, the required commitment he will need to make under the contract with LSAC, and any and all potential conflicts that could arise under this arrangement so that they can better ascertain the implications to Hoboken and its residents; and

WHEREAS the Optional Municipal Charter Law (aka “The Faulkner Act”) 40:69A-36-37.1 provides the city council with various legislative tools to make inquiries by resolution including requiring “a report on any aspect of the government of the municipality by making a written request to the mayor”; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hoboken City Council submits the attached written request to the Mayor of Hoboken to respond to the cited questions of the City Council under its legislative powers of inquiry and we kindly request that he respond no later than Friday, March 2nd, 2018.

Meeting date: February 21, 2018

Councilperson	Yea	Nay	Abstain/Present	Absent
Peter Cunningham				
Michael DeFusco				
James Doyle				
Vanessa Falco				
Tiffanie Fisher				
Jennifer Giattino				
Emily Jabbour				
Michael Russo				
President Ruben Ramos, Jr.				

APPROVED:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

STEPHEN D. MARKS
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR

BRIAN ALOIA, ESQ.
CORPORATION COUNSEL