

## Desert Sun

Estimated printed pages: 3

August 29, 2003

Section: Local

Page: B1

### DHS manager again under fire

*Jose Paul Corona*

*Staff*

*The Desert Sun*

New conflict-of-interest charge stems from engineering report

By Jose Paul Corona

The Desert Sun

DESERT HOT SPRINGS - The City Council plans to discuss on Sept. 16 a new conflict-of-interest allegation levied against City Manager Jerry Hanson, the second such allegation since his February appointment.

The council conducted, and on Aug. 5 terminated, its investigation of a conflict-of-interest claim involving the city hiring Hanson's son's employer to install security equipment on city property.

The new allegation involves Hanson preparing a Dec. 14 engineering report for a resident and general contractor while Hanson served as the city's public works director.

Nathan Barankin, a spokesman for the state attorney general's office, said that the working relationship potentially could be a conflict of interest.

Hanson and Mayor Matt Weyuker have refused repeated verbal and written requests for an interview regarding the allegation.

Weyuker and other council members have said they can't comment on the issue because it is a personnel matter.

Weyuker said the council would discuss the new concern in closed session, according to Candi de Lima, assistant to the city manager. Depending on what action is taken, a report could be made during the open portion of the regularly scheduled City Council meeting that follows.

During a special council meeting Saturday, resident and council candidate Karl Baker asked that an investigation be conducted.

Neither the council nor Hanson addressed Baker's comments at the meeting. However, Councilwoman Mary Stephens suggested that Hanson's contract be looked at and possibly renegotiated in light of what she termed as "the recent controversy."

The council is set to review Hanson's contract Tuesday during a closed session meeting before a regularly scheduled council meeting.

Hanson makes \$115,000 a year, plus benefits. He receives an additional \$10,000 a year from the city's Redevelopment Agency.

Hanson's contract went into effect Feb. 12 and is automatically renewed every 30 days. The contract can be terminated by Hanson or the city at any time with a 30-day notice. If either Hanson or the city terminates that agreement, Hanson receives a year's pay with benefits.