

Columbia City Council Pre-Council Minutes

Monday, February 17, 2014 6:00 p.m.

City Hall – Conference Room 1A/1B

701 East Broadway

Council members present: Mayor McDavid, Fred Schmidt, Mike Trapp, Karl Skala, Ian Thomas, Laura Nauser and Barbara Hoppe

Absent: None

Mayor McDavid called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

City Manager Mike Matthes explained that tonight will begin as an open meeting and then will close for further discussions. He introduced Director of Human Resources, Margrace Buckler. Ms. Buckler and Cavanaugh Noce, Assistant City Counselor, explained that they are the City staff leads for the Meet and Confer process and she began to introduce the representatives in attendance tonight.

Meet and Confer with Labor Groups:

1055 IAFF: Captain Steve Forrest, President of the Columbia Professional Firefighters Local 1055, presented their goals for the FY2015 meet and confer process. The items included in their requests were outlined in order of importance, and are as follows:

- 1) The Safer Act Grant expires in 2015. They ask that the five positions funded by that grant, be funded permanently. Those positions allow Engine 2 to be in service on a more consistent basis and discontinued funds could result in layoffs and closure of Engine 2.
- 2) They ask that we proceed with the implementation of Phase 2 of the Compensation and Classification Study. Phase 1 increased the hourly wage for the lowest paid employees making for more competitive recruitment that is consistent with market minimums. Phase 2 is in the early stages of development but will further enable the Fire Department to retain employees. They have faith in the City Manager and Human Resources to work to implement Phase 2 in a fair and just manner resulting in a package that will address the compression issues between various ranks, therefore increasing the wage for employees that have been in their current position for five or more years.
- 3) They ask that we grant vacation for 3 employees per day. The current policy allows for two employees to use vacation on any given day and that policy has been in place for 40 years. Columbia has grown over the years, as has the staff in the Fire Department. The current shift schedule allows for 40 vacation slots per year and there are presently 38 line Fire Fighters per shift. With only 40 slots, newer employees are not able to take adequate time off. Allowing 3 employees to take vacation will enhance the benefit package.
- 4) The last request is to restructure step up pay to bring it in line with the rest of the city. All other departments receive a five percent differential or pay equal to the bottom range of the pay scale they are "stepping" into. There seems to be

no reason for the current arrangement and they would like the policy for this department to be consistent with the rest of the city.

Columbia Police Officers Association: Dale Roberts, Executive Director of the Columbia Police Officers Association, presented their goals for the FY2015 meet and confer process. The items included in their requests were outlined as follows:

- 1) The group requests conversion to an 80 hour pay period. This will provide more accurate and equitable pay for officers. He understands the city is changing software systems for payroll and this could be economies of scale for converting to an 80 hour pay period as the new software comes in. This change would bring the Police Department into compliance with the pay practices of most other departments.
- 2) They request addressing shift differential issue for officers. The current differential is computed as a percentage of an officer's rate of pay. The Police Department cannot go forward with a plan to bring the department to full force without an accurate appraisal of the real costs of the services needed.
- 3) They requested better access to the physical fitness facility. This request would be of no cost to City. The hours allowed now are not past 10 pm, but many shifts end past that time. They would like access to key fobs to allow them after-hours access to the fitness center. The Wellness team has identified this as an important issue to pursue. All officers are responsible for city property, so there shouldn't be an issue in having them have access to the fitness center.
- 4) CPOA is requesting a joint City of Columbia-CPOA study of staffing needs within the department. It is widely agreed upon that there is a need for more officers and they feel a study to determine ratios of officers to sergeants, etc. would better prepare the city to continue to address those needs.
- 5) Pay compression is an issue for officers and the Human Resources Department has done great work on the Comp Plan, but it is very important for employees to have fair review of how officers are paid within department.

LIUNA 773: Regina Guevara (local business agent) and Paul Prendergast (attorney) are Field Representatives for Local 773. Ms. Buckler noted that one item has been added since the packet was made public. A revised letter of requests was handed out.

Mr. Prendergast indicated that he has been involved in these negotiations for many years and he provided an overview of requests in order of priority.

- 1) The first item is a zero cost proposal that has been in this process for five years. A proposed ordinance is ready for approval to have the labor contract be recognized as a collective bargaining agreement to bind the City and the Union.

- 2) They request a \$500 flat payment for FY15 in lieu of a base building increase or 50 cent minimum COLA for all Union eligible employees.
- 3) They requested a change to occupational injury leave to ensure that if an employee is injured on the job, that follow up appointments be excused without loss of pay.
- 4) They requested repeal on the Public Works policy on hiring rules with regard to relatives. There is a good policy in place with City that is clear and accurate. They feel the Policy for the Public Works Department is flawed and that the City policy should be applied city wide.
- 5) They requested a review of Chapter 19-95 on restoration of services, to bring clarity between shift differential and restoration pay services.

Mike Matthes thanked them all for coming and explained that at 6:30, Council would move into a closed session. The group took a 10 minute break prior to the closed session.

The closed portion of the meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Closed meeting minutes are not posted online.

The closed session is to discuss negotiations with employee groups as authorized by Section 610.021(9) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri.

Other Topics Council Wishes to Discuss:

None.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:57 PM.