



**UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD
BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

March 25, 2021 at 8:00 a.m.

This meeting was held electronically via ZOOM, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Committee Members Present:

Council Member Hull
Mayor Peterson
Mayor Overson
Mayor Dahle

Council Member Bowen
Mayor Hale
Mayor Silvestrini
Council Member Stewart

Committee Members Absent:

Mayor Bush

Staff:

Chief Petersen
CLO Roberts
Cal Ricotta
Sylvia Cardenas

CFO Hill
Arriann Woolf
Cyndee Young
Steve Quinn, Local 1696

Guests:

Andrew Ridd
Bill Brass
Brad Larson
Dominic Burchett
Erica Langenfass
Greg Fisher

Kate Turnbaugh
Larson Wood
Lana Burningham
Michelle Morse, Gallagher
Nile Easton
Patrick Costin
Rebecca Norfleet, Gallagher

Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Chair Dahle at 8:02 a.m.

As Chair, I have made this written determination that, based upon the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, conducting this Benefits and Compensation meeting with an anchor location would present a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present at an anchor location. Therefore, this meeting will be held in electronic format only with participation available to the public in the manner described in this publicly posted agenda.

Public Comments

None

Public comment was made available live and with a posted email address

Minutes Approval

Council Member Hull moved to approve the minutes from the February 18, 2021 Benefits & Compensation Committee Meeting Minutes as submitted

Mayor Peterson seconded the motion

All in favor, none opposed

Health Insurance Update – HR Deputy Director Ricotta/Gallagher

- ◆ Michelle Morris presented the updated status of insurance with SelectHealth
- ◆ Chief Petersen and Mayor Dahle agree that the savings from the 4% decrease in premiums (\$279,646) will be absorbed into the budget
 - ◆ Chief stated that the UFA portion of the savings is 80% (\$222,000) and the remaining is a savings to the employee share of the contribution
 - ◆ This savings will also allow other budget items to be addressed
- ◆ Dental (PEHP) saw a .5% increase, \$2,319 difference
 - ◆ Did receive a quote from SelectHealth for dental, however it did not match the current plan and did not allow for adult orthodontic care
- ◆ EyeMed saw no increase and the rate is guaranteed for the next 4 years
- ◆ Ancillary Benefits
 - ◆ No increases
- ◆ Mayor Dahle directed Gallagher to continue to move forward with the renewal and stressed the message to UFA employees that their responsible use of the health plan is resulting in premiums that allow for benefits in their pay and a reduction in their premiums
 - ◆ This benefit will be realized with a positive impact in their paycheck

Consideration of CPI Increase for all Personnel – Chief Petersen

- ◆ Chief reviewed his request from the February meeting asking the Benefits & Compensation Committee to consider a 2% VEBA contribution for employees in lieu of the 1.2% average CPI
 - ◆ The concept would be to embed into the budget for civilians beginning July 1, 2021 and implement for sworn January 1, 2022
 - ◆ This would affect the Member Fee by .74% or \$418,000
 - ◆ Chief also explained that postponing sworn contributions until 2021 would help him manage the budget to allow for a 3.5% Member Fee increase recommendation to the Finance Committee
- ◆ Chief Petersen stated more work must be done to educate all UFA employees on the benefit that provides pre-tax deposit, growth, and withdrawal for health care premiums in retirement
 - ◆ Questions such as if the funds are willable must be further explored
- ◆ Chief also clarified that this benefit would be included in base wage comparisons and that if members chose to not accept the 2%, then a 1.2% CPI would be implemented
 - ◆ Chief will embed the 2% into the budget, but is prepared to pivot to the 1.2% if necessary
 - ◆ Mayor Dahle stressed that it be clear that the VEBA be reflected in the ongoing market wage reviews if chosen
- ◆ IAFF President Quinn agrees that with further education and answers, employees will feel this is the right thing to do and is perfectly timed
 - ◆ He believes this is a good time for this product, but wants to be sure he is able to represent the membership effectively and needs a little more time
- ◆ All committee members agreed to move this forward to the Finance Committee

Civilian Market Wage Review – HR Deputy Director Ricotta

- ◆ UFA HR utilizes a system (TechNet) that provides comparisons in both internal and outside markets
- ◆ Deputy Director Ricotta explained the document outlining the positions that were reviewed and needing reclassification

- ◆ Usually HR conducts comparisons for 1/3 of the civilian positions, but due to vacancies throughout the past year and comparisons having been conducted prior to posting the positions, five positions were reviewed in preparation for this coming budget
 - ◆ Positions reviewed with no proposed changes to title or grade: Director of Communications and GIS Specialist
 - ◆ Positions reviewed with proposals to reclassify to a higher pay grade or title: Communications Supervisor, Communications Tech, Human Resource Tech
- ◆ HR Director Woolf stated that now that the sworn have a robust tool for comparison, the focus is shifting to civilian positions
 - ◆ A Key Initiative for the coming budget year is to create a robust tool for civilian positions
- ◆ All committee members were in support of the reclassifications and title changes and agreed to move this forward to the Finance Committee

Consider Restructure of Pay Plan for Mechanics – AC Burchett

- ◆ AC Burchett presented a memo outlining the request to provide additional pay to encourage and reward formal training and certifications
 - ◆ This will improve emergency services delivery by improving the quality of maintenance on the emergency vehicles
 - ◆ This program will allow apparatus to be out of service less and when needing service, will be done in-house, getting the crews back into frontline apparatus quicker
 - ◆ The focus of program is to ensure the technicians working on the apparatus are held to similar standards as the crews on the apparatus
- ◆ The estimated impact to the FY21/22 budget is \$16,326 and may be realized annually until all mechanics reach their top salary range based on the level certified
- ◆ Chief Petersen expressed his support and feels this is a worthwhile investment for UFA
- ◆ All committee members agreed to forward the proposal to the Finance Committee

Consider Restructure of Pay Plan for Fire Prevention – AC Burchett

- ◆ AC Burchett apologized for not including Local 1696 throughout this entire process
 - ◆ Local President Quinn stated that they are in support concept-wise, but have concerns and questions as to how the system will work
- ◆ The intent is to recognize the value in the Fire Marshal and the Specialists acting as Area Fire Marshals for the municipalities
- ◆ Chief stated that in reality, these positions are already doing this job and have the same requirements and the same job, the request is to compensate the positions to better reflect the duties
 - ◆ This would also encourage additional training and encourage growth
- ◆ Chief Petersen is in full support, AC Burchett has done extensive work and will collaborate with Local 1696 to solidify the proposal
- ◆ Mayor Peterson feels this type of adjustment is necessary to maintain quality salary structure and appreciates the effort to move in a direction that strengthens the organization
- ◆ All committee members agreed to forward the proposal to the Finance Committee

Closed Session

None

Recommendations

- ◆ Mayor Dahle asked that Chief Petersen and CFO Hill prepare a recommendation letter for the April 15 Finance Committee meeting outlining the agreed upon proposals above

Adjournment

Council Member Stewart moved to adjourn the March 25, 2021 Benefits & Compensation Committee Meeting
Mayor Overson seconded the motion
All voted in favor, none opposed

DRAFT