

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF CUBA, MISSOURI
TUESDAY – AUGUST 10,2021 – 5:30 P.M.
CUBA CITY HALL COUNCIL ROOM**

Mayor Leathers called the meeting to order. Aldermen present: Jeff Bouse, Curtis Holt, Warren Graddy, Dave Honea, Sam Black. Aldermen absent: Kevin Copling. Public Works Director: Craig Bouse. Police Captain: Ben Scharfenberg. City Attorney: Lance Thurman.

Mayor Leathers addressed the council room of employees on the changes of Mayors, aldermen, and committee groups that come and go. As those will always change, the employees are the ones putting in the time daily and will hopefully retire with the City of Cuba. It is the councils job while elected to represent and work for the employees, be the stewards of the tax payers money, and listen to the citizens. Mayor Leathers feels that all employees deserve respect regardless of their job title or position. Obviously, there will be differences of pay, but at the end of the day all employees have to respect one another while helping make the City move forward. Mayor Leathers urges all to lean on the council and their committees when necessary, and encourages the council to be available and accommodating of the committee meetings.

Mayor Leathers stated that Comptroller Christine Nash has put together some salary compression scales similar to ones presented at budget time to discuss and answer questions if necessary.

Mayor Leathers asked for any questions or statements before getting into the salary discussion.

Jimmy Happel stated that he has worked with the City of Cuba for 28 years and has never seen things this bad within the city. He blames the council for a lot of the problems, as he feels the council picks and chooses. He feels the salary study done a few years back would have been a good steppingstone to get things in the right direction and solidify salaries, but now they are astray again. Happel feels with out steppingstones within the salary scale that can be seen, then nobody would want to switch to other departments or take on more responsibilities.

Comptroller Christine Nash thanked Mayor Leathers for the words of encouragement.

Comptroller Nash addressed Happel's concerns with the salary scale. In regards, to the miscommunication of the salaries, maybe the supervisors should be included in the next budget meetings. There are steppingstones, and what was previously presented had good raises for the public works employees, but they don't see that information as ultimately the council decides and therefore it could get some hopes up. Moving forward, maybe supervisors and all employees should be more active in the budget to eliminate any misunderstanding.

Mayor Leathers agreed. In the years he has been on council, there has not been a clear-cut way of pay raises.

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Happel stated that in the time he has worked for the city, there have been wage freezes, and some crazy things take place with raises with nothing set in stone.

Comptroller Nash clarified that there was a salary study set in place as of October 2020 and it is a moving document to what the council passes, and it will show how one will move laterally or vertically within the scale. Maybe for a better understanding of the salary scale, all should get a copy of it for discussion.

Happel discussed new employees with a higher starting salary than some who have years of city experience and the frustration. Happel explained a previous new hire that is no longer working with the city and the salary they were hired in at being much more than some working, and that it has happened this way a few times. The committee and council hires people and picks a salary instead of following the salary study.

Mayor Leathers agreed that for the next budget and moving forward, supervisors and all employees should be involved. For the immediate fix, the compression scale needs to be looked at so that everyone is where they need to be and compensated fairly. Before the next budget, Mayor Leathers wants to get a committee with Graddy and get a system that will work and everyone understands.

Comptroller Nash explained the salary scale proposal, and explained it is very similar to the one proposed at budget time. It was clarified that within the proposal there are some amounts that are negative, but never has it been proposed to not give a raise of any sort. Those negatives came into play with previous salaries being higher than the original salary study salaries, but the \$1/hour raise was applied. This current proposal is from the original salary study that was approved in October 2020 and then moved the document with the raises passed by the council. It was also explained that this salary proposal was presented back in May, but the council did not pass it. This current salary proposal was figured the same way the administrative, line 12, employees was figured. This current salary does have a minimum and maximum pay range with milestones for years of service in the current position held, showing the possible room for growth and movement.

Attorney Thurman suggested to give all employees the salary study and structures, and then have a meeting to discuss and explain how it works. He also explained to the new council members and employees many factors that have affected salaries in the last couple of years; one being the minimum wage going up closing the bottom which effects the new employees doing nothing for the existing. He feels the salary study is worth it in the long run, but only if all the employees and aldermen understand it.

David Minardi asked the council why it took the employees all coming to a meeting to get salaries reviewed when the salary study was adopted in October 2020, and then a salary proposal was presented in May at budget time. Black explained that a salary guideline was being followed since May 2019 but it

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wasn't formally adopted until October 2020 but there were some payment adjustments made based off the salary study. Minardi then asked if the salary study was adopted in October 2020, why in April 2021 did a certain department get raises. Minardi feels that after numerous conversations with other employees, since a certain alderman was elected in 2017 they all have targets on their backs leading to poor attitudes and bad employee morale, even with that alderman gone. None have tried to correct any of the issues until all employees stick together and attend a council meeting. Minardi explained that as he is very happy with the current raise that was given, another department was given a raise and he questioned why everyone wasn't looked at. Ultimately, why does it take all employees sticking together to get something looked into.

Mayor Leathers felt those was good questions and asked to council to provide answers.

Bouse stated that yes it was presented, but there were a lot of texts going on saying why it couldn't be passed, and he has those texts on his phone. Bouse stated that if that wasn't going to be passed then a 1.3% would have been passed and as that is a lot for someone at the top, it isn't much for those on the bottom, so he proposed the \$1/hour to make everyone happy. Minardi said that everyone was happy, and then an additional raise was given. Bouse stated that he requested that meeting be held in the evening so that he could attend as he works, but it wasn't. Mayor Leathers clarified that the meeting that had the motion and vote on the additional raise was held at a regular council meeting and passed with a 5-0 vote. Bouse said that himself nor Holt voted on that motion. Mayor Leathers again clarified that there were no nays on the vote, therefore passing because if you don't vote aye then you either have to vote nay or abstain. Comptroller Nash also wanted to clarify that the raise Bouse spoke of earlier would have been a 1.3% with the compression pay.

Comptroller Nash explained why the additional raise was proposed for the administrative departments as the starting salary for a new position was the same as some who had worked for the city for a couple of years.

Minardi again wanted to know from the council why something can only be done when all the employees stick together and attend a meeting.

Bouse asked why Comptroller Nash didn't bring everyone up to the compression when she proposed the administrative departments. Nash explained that it was presented previously and turned down so was fighting for her department as other departments have done. Black also explained that it all started when the public works secretary salary was set, being as much as some who have already worked for years.

Mayor Leathers suggested the council to make a motion allowing Comptroller Nash to meet with the employees and departments to discuss the salary study to make right or make corrections allowing to move forward. This would be retroactive July 1.

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Graddy would not feel comfortable voting on something brought to the council and not have meeting with the committee first.

Motion by Holt, seconded by Honea, to allow Comptroller Nash to meet with employees to discuss the salary study and make compression corrections to move forward. Vote: All ayes.

Mayor Leathers stated that once this is complete then a special meeting will be held for discussion and then it will be put to vote.

Mayor Leathers would like to have a salary committee that meets frequently especially going into budget time to make sure these problems do not happen again and including supervisors.

Motion by Black, seconded by Graddy, to have a salary committee with Alderman Warren Graddy, Alderman Jeff Bouse, Comptroller Chris Nash, Public Works Director Craig Bouse, and Mayor Cody Leathers. Vote: All ayes.

Chris Durham asked the council what the starting salary was for a truck driver. It was questioned as to where that fell in the salary study and determined it was \$14.79/hour. Durham then asked why someone was hired in at more than the starting salary as this employee was making more than him who has worked here for years. Durham feels there needs to be consistency. Bouse stated that when that employee was hired in, a former alderman wanted to use past experience to determine starting pay. It was questioned how it passed with only one alderman.

Jerry Montgomery asked why there are different levels of laborers on the study scale, shouldn't they all be the same as they help other departments. Comptroller Nash explained they came from the original maker of the salary study. Montgomery stated that the laborer from his department helps other departments and they are on a higher laborer scale and feels they should be the same. PWD Bouse feels that level 10 laborer on the salary scale should be done away with.

Bouse stated that on the salary study, Jacob Bouse and Jessica Baker started at the same time, but Baker is higher on the scale than Jacob Bouse. Comptroller Nash said that it is all based off job descriptions.

Jacob Bouse asked how to move up on the scale and between the minimum and maximum levels. Mayor Leathers explained it is years of service and any advancements of positions. Jacob Bouse stated the difference of his pay verses Baker's pay. Comptroller Nash stated that it is based off their position, accountability, and the skills required.

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Bouse asked the definition of salary cap. He was told by the previous Mayor that when the salary cap was given, then no other raises were to be given. Comptroller Nash said that a cost of living raise would still be given.

Black wants all to understand the salary study.

Motion by Graddy, seconded by Black, to adjourn.