



## **Employee Relations Committee Meeting Agenda**

***Monday, April 17, 2023 - 5:30 PM***

Newton City Hall - Council Chambers  
101 W 4th St S  
Newton, IA 50208

- I. Roll Call
- II. Approve the minutes of the February 20, 2023 Employee Relations Committee Meeting
- III. Fire Captain Pay Range
  1. Authorizing increase in pay for Fire Captain from Range 8 to Range 9 in the Fire Department
- IV. Adjourn

Meeting Agenda Employee Relations Committee MEETING MINUTES  
February 20, 2023, 5:30 PM  
Newton City Hall - Council Chambers  
101 W 4th St S  
Newton, IA 50208

Meeting Items

- I. Roll Call  
The Employee Relations Committee Meeting of the Newton, Iowa met at 5:30 P.M. on the above date in the Council Chambers at 101 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street South. Present Committee Members: Dalton, Ervin, Trotter. Absent: None.
- II. Review of Minutes of the December 19, 2022 meeting  
Moved by Dalton, seconded by George to approve the December 19, 2022 Employee Relations Committee Meeting Minutes. AYES: Three. NAYS: None. Motion passed.
- III. Recommendation to Approve Utilities Water Distribution staffing  
Utilities Director Jody Rhone proposed to add a Water Distribution Operator for all utility locates for city utilities freeing time for the current Engineering Tech Trainee who will be taking on additional responsibilities. Moved by George, seconded by Dalton to recommend to the full council. AYES: Three. NAYS: None. Motion passed.
- IV. Recommendation to Approve Code Enforcement Division Staffing  
Police Chief Burdess proposed additional staffing in the Code Enforcement Division in an effort to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of code enforcement in Newton. This CSO position would take on the responsibility for grass and snow complaints as well as other minor code violations currently handled by other departments. Moved by Dalton, seconded by George. AYES: Three. NAYS: None. Motion passed to recommend to the full council.
- V. Recommendation to Approve a Fire Prevention Specialist Position  
Fire Chief Wellik proposed adding a Fire Prevention Specialist who would be a member of the executive staff and primarily responsible for community risk reduction. They would be the primary fire investigator and expected to be on scene to manage the investigation from start to finish. Additional duties include general preplanning and hazardous materials operations planning and support, vehicle maintenance and repair, vehicle specification and acquisition, the liaison to Building Safety, personnel training for fire prevention, code enforcement, and arson investigation. Moved by George, seconded by Wade. AYES: Three. NAYS: None. Motion passed to recommend to the full council.
- VI. Recommendation to Approve Public Works / Engineering staffing  
Public Works Director Grife proposed to replace the open Civil Engineering Technician III position with a Civil Engineering Technician I to be filled by the current Engineering Technician Trainee and to add one Engineering Technician Trainee employee within Engineering and one Public Works Operator to Public Works Operations. The Engineering Technicians provide services and technical assistance to all the city divisions and departments, contractors, and the public. Historically, Engineering was staffed with three full-time technicians to complete these duties; currently, there is one. The additional operator would be split between Landfill and Streets to allow for the busier landfill season and street snow removal in the winter. Moved by Dalton, seconded by George. AYES: Three. NAYS: None.

VII. Adjourn

Moved by George, seconded by Dalton to adjourn the meeting at 5:55 P.M. Motion unanimously carried by voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Katrina Davis CMC, Newton City Clerk



## Memorandum

To: Matt Muckler  
From: Chief Jarrod Wellik  
Priority: High  
Date: 4/12/2023  
Re: Changing of Fire Captain Pay from Range 8 to Range 9

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The purpose of this memo is to provide information regarding the change of Fire Captain's pay from Range 8 to Range 9. The Fire Captain pay range has been set at Range 8 prior to my arrival in 2011. At that time, Fire Captain's top pay was \$69,510 and Firefighter/Paramedic top pay was \$57,838 leaving a gap between Fire Captain and Firefighter/Paramedic \$11,672. Both of these positions work a 2,912 hour year resulting in a Fire Captain hourly pay of \$23.87 and a Firefighter/Paramedic hourly pay of \$19.86. The Fire Captain is an exempt position and therefore not entitled to overtime pay. The Firefighter/Paramedic overtime rate (HRX1.5) is \$29.79. Taking the pay gap and dividing by the overtime rate ( $\$11,672/\$29.79$ ) results in a requirement to work an additional 391.8 hours, or 16.32 shifts ( $391.8/24$ ) to achieve the same pay. This gap was large enough to make the promotion to Fire Captain desirable from an economic standpoint.

Fast forward 12 years, the current Fire Captain's top pay is \$88,065 and Firefighter/Paramedic top pay was \$75,660 leaving a gap between Fire Captain and Firefighter/Paramedic \$12,405. Both of these positions work a 2,912 hour year resulting in a Fire Captain hourly pay of \$30.24 and a Firefighter/Paramedic hourly pay of \$25.98. The Fire Captain is an exempt position and therefore not entitled to overtime pay. The Firefighter/Paramedic overtime rate (HRX1.5) is \$38.97. Taking the pay gap and dividing by the overtime rate ( $\$12,405/\$38.97$ ) results in a requirement to work an additional 318.3 hours, or 13.26 shifts ( $318.3/24$ ) to achieve the same pay. This gap is still considerable but has shrunk. In a recent promotion, the firefighter/paramedic that promoted was currently earning \$75,660. Once promoted, he was placed on the pay matrix with a minimum of a 5% increase by Administrative Policy. This placed him at a range 8, step 10, or \$80,669. As a firefighter he was eligible for overtime at a rate of

\$38.97. (1.5 X \$25.98). There is a \$5,009 difference in his pay. This would equate to 128.5 hours of overtime to make the same amount. Since they work 24 hour shifts this equates to 5.35 shifts. As a frame of reference, in 2011 a firefighter would have to work approximately 16 shifts to make up that difference. This particular person worked quite a bit of overtime instead of working part time for another department, which is very common amongst firefighters. From January through June of 2022, this person worked a total of 139 hours of overtime. Simple multiplication (139 X \$38.97) would result in \$5,417 in extra pay for the six-month period. In his own terms, he stated he is taking a pay cut (annually) to become a supervisor with no option for extra work or pay to change the gap. It would take this newly promoted Fire Captain six years to make the top pay range for Fire Captain.

Summary:

The Fire Department Fire Captain position is the supervisory leader of each of the department's three shifts. This position is not only responsible for day-to-day leadership, but is responsible for managing the culture of the organization. We continue to see escalation in pay scales for firefighters across the State. It is important to set the pay for the Fire Captain at a level commensurate with their duties and responsibilities. This amount should also represent an amount that provides benefit for staff to promote, not take a pay cut to promote.

Jarrold Wellik  
Fire Chief

## City of Newton Council Report

**Item:**

Authorizing increase in pay for Fire Captain from Range 8 to Range 9 in the Fire Department

**Summary:****Financial Impact:**

The financial impact would be \$16,694 using the FY22/23 Pay Matrix.

**Report Number:** 2023-411**Date:**

April 17, 2023

**Lead Department:**

Fire

**Recommendation:**

Approve

**Background:**

The Fire Department Fire Captain position is the supervisory leader of each of the department's three shifts. This position is not only responsible for day-to-day leadership, but is responsible for managing the culture of the organization. At one time, the Fire Captain position pay differential to the line staff was enough to make the job appealing to line staff. Over the years, the pay differential has eroded due to disconnection with annual increases given to the line staff through contract negotiations. In a recent promotion, the firefighter/paramedic that promoted was currently earning \$75,660 (maximum pay for line staff by contract). Once promoted, he was placed on the pay matrix with a minimum of a 5% increase by Administrative Policy. This placed him at a range 8, step 10, or \$80,669. As a firefighter he was eligible for overtime at a rate of \$38.97. (1.5 X \$25.98). There is a \$5,009 difference in his pay. This would equate to 128.5 hours of overtime to make the same amount. Since they work 24 hour shifts this equates to 5.35 shifts. As a frame of reference, in 2011 a firefighter would have to work approximately 12 shifts to make up that difference. This particular person worked quite a bit of overtime instead of working part time for another department, which is very common amongst firefighters. From January through June of 2022, this person worked a total of 139 hours of overtime. Simple multiplication (139 X \$38.97) would result in \$5,417 in extra pay for the six-month period. In his own terms, he stated he is taking a pay cut (annually) to become a supervisor with no option for extra work or pay to change the gap.

I believe this compaction has come about over the years due to quickly escalating pay rates for firefighter/paramedics in the market. Many years have realized a range of 2.75 – 4% for increases in wages. Our Captains have been on the pay matrix and have only received the same annualized increases as other employees, typically in the range of 2 – 2.25% increase.

**Recommendation:**

Move the Fire Captain position from Range 8 to Range 9. This would provide an approximate 6.5% raise to the Fire Captains placing two of them at Range 9, Step 13 and one at Range 9, Step 10. The estimated cost of this move is \$16,694 using the FY22/23 Pay Matrix. This increase would be effective on 7/1/2023. This recommendation was heard at the Employee Relations Committee meeting held prior to City Council meeting on 4/17/2023 and is subject to their recommendation to City Council.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Muckler".

Matt Muckler, City Administrator

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-\_\_\_\_\_**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING INCREASE IN PAY FOR FIRE CAPTAIN FROM RANGE 8 TO RANGE 9 IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.**

**WHEREAS**, the Fire Department relies on a Fire Captain as the supervisory leader of each of the department's three shifts; and

**WHEREAS**, this position is not only responsible for day-to-day leadership, but is responsible for managing the culture of the organization; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fire Captain position pay differential to the line staff was enough to make the job appealing to line staff; and

**WHEREAS**, the pay differential has eroded due to disconnection with annual increases given to the line staff through contract negotiations; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposal to change the Fire Captain pay from Range 8 to Range 9 and move the current positions up with a minimum increase of 5% resulting in two Fire Captains moving to Range 9, Step 13 and one Fire Captain moving to Range 9, Step 10; and

**WHEREAS**, the stated changes were presented to the Employee Relations Committee (ERC) and the ERC recommended the changes be made.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Newton, Iowa, that the City of Newton hereby approves increasing the Fire Captain pay from Range 8 to Range 9 in the Fire Department as stated.

**PASSED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of April 2023.

**APPROVED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of April 2023.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael L. Hansen, Mayor

(SEAL)  
ATTEST:

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Katrina Davis, City Clerk