



Employee Relations Committee Meeting Agenda

Monday, May 15, 2023 - 5:30 PM

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

- I. Roll Call
- II. Review of Minutes from the April 17, 2023 Employee Relations Committee Meeting
- III. Approving the creation of two temporary Firefighter/EMT/Paramedic positions in the Fire Department
- IV. Placing Staff on the Pay Matrix in the Administration, Utilities, and Fire Departments
- V. Adjourn

Meeting Agenda Employee Relations Committee MEETING MINUTES

April 17, 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 of Newton, Iowa met at 5:30 P.M. on the above date in the Council Chambers at 101 West 4th Street South. Present Committee Dalton, Wade, George. Absent: None.
- II. Approve the minutes of the February 20, 2023 Employee Relations Committee Meeting
Moved by George, seconded by Dalton to approve the February 20, 2023 minutes. AYES: Three. NAYS: None. Motion passed.
- III. Fire Captain Pay Range
 1. Authorizing increase in pay for Fire Captain from Range 8 to Range 9 in the Fire Department
Fire Chief Wellik presented, 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 an 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. Moved by Dalton, seconded by George to recommend the request to the full council. AYES: Three. NAYS: None. Motion passed.
- IV. Adjourn
Moved by George, seconded by Dalton to adjourn the meeting at 5:46 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: May 8, 2023
Re: Request for Temporary Firefighter/EMT/Paramedic Staff

The purpose of this memo is to provide background information regarding the request for temporary firefighter/EMT/paramedic staff. The fire department currently has a shortage of staffing in the operations department. We have one staff member on light duty who is currently waiting for final determination on permanent disability. We have another employee who is out on a medical issue and has recently found out they will not be returning to work anytime soon. This has led to shortages in staffing resulting in vacation calendars being locked down, occasional mandatory hold for overtime, and reduced staffing levels resulting in loss of transfer revenue. This has been ongoing since November. In addition, we have a firefighter leaving for a department in the Des Moines metro area. Fortunately, we have a current hiring list that contains five names and one of those is a paramedic and three are already EMT's. It will take approximately 30 days to complete the process of making an offer and getting the new hire through a physical prior to a start date.

I am requesting two (2) temporary Firefighter/EMT/Paramedic positions for the standard 56 hours per week. One of these would be until such time that we have resolution on submitted disability paperwork to the Municipal Police and Fire Retirement System of Iowa. Their paperwork was submitted on 4/25/23 and will likely take approximately 120 days to receive the final decision which is roughly the end of August 2023. The second position would be left open and possibly utilized for another potential disability case. I am requesting that City Administrator Matt Muckler be given the authority to fill that position at such a date that is reasonably in advance of the expected disability. We currently have a firefighter leaving for the Des Moines area who will resign their position and has a start date of 6/5/2023 with their new department. We currently have a certified list and could make job offers immediately. My goal is to bring staffing levels

back to a level that allows employees to schedule vacation and provide relief from risk of mandatory hold over. This will improve employee morale and provide for consistent staffing of operations.

We have just made an offer for permanent employment for a replacement for the firefighter leaving for a position in the Des Moines metro area which will start on 6/5/2023. Financially, we project the first of the temporary positions to be in place until the end of August. At that time, the position will be converted to permanent full-time. I propose we use the contract amount Entry Level EMT as the basis for the hourly wage calculation. (We only had one Paramedic on the certified list and have offered him a position starting sometime at the end of May). Below are the two pay ranges included in the Labor Agreement with the Newton Association of Professional Firefighters (Contract):

Position:	Annual Salary
Entry Level EMT - Entry(through 6/30/23)	\$50,091
Entry Level EMT – Step 1 (after 7/1/23)	\$51,594
Entry Level Paramedic (through 6/30/2023)	\$56,298
Entry Level Paramedic (after 7/1/2023)	\$57,846

The current position being vacated is a firefighter that is a Paramedic position and when replaced will save \$589 per month in salaries. (We are trading entry level Paramedic for Paramedic Step 4) The EMT temporary position would have a salary as seen above in the salary comparison. The cost of the position is as follows:

Month	Salary	Benefits	Total
June	\$4,174	\$3,000	\$ 7,174
July	\$4,299	\$3,000	\$ 7,299
August	\$4,299	\$3,000	\$ 7,299
Total Cost of New EMT Position (Est. wages and benefits)			\$21,772

From a revenue perspective, the Newton Fire Department's primary revenue comes from the ambulance operations. Specifically, the revenue comes from interfacility transfers. In FY21/22, we completed 670 interfacility transfers. The average revenue collected per transfer is approximately \$800. The average transfers per shift are calculated as follows:

Transfers/months	Avg./Month	Per shift	Shift/Month
670/12=	56/month	56/3=	19 transfers

With two people currently on light duty, we have two shifts staffed at seven and one shift that is staffed at six. We allow one firefighter to be off per shift. When we have a

firefighter off, the short shift ends up staffed at five. Our average number of shifts with scheduled time off is about 50% of shifts. During the summer that number increases up to nearly 100% of shifts. Our policy states that when staffed at five we will only take emergency interfacility transfers. This results in interfacility transfers being turned down. Interfacility transfers are 22% of our call volume and account for 47% of our revenue. This results in an average transfer revenue of approximately \$800. The potential lost revenue is estimated as follows:

Turned Down Transfers	Revenue per Transfer	Revenue Loss	3-Month Total
25% (5)	\$800	(\$ 4,000)	(\$12,000)
50% (9)	\$800	(\$ 7,200)	(\$21,600)
75% (15)	\$800	(\$12,000)	(\$36,000)
100% (19)	\$800	(\$15,200)	(\$45,600)

We would also realize a savings in the salary for the newly hired Paramedic. As mentioned earlier this would save \$589 per month in salary. Over the course of the three months that would also reduce any cost associated with this change by \$1,767.

The cost of adding one temporary full-time position is then calculated as follows:

Total cost of new temporary position (Est. wages and benefits)	\$21,772
Reduction in revenue for turned down transfers	(21,600)
<u>Savings in new Paramedic hire</u>	<u>(1,767)</u>
Net potential savings of Temporary Full-time position	(\$ 1,595)

Summary:

Operations staff are in need of this temporary position. With the injuries described earlier and reduced staffing levels, they have experienced difficulty in scheduling time off and stress related to the unknown of mandatory hold over. The reduced staffing levels have also reduced the number of interfacility transfers we were able to perform. Expense and revenue projections show this change could have a minimal impact on finances for the Fire Department. Staff recommends approving two temporary positions with one being filled now and holding the other position for potential use at a later date subject to approval by the City Administrator.

Jarrold Wellik
Fire Chief

RESOLUTION NO. 2023 – _____

RESOLUTION APPROVING CREATION OF TWO TEMPORARY
FIREFIGHTER/EMT/PARAMEDIC POSITIONS IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

WHEREAS, the Fire Department is currently authorized with 27 full-time-employees; and

WHEREAS, turn over, injuries, and a long-term disability process have led to increased overtime and decreased ability to perform existing levels of output.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of Newton, Iowa that two (2) temporary Firefighter/Paramedic position be created.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the temporary Firefighter/EMT/Paramedic positions will be eliminated after successful replacement of the Firefighter/EMT/Paramedic position issues have been resolved.

Department	Position	Current Authorization	Proposed Authorization
Fire	Fire Chief	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Assistant Fire Chief	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Fire Captain	3 FTE	3 FTE
Fire	Firefighter	19 FTE	19 FTE
Fire	Volunteer Firefighter	BY BUDGET	BY BUDGET
Fire	Administrative Supervisor	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Administrative Assistant	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Administrative Assistant	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Temporary Firefighter/Paramedic	0 FTE	2 FTE

PASSED this _____ day of May, 2023.

APPROVED this _____ day of May, 2023.

Michael L. Hansen, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____Katrina Davis, City Clerk

Memorandum

To: Matt Muckler

From: Jody Rhone, Utilities Director

Lisa Frasier, Finance Officer

Date: May 9, 2023

Re: Administration and Utilities Department Employees Placement on Pay Matrix

In September of 2022, the citizens of Newton voted to approve that the Newton Waterworks become a department of the City of Newton. At the November 7, 2022 meeting, the City Council amended the code of ordinances to dissolve the Water Board of Trustees and add the Waterworks to Title V Public Works, Chapter 54 to the City of Newton code of ordinances.

There are 5 employees in the Water department that are not included in the Union contract and each received a 3% pay increase on July 1, 2022 for fiscal year 2023 as done in previous years.

As of July 1, 2023 and going forward, these 5 employees will need to be placed on the City's pay matrix. Below is the recommended range and step for each Water department non-Union employee:

Administrative Assistant Plowman	Range 3	Step 1	4 Years of Service
Administrative Assistant Springer	Range 3	Step 11	25 Years of Service
Administrative Supervisor Werden	Range 5	Step 14	27 Years of Service
Water Distribution Asst Superintendent	Range 8	Step 10	25 Years of Service
Water Treatment Superintendent	Range 10	Step 7	27 Years of Service

Council approval is needed according to policy because some employees will be starting on the pay plan above mid-point (Step 7). This is due to these employees having many years of service with the Waterworks.

All other benefits as outlined in the employee handbook would apply to these 5 employees.

The current Water Pollution Control Assistant Superintendent provided interim supervision of the Newton Waterworks last winter and spring. This employee has also passed the IDNR grade III certification. With the creation of the Utilities Department and the desire to merge the wage scales between Waterworks and the City of Newton, this creates the need to adjust the Water Pollution Control Assistant Superintendent from a range 8, step 8 to Range 8 step 10 beginning on July 1, 2023.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-_____

RESOLUTION PLACING STAFF ON THE PAY MATRIX IN THE ADMINISTRATION, UTILITIES, AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS

WHEREAS, with the addition of the Water department to the City of Newton the five non-union employees need to be placed on the City’s current pay matrix; and

WHEREAS, 3 of the 5 employees have been with the Waterworks for over 20 years and because of the years of services will need to be placed above midpoint in their respective ranges and this action requires City Council approval; and

WHEREAS, With the creation of the Utilities Department and the desire to merge the wage scales between Waterworks and the City of Newton, this creates the need to adjust the Water Pollution Control Assistant Superintendent from a range 8, step 8 to Range 8 step 10 beginning on July 1, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Fire Department has found that in order to hire qualified candidates for the Fire Marshal position (previously the Fire Prevention Specialist), it is recommended that the Fire Chief have the authority to hire a qualified candidate in range 9, up to and including step 9, which is above the mid-point and requires City Council approval according to policies; and

WHEREAS, this proposal is summarized in the chart below:

Position	Current Authorization	Proposed Authorization	Reporting to:
Administrative Assistant (4 years of service)	1 FTE, Not on Pay Matrix	1 FTE, Range 3, Step 1	Finance Officer
Administrative Specialist (25 Years of Service)	1 FTE, Not on Pay Matrix	1 FTE, Range 3, Step 11	Finance Officer
Administrative Supervisor (27 years of Service)	1 FTE, Not on Pay Matrix	1 FTE, Range 5, Step 14	Finance Officer
Water Distribution Assistant Superintendent (25 years of Service)	1 FTE, Not on Pay Matrix	1 FTE, Range 8, Step 10	Utilities Director
Water Treatment Superintendent (27 Years of Service)	1 FTE, Not on Pay Matrix	1 FTE, Range 10, Step 7	Utilities Director
WPC Assistant Plan Superintendent	1 FTE, Range 8, Step 8	1 FTE, Range 8, Step 10	Utilities Director
Fire Marshal	1 FTE, Range 9, No higher that step 7	1 FTE, Range 9, Up to and including Step 9	Fire Chief

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 the additions and adjustments to the pay matrix for the City of Newton beginning July 1, 2023.

PASSED this15th day of May 2023.

APPROVED this _____ day of May 2023.

Michael L. Hansen, Mayor

(SEAL)
ATTEST:

Katrina Davis, City Clerk

Memorandum

To: Matt Muckler
From: Chief Jarrod Wellik
Priority: High
Date: May 10, 2023
Re: Fire Prevention Specialist Recruitment Update and Revision

The purpose of this memo is to provide background information regarding the changes to the Fire Prevention Specialist recruitment and proposed revisions to the position. The Fire Department recently conducted a recruitment for a Fire Prevention Specialist position. The request for changes from the Fire Department are a result of the recruitment process. The title, Fire Prevention Specialist, was confusing to candidates, and potential candidates, resulting in a low number of applicants. In the fire industry, a Fire Prevention Specialist typically reports to the Fire Marshal. The job description for the position was very clear that the position responsibility and authority were that of a Fire Marshal, but the perception was unclear. One of our candidates commented on the title with concern for being able to conduct inspections and cite code sections with what was perceived to be a lack of clear authority. Typically, the Fire Marshal is the code "expert" and has the authority to make determinations in the field. Without that authority, the fear was that people would immediately go up the chain of command to get there questions answered without working with the Fire Marshal.

In addition, it was realized the salary for the position was below the minimum market salary for similar positions. In a non-scientific study, the average starting wage was \$85,472. If we start this position at Range 9, Step 9, it would start at \$85,742. The average maximum salary was \$116,053 and our Range 14, Step 14 would be \$95,804. This would be after five steps. The mid-point for the group was \$99,585 and Newton is at \$81,720. We feel the candidate list was appropriate for the position of Fire Prevention Specialist and did not meet the requirements of a Fire Marshal position. The Fire Department will be going through an additional recruiting process to find a candidate with the expected qualifications and experience. In order to raise the salary, the Fire Department is requesting to be able to place the position above mid-point in

Range 9, up to and including Step 9.

Summary:

The Fire Department is in desperate need of the Fire Marshal position. The duties of the Fire Marshal position are time consuming for staff that have been covering these duties while the Fire Department did not have someone in that position. The title of this position is important to the success of the person filling this role. While it does not take the place of education and real-world experience, it is needed to allow this position to operate as intended. In addition, we are trying to draw a candidate away from other departments. Most candidates are currently working within a department and are looking to take the big step of going from training for to application of disciplines within the job. Our salary must be competitive in order to attract a good candidate.

Jarrold Wellik
Fire Chief