



CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

Finance & Personnel Committee Communication

Meeting Date: June 15, 2020

Prepared By: Ray Forsythe, City Administrator

Agenda Item: Benefits for Sergeants

Explanation: A new 4-year Contract with the Police Officers was approved on April 20th City Council Meeting. The budget for Fiscal Year 2020/2021 included a 2.5% increase for the Sergeants who are on a separate pay plan than other non-union employees. While the Sergeants are on a separate pay plan, they generally have had the same benefits as the non-union employees since taken out of the union in 2013.

The Chief of Police has requested that the City Council consider amending the benefit package for Sergeants to mirror those of the union Police Officers to provide parity between the two groups of officers as well as maintaining interest by officers to attain advanced positions within the Department.

This includes sick leave and comp-time. They also have a uniform allowance. Below is a comparison of benefits provided in the new 4-year contract and those benefits offered to Sergeants and other non-union employees.

Benefit Changes for Sergeants

- Uniform Allowance - An additional \$100/year
- Holiday Overtime Rate from 2 x to 2.5 times. This will only apply should a Sergeant work overtime on a Holiday. Not likely to be necessary unless there is a Sergeant off on sick leave or short staffing.
- Comp Time – All non-union staff, including Sergeants and Laborers currently can accumulate 64 hours of comp time at which point they must be paid rather than added to the comp bank. They can take 40 hours in a given fiscal year. The Police Officer contract recently approved increased both comp time accumulation to 160 and hours available to take per year to 160.
- Sick Leave Buy Back – Currently, the Police Officer contract allows 960 hours to be accumulated (compared to 1,280 for non-union and Laborer's) with an annual payout allowed of up to 96 hours if total accrued exceeds 400 hours. In addition, all sick hours (up to 960) on the books are paid at the rate at retirement. Non-union, including Sergeants (since 5/1/13) and Laborer's have a different program called Good Health Incentive Program (since 1991 in which the sick leave payout at termination was changed for all employees except the Police union) With the GHIP program, if certain criteria is met, a maximum of 32 hours may be paid per year. Currently Sergeants will be paid out at retirement for the sick time they had on the books that they accrued as an Officer.

These benefits have an annual cost and create a long-term liability which would be paid out individually as Sergeants retire from the City. The long-term liability comes from the increased Sick and Comp Time accrual and will vary depending on the annual buy back options each individual Sergeant elects to use.

Date Prepared: 06/12/2020

This item was discussed at the May 18th Public Safety Committee Meeting and at the June 8 Committee of the Whole Meeting. Staff has continued to estimate the overall costs of the proposed changes to be presented to the Finance & Personnel Committee as the Benefits are included in the City's Personnel Manual and will require an Ordinance Amendment to adopt.

Fiscal Impact:

- **Uniform Allowance** – additional \$100 for 5 Sergeants for **total increased cost of \$500**.
- **Sick Leave Buy Back (SLBB)** - The potential annual cost of the Sick Leave Buy Back for the five Sergeants, if they chose to elect it, is approximately \$19,200 per year (at **current** rates). The GHIP program has a maximum payout of 32 hours per year which is 1/3 of the 96 for SLBB and equates to a maximum cost of \$6,400 resulting in an **increased annual cost of \$12,800 for SLBB** for the five Sergeants. This program would also allow for any sick time remaining on the books to be paid at the rate at termination. The projected total future cost for this benefit for the five existing Sergeants is \$110,495.
- **Compensatory Time** – The annual cost of the increased comp time from using 40 hours to 160 hours per year would be approximately **\$2,500** assuming a 25% increase in time used. Due to the increased Comp maximum, there is also the potential for an additional 96 hours of Comp (160 minus 64 current policy) that could be paid at retirement at a higher rate than if the OT was paid throughout the tenure of the Sergeant.

In addition to the fiscal impact, there is some exposure to having a disparity of benefits with other employee groups, especially in regard to the Laborer's contract which expires at the end of the fiscal year.

Recommendation/

Committee Discussion Summary: The Public Safety Committee discussed this item at their May 18th Meeting and recommended that the item be further discussed by the Committee of the Whole which did at the June 8th Meeting. Both the Public Safety Committee and Committee of the Whole felt that it was important to provide parity between the Police Officers and Sergeants.

This proposed policy change would not be retroactive and thus any sick time accrued up to the policy effective date would not be eligible for Sick Leave Buy Back or payment upon retirement. In addition, the sick leave payment would only be made at retirement and not at termination for any other reason.

Action Requested: Consideration of an Amendment to the Personnel Manual via an Ordinance.