

COMMITTEE ON ORDINANCES, CHARTER AND RULES
MARCH 25, 2019 AT 7:55 p.m.
COMMITTEE ROOM
WOBURN CITY HALL

Voting Members:

Present: Chairman Lindsay Higgins, Alderman Michael Concannon, Alderman Mark Gaffney,
Alderman Edward Tedesco, Alderman Mercer-Bruen

Non-Voting Members:

Present: President Michael Anderson, Alderman Richard Gately, and Alderman Robert Ferullo.

Recused: Alderman Joanne Campbell

Also present: City Clerk William Campbell

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Order to review salaries of non-union department heads: Alderman Campbell recused herself and left the Committee Room. Chairman Higgins said not all of the city's labor unions have settled their contracts yet and that will probably preclude the committee from making any recommendation tonight. She said the last time the non-union department heads has an increase was 2017, and several time periods have elapsed since then. She said the council can only address salary adjustments going back to July 1, 2018. Clerk Campbell presented a document entitled "Review of Non-Union Department Head Salaries" to the committee. Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen to accept the aforementioned document and make it part of the permanent record; approved, 5-0. Clerk Campbell said the City Council can establish salaries for non-union employees, but it cannot be involved in union negotiations. He said there are non-union eight department head positions, two of which – Fire Chief and Police Chief – have their own contracts. He said the council cannot go back beyond the start of the fiscal year to adjust salaries. He said he is in the business because he loves the job, but he does want to get paid and wants to keep up with his union colleagues. He said he wants to make sure the council is aware of its authority to establish salaries for non-union department heads. Alderman Gately asked if there was an arrangement made in that past that allowed non-union department heads to get the same raises as department heads that are in the union. Chairman Higgins said changing the salaries is under the auspices of the council in the ordinance. President Anderson asked if the non-union department heads have been getting the same raises as the department heads in the union. Clerk Campbell said they have not. Chairman Higgins said the last raise for non-union department heads was in 2018. President Anderson asked if the raises in the union contract are retroactive to 2018. Clerk Campbell said he does not know because the non-union department heads are not privy to negotiations. President Anderson said any adjustments to the salary schedule need to be done by the end of the fiscal year. Alderman Ferullo said the current labor contracts call for 2 percent raises in each of three years. Clerk Campbell said he is willing to accept 2 percent this year and next year. He said he just does not want things to get lost, and he would prefer to have some sort of arrangement that does not require him to come to the City Council and ask for a raise. Alderman Concannon said the only down side of tying the non-union department heads to the union raises is it puts the non-union personnel behind if there are protracted negotiations. Alderman Ferullo said the issue is bigger

than 2 percent raises for three years. He said Woburn's department heads are not in line with their peers in other communities. He said there is a disparity. He said a 2 percent raise does not put the department heads in the range of similar positions in Winchester and Stoneham. He said when he was the police chief his salary was 35th out of 35 comparable communities. Alderman Concannon asked if a salary survey might be a worthy endeavor. Alderman Gately said the non-union department heads deserve raises, especially Clerk Campbell. He said the work the City Clerk's office does is unbelievable. He said there are other department heads who seem to be making way too much. Chairman Higgins said she wants to wait for another cycle of committee meetings before taking action. She said there has to be some discussion with the mayor. She said once that happens, the council can consider legislation. Alderman Concannon said if the City Council sets the salary, the mayor has to fund it. President Anderson said council members get phone call from union members who claim the non-union personnel get the benefit of negotiations but don't have to pay union dues. Chairman Higgins suggesting holding the matter until the next meeting. Alderman Concannon said the council is basically one word away from remedying the situation. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said the committee should revisit the issue in a month.

Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen to adjourn; approved, 5-0. Chairman Higgins adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST

Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees