

CITY OF LAREDO  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
M98-S-38  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
SEPTEMBER 02, 1998  
5:30 P.M.

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

With a quorum present Mayor Elizabeth G. Flores called the meeting to order.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Elizabeth G. Flores led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. ROLL CALL**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Alfredo Agredano	Councilmember, District I
Louis H. Bruni	Councilmember, District II
Cecilia May Moreno	Councilmember, District IV
Joe A. Guerra	Councilmember, District VI
Mario G. Alvarado	Councilmember, District VII
Consuelo "Chelo" Montalvo	Councilmember, District VIII
Gustavo Guevara, Jr.,	City Secretary
Florencio Pena, III,	City Manager
Jaime L. Flores	City Attorney

ABSENCES:

Motion to excuse Cm. John C. Galo (out of town) and Cm. Eliseo Valdez, Jr.

Cm. Joe A. Guerra arrived at 5:40 p.m.  
Cm. Mario G. Alvarado arrived at 5:42 p.m.

Moved : Cm. Bruni

Second: Cm. Alvarado

For: 6                                  . Against: 0                                  Abstain: 0

**IV. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE CITY'S PAY PLAN WITH POSSIBLE ACTION.**

1. Mr. Dan Migura, Administrative Services, made the presentation before council. (see PAY PLAN WORKSHOP handout).

Cm. Guerra brought up the issue that 911 operators wanted to come before the city council to ask for a salary adjustment.

Mr. Dan Migura stated that some specific positions have been identified as being very low compared to the TML survey. He needs to study each individual position in order to make the proper adjustments to bring them up to current market levels.

Cw. Moreno asked for those positions (below TML) including their grades.

Mr. Migura provided the following information:

- Grade 21 - Custodian and Grade 22 - Laborers (over 20% below TML).
- Grade 23 - Clerk I (up to 10% below TML).
- Grade 24 - Animal Control Officer (over 20% below TML).
- Grade 24 - Refuse Collector (up to 10% below TML).
- Grade 25 - Clerk II (over 20% below TML).
- Grade 26 - Water Meter Readers (up to 10% below TML).
- Grade 27 - Computer Operators, Secretaries, Crew Leaders and Heavy Equipment Operators, (10% below TML).
- Grade 28 - Personnel Assistant (10% below TML).
- Grade 29 - Automotive Mechanic (10% below TML).
- Grade 30 - positions, there were no problems identified.
- Grade 31 - Buyer II (up to 10% below TML) and Traffic Signal Technician (20% below TML).
- Grade 32 - Administrative Assistant, Communications Tech. Supervisor, oversees 911 Operators, Building Electrical Inspector, Water Plant Supervisor (20% below TML).
- Grade 33 - Accountant (10% below TML).
- Grade 34 - Sanitarian II (10% below TML) and Senior Buyer (20% below TML).
- Grade 35 - Programmer Analyst (20% below TML).
- Grade 36 - Accounts Payable Supervisor (10% below).
- Grade 37 - Civil Engineer I (20% below TML).

Mr. Migura stated that this was done comparing the minimum start salary of each position. If we consider the average salary, some of these individuals might be already within the competitive market.

- Grade 38 - Parks, Sanitation and Water Treatment Superintendents (10% below TML).
- Grades 39, 40 and 41 there were no positions identified as a match.
- Grade 42 - Assistant Police Chief the minimum starting salary was identified as 10% below TML, but the salary being paid to the Assistant Police Chief is comparable to the average salary of TML.
- Grade 42 - Assistant City Attorney (10% below TML).
- Grade 43 - Administrative Services Director, Financial Services Director, Parks & Recreation Director and the Police Chief were all identified as being 10% below market.
- Grade 45 - the minimum for Assistant City Manager and City

Attorney were identified as 10% below market, however our average incumbent was comparable to TML.

Mr. Migura made a recap of the study and the cost that each proposed action would generate. He further explained how the actual pay plan system was designed, how specific factors are considered to determine each grade and how the salaries ranges (steps) were figured within the grades.

Cm. Moreno addressed the recap of the proposed actions that council wanted done to the actual pay plan. She wants to know, assuming that the priorities are: a 5% annual review increase, eliminate pay grade 21, remove steps 1 and 2 on pay grade 22 and remove step 1 on the rest of the grades, how much of this can we afford?

Dan Migura replied that on the proposed budget of April 1st, 98 a 5% cost of living increase was considered, so \$898,033.00 were set aside; then his staff calculated that the proposed plan presented to council on August 13th will cost \$1.2 million (this includes the proposed changes that Cm. Moreno addressed above). Therefore, some additional monies will be required.

Cw. Moreno stated that by implementing the proposed actions, some of the identified problems regarding the positions that are below the TML will be taken care of, but we need a recommendation from staff on the issues that will not be taken care of. She wants to know what can be done and what the cost would be.

Florencio Pena, City Manager, replied:

- (1) that the 5% annual review increase, moving grade 21 to 22, making step 2 the minimum for grade 22, and even moving steps 1 to 2 in grades 22-25 will cost of \$1,182,506, which is available in our current year budget. Anything above that is currently not available.
- (2) This plan adopts a system that has been used for the past five years, in the sense that the pay plan does not get upgraded and we will fall behind again.

Mayor Flores stated that council likes the recommendations made to staff, but a way to fund them needs to be found or we need to come up with another plan, closed to what council recommended, that will work.

Cm. Moreno brought up the issue of employees on step 10 because if the 5% annual review increase gets implemented, and step 10A is not created, those employees will not get the 5% raise.

Florencio Pena, City Manager, identified 56 employees on step 10. Mr. Migura calculated that \$114,439 is the amount required in order to create a new step so these employees

will get the 5% annual review increase.

After discussing different alternatives and the amount of money required for their implementation, Cm. Moreno asked staff to evaluate all the recommendations made and to advise on what is affordable.

Mayor Flores asked Mr. Pena to clarify his comment regarding that if the city does not upgrade the actual pay plan we will fall behind again.

Mr. Pena explained that the city's pay plan was designed to provide for both merit and cost of living increases, but somewhere down the line city council and management did not consider the cost of living. That forced department supervisors to give an automatic 5% increase to 95-98% of employees, because that was the old way to get a raise. The cost of living system was not in place and this practice went on for six years, thus causing the pay plan to stay behind since step 1 stayed at \$4.50/hr. for six years. This is the reason he favors the cost of living adjustment.

Cm. Moreno said two issues were involved: the cost and the pay plan. She wants staff to bring back a report on how can the pay plan be increased and improved.

Mr. Pena reiterated that he will report back to council on the adjustments to the pay plan. Grade 21 will be eliminated, step 1 will be dropped and step 11 will be added, grade 22 will start on step 2, as recommended by council. Also staff will try to accommodate a cost of living adjustment to the pay plan within the \$1,298,000 budget, and grades 43A, 44A and 45A will be added. Since this is a workshop, no motions will be made and staff will wait for Mr. Pena's recommendations.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn.

Time: 6:50 p.m.

Moved : Cm. Guerra


Second: Cm. Alvarado

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

I hereby certify that the above minutes contained in pages 01 to 04 are true, complete and correct proceeding of the City Council Meeting held on the 2nd day of September, 1998.

  
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Gustavo Guevara, Jr.  
City Secretary

Minutes approved on: October 19, 1998